

COURTROOM JOTTINGS

4 Prospective Jurors Excused; Got Preview

Courtroom jottings from the Jack Ruby murder trial:

Joe Tonahill, the 340-pound defense lawyer from Southeast Texas, says a new pun is making the rounds in his home town of Jasper.

"I gave my daughters diamond rings for Christmas," Tonahill told reporters. "Now they're saying that my daughters got diamonds and I only got a Ruby."

JUDGE JOE B. BROWN called another 50 prospective jurors into court Friday as attorneys neared the end of the original list of 151.

Then the judge had to excuse four members of the new group. They had obtained a "preview"

High Court Gets 2d. Ruby Request

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A representative of Jack Ruby's attorneys asked the Texas Supreme Court again Friday to hear arguments on whether prospective jurors who saw Ruby shoot Lee Harvey Oswald on television should be disqualified.

William VanDercreek, a Dallas attorney and professor at the Southern Methodist University Law School, presented the clerk a request for a rehearing on the matter.

The petition seeks a rehearing on a request for permission to file with the court an application for a court order requiring the judge hearing the Ruby trial to disqualify as jurors persons who witnessed the Nov. 24 shooting on television.

The Supreme Court refused Monday to hear arguments on the point.

There were not enough of the nine justices present Friday to consider the request for a rehearing. It can be considered Monday at the earliest.

—by sitting in the spectator section of the courtroom during questioning of other prospective jurors.

DEFENSE LAWYERS have piled law books atop their table in the courtroom. But one book there has nothing to do with the penal code or court decisions.

Authored by Carol Estes Thometz, it is entitled "The Decision-Makers—The Power Structure of Dallas."

Ruby's lawyers, who contend "an oligarchy" rules Dallas, keep the book prominently displayed.

THE DEFENSE accepted J. Waymon Rose as the 10th juror despite his statement that his wife and the wife of Detective Capt. Walter Fannin of the Dallas police burglary and theft bureau, "are close friends."

Rose said the friendship would not affect his verdict.

ALTHOUGH THEY didn't hear it, the jurors got a compliment Friday.

It came from Melvin Belli, the chief defense lawyer, who praised their intelligence.

"I think the intelligence level of our jury is well above what you would expect from a cross-section of Dallas residents," Belli said.

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