

Commentary

It's for sure: Woman innocent of murder

by SCOTT NEWTON

I hate to reveal the outcome of a play before it has finished its run, but, what the heck, I know I'm right.

Karen Andre, played venomously by Denyse DeBoor, is innocent.

Sandy High School's "Night of January 16th" leaves just enough questions that I was arguing the outcome with Debbie Lamm's mother all the way down the corridor and out the door Saturday night.

"She was guilty." "No, Faulkner died in a plane crash, not from a fall off the balcony of Karen Andre's penthouse." "She was guilty." "No, Karen Andre was really in love with Faulkner." "She was guilty."

Obviously, it wasn't much use arguing with Mrs. Lamm, whose daughter, Debbie, plays the part of Nancy Lee Faulkner, wife of a crooked businessman and very possibly an adulterer.

Faulkner's not the only one with questionable values. Faulkner's mistress apparently felt little remorse about swindling people out of millions of dollars, forging financial statements, or lying under oath.

Karen Andre may not have even been faithful to the man she claims to have loved. It kind of shatters your belief of how a mistress should behave, don't you think?

No, Karen Andre was a crook, forger, liar and if not a murderer, an accomplice to a murder. In my opinion, I served on the jury, and I voted with the majority. To date, one jury has found her guilty and three have found her not guilty.

But maybe I should back up. People who are really interested should go to the Sandy High School commons on Friday, March 14 or Saturday, March 15 at 8 p.m. People who would like to serve jury duty may

sign up; 12 jurors will be picked at the opening of the performance.

I wasn't sure I wanted to serve on the jury, but, I figured, what the heck.

Once selected, I took my duty seriously. I tried to pay close attention, but I'm telling you, it comes at you fast.

At first, the fingerprints on the gun pretty much implicate Andre/DeBoor. But then you kind of get the feeling Faulkner married Nancy Lee because her father was rich, and he needed the money to bail out his failing business. And just when you begin to sympathize with Andre/DeBoor, some creepy mafia type comes into the picture, and all the sudden you're thinking, "Well, maybe this chick's got no loyalties at all."

Except her gangster boyfriend, if you can believe him, said that Karen Andre didn't love him, but he loved her, and he'd do anything for her.

So, what did they do? Faulkner, Andre and this greasy Larry Regan guy decide to fake Faulkner's suicide.

See, Faulkner decides the only way out is to fake a suicide, but first he transfers some money to Argentina. I think that's something everyone will agree on. There was \$10 million awaiting someone in Argentina. But was it awaiting Andre and Faulkner or Andre and Regan?

Well, it turns out the person they scraped off the sidewalk was cremated, and another corpse turns up later, burned in an airplane crash. Andre, who has already lied once on the stand, and Regan, a gangster, say Faulkner's body was in the airplane, and that Nancy Lee's father had something to do with the airplane wreck. And there is some evidence of that. For sure he didn't



The cast of SUHS' "Night of January 16th."

Photo by Scott Newton

like Faulkner.

There's just a little more to this, if you can hold on. Four of them who went up to Karen Andre's penthouse the night of January 16th, and one of them was staggering drunk. Someone was seen later leaving the penthouse — but was it Faulkner? It could have been the drunk, who suddenly sobered up, which I think is possible but not very.

But, see, I'm an emotional type. It's possible, I will admit to the five people on the jury who were arguing the point, that Karen Andre was guilty. But to tell you the truth, this Faulkner guy must have been pretty charismatic. And as I listened to Andre/DeBoor, I was convinced that she loved the guy.

Howard Bickle, who has been knocking 'em dead at drama com-

petitions lately, is a good district attorney, but Defense Attorney Russ Benton convinced me there was reasonable doubt.

My one criticism is that the jury didn't get to debate the issue just a little longer. Of course, the audience was waiting for the verdict. Heck, maybe we could all get together sometime and kick it around a little more.

Now, to be honest, I haven't revealed all the surprises. You should have

heard what the judge said when he heard our verdict.

Regardless of what he said, I'm still pretty sure she was innocent. Well, fairly sure. I mean, I'm not saying I haven't ever been wrong.

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Letter to the editor

Welches parents' demands reasonable

In response to the recent letters and discussion regarding Welches School pertaining in particular to curriculum, and incidentally to the film "The Lottery," I would like to speak out.

The current administration and board has repeatedly turned away criticisms, small or large, into a criticism of Welches teachers. The criticisms have mainly concerned curriculum, especially the language arts and math programs which were cited as being deficient by a team of educators from the Oregon Department of Education in a letter addressed to Dan Barker, superintendent, dated April 15, 1985. (The actual state visitations took place on March 18, 1985.)

The setting for the Advisory Committee viewing of "The Lottery" was adversarial, so that we who object so strongly to this tasteless movie were presented as attacking Ms. Thompson. Our "attack" was on that movie!

Questions as to the scope and sequence of curriculum, or our student's preparedness for high school academics, are continually answered with an overstated (and unnecessary) defense of Welches teachers. The implication is left that we don't respect these teachers or their abilities. Not so! I feel that Welches has one of the best teaching staffs in Oregon, and so do most of the patrons of this district, I think.

The teachers are not responsible for curriculum development, although I think their input would be invaluable. The teachers do not purchase overall materials used, i.e., math and English texts. The teachers are not responsible for running the school and deciding its policy. The teachers are hired to teach! The administration is hired to administer, and that includes the above mentioned responsibilities.

Some of us have recently been labeled the "far right" and "censors" because we have had our concerns flouted by the administra-

tion and continue to protest. We are "far right" because those concerns have been gelled and verbalized in the words of other parents in "Child Abuse in the Classroom," and we have taken heart that there are others who are disturbed by some of the things happening in modern public schools! (If you haven't read the book, try it. It won't hurt you — it's simply the compiled testimonies of parents nationwide before U.S. Senate hearings meetings.)

We of this "far right" have come to a few radical and evidently unpopular conclusions. We would like our teachers to do that for which they have been trained — teach! We would like them to teach facts:

reading, math skills, history and science. We would like that teaching administered and directed so that all the grades build to the next grade in skills and comprehension.

We would like our children to learn to the best of their ability in order that they grow up to be intelligent, seeking American citizens, curious about their world and anxious to contribute to it. We would like less time spent in shaping their attitudes and values. We shape their attitudes and values with our various home backgrounds and that provides for that great eclectic mixture known as the United States of America.

It is really very simple. Who has the responsibility for determining

what our children learn at school? Is it the parents and other taxpayers of the Welches School District, or the school? Do we have a right to ask? To advise? Last time I read the U.S. Constitution, we did!

Vicki Kramer Welches

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