TUESDAY • APRIL 5 • 2005

WINDY, STORMY

High: 75  
Low: 52

Today's forecast: Page B5

INSIDE

Tar Heels deliver for Roy Williams

Roy Willimas gets his ninth national title. The Tar Heels beat the Fighting Illini 75-70 in Monday's game, two years after Williams left. Page B6

SPORTS

Alex Galindo leaving KU basketball behind

Alex Galindo would like to play basketball closer to his native Peru, R.I., so he plans to leave the Jayhawks and play at an announced school. Page B7

PULSE

Kids set agenda

If they ruled City Hall

Mayor's "I have to be in the mayor's contact," needi age the city agenda. Fix the potheads, and bring back the fireboxes. Page B8

RECONCILIATION

Bush awards first Medal of Honor

President Bush presents the medals of honor to Army Spc. Charles Paul Roy Smith with his Medal of Honor for saving the lives of nearly 150 troops in Iraq. Page A4

QUOTABLE

"We expect failure because we're actually going to be seeking to push to failure, and that is, in judgment, the best way to get a "lessons learned" from what we do here."

-- U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff on writing emergency plans to fail during the largest and terrorist-assail all over the United States so that weak spots in the nation's response can be identified. Page A4

COMING WEDNESDAY

Beans are cheap and nutritious and they can be used in many multi-cooked meals, including beans and rice. Check the scoop Wednesday in Pulse.

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Vol. 447, No. 95
36 pages

-Eric Weisband

Roy's big win stings a little in Lawrence

By Erica Weisband

"I'm not sure. That's the question many basketball fans in Lawrence asked Monday night as former Kansas University coach Roy Williams ended the quest for his elusive first national championship -- not at KU, where he spent 10 years, but at alma mater of North Caroli-

"I wish it was with us. That's the best sentiment I can express," said KU grad student Steven Sodergren, 23, of Galesville, Ill., who watched the game at the Red Lion Tavern, 944 Bluestone Road. "If he was going to do it, I wish he would have stayed here, followed through with it and then gone on to his dream job."

Sage fans were able to muster some good will for Williams even while wishing it had been KU in the championship.

Eugene Hickock and Perry Edward Smith on the eve of their execution.

Charles McAttee's phone rang about 2 a.m. on April 1, 1995, and Truman Capote was calling to say he would be visiting convicted killers Richard Eugene Hickock and Perry Edward Smith on the eve of their execution.

Capote had spent the past four years documenting the brutal murders of a rural Kansas family and the lives of the killers for what would become the book "In Cold Blood." He said the emotional buildup to the execution would be too much to bear.

The next to hours would change McAttee's life. He would spend another 30 months with the killers, getting a more detailed view of their lives. He would write a book about the killers, getting a more detailed view of their lives. He would write a book about them. He would get to know them.

IN COLD BLOOD: A LEGACY

Witness to execution

Prison director Charles McAttee recalls killers

By Michael Brunetz

Special to the Journal-World

Charles McAttee's phone rang about 2 a.m. on April 1, 1995, and Truman Capote was calling to say he would be visiting convicted killers Richard Eugene Hickock and Perry Edward Smith on the eve of their execution.

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In Cold Blood: A Legacy

Witness to hanging

"I got to know them as human beings, and I got to know them as people who committed an absolutely horrendous, horrific crime..."

— Charles McKeever

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

Rare glimpse into their personalities in their most vulnerable moments — scenes that never made it into Capote's book.

"I got to know them as human beings," McKeever said. "And I got to know them as people who committed an absolutely horrendous, horrific crime that killed four innocent, beautiful people."

Capote's position as director of Kansas State Penitentiary required him to be at the Kansas State Penitentiary at Lansing the day of the executions. Capote's absence leaves him as one of few people to actually witness the executions himself.

The past 40 years, McKeever's public identity has been defined by that moment in time. Rather than just lawyer Charles McKeever, he became the man who "witnessed the hangings of the Clutter family killers." But unlike many affiliated with the case who refused to talk to the past, McKeever, now 76, accepts that the case changed his life and made him a living link to history, an experience he feels obligated to share.

When he is asked to do so, McKeever pulls out a white storage box inside his home near Topeka. Among the items are some of Capote's letters and a copy of the book. He shows the box to guests and the author later sent from his winter home in Switzerland.

He also has photos of scenes from Paris painted from Death Row on a nearby wall. He showed them to prison chaplain James Post.

Each time he opens the box, memories flood back, memories of characters in Capote's book, of real people he came to know and experiences he had in the 1950s.

Letters from the killers

McKeever's position as a patron and parole agent and special assistant to the governor, and later director of penal institutions, allowed him to receive and send uncensored letters to the killers on Death Row.

From the spring of 1951 until their executions in April 1953, Hickock and Smith frequently wrote to him for coaching on one of the few people who saw their uncensored letters. Letters the killers wrote to the governor, recorded by McKeever's secretary.

Once he became director of penal institutions in early 1952, the letters were directed to McKeever. The killers wrote up front, after they had been sent any last orders.

The letters are stored at the Kansas Historical Society in Topeka. One of the more memorable ones came just weeks before the executions.

The killers wrote to McKeever asking for radios in their cells. Although prison officials initially refused the request, McKeever promised to intercede.

His last letter, "Please remember that I never have heard music," was written on the day of the executions. It was a causal acquaintance of one of Hickock's childhood friends, a common point of discussion when he saw Hickock on Death Row.

In his final letter, Hickock mentioned that he had been told of the two men who died in the gas chamber. He said he had been moved to tears by a picture of a man and woman sitting on a boulder. He added that he had written to Hickock that he would not join him.

Hickock told of a 1949 Packard he and some friends covered with pe- rsonal house pets. When they hit 60 mph on the highway, the paint started to peel off the car's body. Hickock had come to his residnts to give them their respects and apologize for a shabbily worded letter he sent weeks before. Hickock told her to tell his children goodbye. After she left, McKeever said, Hickock was relieved of the pain his crimes had caused.

He said, "Mr. McKeever, I would only have my neck tied up, because we pulled that up into Lansing in 1953, the letters for that..."

While Hickock was busy telling stories, Smith pondered life and death. He quoted several passages from the Bible and the Book of "Man and Nature" and showed signs of remorse that some had never come from the convicted killer.

"Perry did say, "Mr. McKeever, I would like to apologize to someone, no, to whom? To whom? To the relatives? To their friends and neighbors? To you? To the state of Kansas?" But you know you can't undo what we did with an apology," McKeever recalled Smith saying.

Final hours of Smith, Hickock

McKeever's modulation of Smith as the more intelligent, sensitive killer — mirrors Capote's descriptions of him in the book. Capote saw Hickock, though, as crude and uncultured, while Smith had developed a different view of Hickock because of their common background, Don Simmons.

"I wish I had written to Hickock than Capote did," McKeever said.

That Capote and McKeever held somewhat similar views of the killers should come as no surprise, McKeever said, because the case while the thread was its way through the courts.

McKeever first met Capote in 1954 as the author was trying to gain visitation and unfiltered letter-writing privileges with Hickock and Smith. It was not unusual for family members and significant others, rights Capote denied.

Although many have disputed the truth of some of Capote's book, McKeever said that Capote's version of the Clutter case was "mirrored the actual events." His book made McKeever a public political thinker about the book and case. Because he didn't know the family, he said, it's easier for him to talk about.

"It was a part of my law and part of my career," McKeever said. "It was just part of my official duties, and I became personally acquainted with Smith and Hickocks again.

After McKeever left the job with the Corrections Department in 1960, he became a successful attorney and in some ways a better-known figure in Kansas for his work in the courts than the murder case.

For years he was associated with one of Kansas' oldest and most respected law firms, Edwin, Lewis, Potter & Hanson. In 2002, he ran an unsuccessful grassroots campaign for Kansas attorney general while also continuing to practice law.

McKeever was diagnosed with leukemia almost two years ago, and the disease and treatments have taken their toll. He has lost 62 pounds and undergone more than 40 blood transfusions.

"I'm still trying to practice law. I don't think to the office for the

complex feelings about justice

Although McKeever developed a rapport with the killers, he hasn't "shied away from the death penalty.

He said he supports capital punishment, though not in its current form. He believes capital punishment is a good first step in fighting crime.

"They're standing around the precipice — to take that final step, that final plunge, to kill that last row — the last row of human beings," McKeever said.

Neither, of course, has he been able to escape his own past. His life as the lawyer who reads the verdicts for the killers.

"I'm in the middle of everything," McKeever said. "I'm in the middle of everything, and I'm a part of it."

"And with that," McKeever said, "an hour later, we took them to the Kansas galleys and hung them."
**In Cold Blood: A Legacy**

By Patrick Smith

*The New York Times*

One of the most seasoned and award-winning journalists of his day, Alvin Dewey Jr. was forever interested in Truman Capote’s “In Cold Blood.”

But for New York, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation’s lead detective on the famous Clutter murder case, getting such credit for an entirely different book, that of the 1953 Clutter case, began with a peculiar and fortuitous happening during the early 1960s. Dewey’s overtures to the idea of an entire book about the Clutter case

One of the few hard decisions Dewey made for his book was to maintain the Clutter case as the focus of his book. Dewey’s research and interviews with the families of the Clutter victims led to a detailed and compelling account of the Clutter case. His book, “In Cold Blood,” was published in 1965 and became an instant bestseller.

After leaving the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Dewey continued to investigate the Clutter case. He wrote several articles about the case, interviews with the families of the Clutter victims, and the community affected by the case.

In 1964, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation’s lead detective on the famous Clutter murder case, Alvin Dewey Jr., was involved in the investigation of one of the most notorious cases in American history. The case involved the Clutter family, who were murdered in their home in the early morning hours of June 5, 1959.

Dewey, as the lead detective on the case, had a great deal of firsthand knowledge of the case. He interviewed the families of the Clutter victims, visited the crime scene, and even conducted interviews with the families of the victims.

As Dewey continued to investigate the case, he began to realize that the Clutter case was not just a local story, but a national phenomenon. He saw the potential for a book that would capture the public’s interest.

Dewey began to research the case in earnest, and he quickly realized that the Clutter case was a perfect subject for a book. The case was both compelling and newsworthy. The Clutter family was a wealthy and well-known family from Kansas, and the murder was a brutal and senseless act.

Dewey began to write, and he quickly discovered that he had a natural talent for storytelling. He was able to capture the reader’s attention with his vivid descriptions of the crime scene and the families of the victims.

Dewey’s book, “In Cold Blood,” was published in 1965 and became an instant bestseller. The book was a critical and commercial success, and it established Dewey as a major figure in American journalism.

After the success of “In Cold Blood,” Dewey continued to write and investigate. He wrote several articles and books about the Clutter case, and he even considered writing a screenplay based on the case.

Dewey’s work on the Clutter case was not just a book, but a way of life. He was dedicated to his work, and he was determined to bring justice to the Clutter victims.

Dewey’s legacy is a testament to his dedication to his craft and his commitment to the families of the Clutter victims. He was a true detective, and he left an indelible mark on American journalism.

**A KBI agent’s story**

**KANSAS BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION agent**

While Dewey didn’t write about the famous Clutter family murders in his book, *Cold Blood*, it was later made into an HBO miniseries and a film.

While Dewey’s book was a huge success, it was not the end of the Clutter case. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation continued to investigate the case for many years.

One of the KBI agents who worked on the Clutter case was Oliver Tilton. Tilton worked on the case from the beginning and was there for many years.

Tilton was a dedicated agent who was passionate about justice. He was determined to bring the Clutter killers to justice and bring closure to the families of the victims.

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COUTEOY WEST is an outspoken and integral part of western Kansas. He has been the Finney County attorney, a Garden City council member and mayor. He is best known outside the county for his role as a prosecutor for the state, and especially for his successful prosecution of the Dennis R. R. Feary, Jr., who was convicted of first-degree murder for the murder of 17-year-old april palmer in January 1991.

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