

Belyeu to hear his fate

*Convicted killer faces
life sentence or death*

By **DARRELL DUNN**
Tribune-Herald staff writer

Convicted murderer Clifton Eugene Belyeu is expected to be sentenced to death by injection or a life prison term Friday when his trial concludes in 54th District Court.

The jury of five women and seven men deliberated about 45 minutes Wednesday before finding Belyeu guilty of capital murder in the Dec. 10 slaying of Melodie Bolton of West.

The jury on Thursday listened to testimony from a former live-in girlfriend of Belyeu who said Belyeu beat her and his mother.

Shirley Carver of Corsicana testified Thursday that she and Belyeu lived together between 1980 and 1983. She said she later learned that Belyeu was married at the time.

Ms. Carver said Belyeu frequently abused her and her daughter. Ms. Carver said she also saw Belyeu strike his mother "a bunch of times."

She recalled one night when "Cliff got violent. He leaned me over the side of the bed and put his hands on my neck. If I hadn't kicked him and gotten free, I think he would have choked me to death."

Ms. Carver said Belyeu picked up a lamp, threw it at his mother, and then attacked her (Ms. Carver) and ripped off her clothes.

She said she ran naked out of the house, but Belyeu chased her down and threw her to the ground. She said he rammed his knee into her back and forced her to eat dirt.

"I can honestly say he enjoyed beating me," she told the jury.

On another occasion, Ms. Carver said, "Cliff got into one of his moods where he wanted to beat again."

Ms. Carver said following a fight with Belyeu, he grabbed her 2-year-old daughter by the hair and held her aloft outside a second-story window.

"He said, 'You don't think I'm cruel enough to kill this baby. You don't think I'm rough

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enough," she said.

Ms. Carver said she grabbed the screaming child from Belyeu's grasp as he dropped her.

Ms. Carver said she and Belyeu were traveling in Belyeu's truck one day when she complained to Belyeu that he was driving too fast.

She said Belyeu became irritated and, while still driving, grabbed a parakeet out of a cage inside the truck. She said he pulled the head off the parakeet, threw the body in her lap and wouldn't let her remove it.

Defense attorneys Ken Ables and Fred Horner, appointed by Allen to represent Belyeu, called two of Belyeu's sisters to testify on Thursday.

Ann Rogers told the jury that she, Belyeu, and three other sisters and brothers were raised by Belyeu's mother.

Mrs. Rogers said Belyeu was kind to her children and spent time teaching them how to play sports.

She said she never saw Belyeu beat anyone or steal anything.

Betty Morgan, another sister, testified that when Belyeu was a child his father was imprisoned after he was convicted of raping one of his daughters.

She said all the Belyeu children worked at a restaurant with Belyeu's mother to pay bills. She said Belyeu gave his mother the tips he earned as a waiter.

Belyeu became emotional Thursday morning for the first time during the 2-week-old trial. As he sat at the defense table waiting for the jury to enter the courtroom, Belyeu looked at members of his family and began to cry.

District Judge George Allen had Belyeu taken into his chambers so that the defendant could regain his composure.