



Staff photo by Jay Godwin  
McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell and his wife, Berni, leave the Federal Courthouse for a weekend break in deliberations.

## Feazell jury breaks for 2 days without bribery case verdict

Associated Press

Jurors deliberated three hours Friday but decided to break for the weekend in the racketeering-bribery trial of McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell.

The jury, which had heard allegations that Feazell took bribes in return for dropping or reducing charges against criminal defendants, decided to resume their deliberations Monday morning.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack Frels said in closing arguments Friday that the 36-year-old Waco prosecutor used his public office for his private gain.

Feazell has denied the charges, and his lawyer, Gary Richardson, told jurors, "I assure you that Vic is fighting for survival, but I also assure you he is telling the truth."

The case went to the jury shortly after noon, following five weeks of testimony that included 74 witnesses.

Feazell, district attorney in Waco since 1984, is accused of racketeering and conspiracy in 14 instances of accepting bribes from Waco attorneys to get misdemeanor DWI and drug charges dismissed or reduced.

"Don't destroy the career of a young man who is willing to stand up to the big boys," Richardson said in his final argument to jurors.

But Frels said of Feazell, "He's mad about being in this courtroom. He's mad about being found out."

U.S. District Judge James Nowlin instructed the jury to find Feazell guilty or innocent of racketeering in the 14 cases of accepting bribes.

A second charge accuses Feazell of agreeing to accept one-third of the legal fees of several Waco attorneys in return for reduced or dismissed prosecutions.

Eight charges of mail fraud were dismissed Thursday.