

Testimony of Nelda Watts

DIRECT EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. TOBY L. SHOOK:

6 Q. You are Nelda Watts; is that right?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. Where do you live, Ms. Watts?

9 A. 5802 Eagle Drive, Rowlett.

10 Q. How long have you lived there?

11 A. It will be three years this month.

12 Q. Do you live there with your husband?

13 A. Yes, I do.

14 Q. Do you have any children?

15 A. I have two that are on their own.

16 Q. Okay. And, are you employed right
17 now?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Okay. Retired?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. What did you do before you retired?

22 A. I was a school teacher for 34 years.

23 Q. Okay. And, what grades did you teach?

24 A. Actually, everything from kindergarten
25 to preschool all the way to -- I did a few months in
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1 junior high.

2 Q. Okay. And you have lived over on

3 Eagle Drive for the last three years?

4 A. We moved in, in March of '94.

5 Q. Okay. Let me show you what's been
6 marked as State's Exhibit No. 8. It's kind of an

7 overhead photo of the neighborhood there. Can you see

8 5801 Eagle, the Routiers' home? Could you see where your
9 house would be?

10 A. Well, yes.

11 Q. What was your address again?

12 A. 5802. I don't --

13 Q. Okay. I'll make it easy for you.

14 A. I was looking too closely. All right.

15 Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Do you recognize this to be at
17 least part of your house?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. And you're right across the street
20 from the Routiers?

21 A. Yes, I am.

22 Q. Okay. Now, let me turn your attention

23 back to June 18th of 1996. And ask you if you were home
24 during the day on that date?

25 A. I was home most of the morning.

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1 Q. Okay. And, did you hear something out
2 in the front yard, or towards what would be your front
3 yard, that drew your attention to the window?

4 A. Yes, sir, from my bedroom I heard
5 sounds.

6 Q. And does your bedroom window, if you
7 look out it, do you see the Routier home?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Okay. When you heard some sounds, did
10 you go to the window and look out?

11 A. I did.

12 Q. Okay. What did you see when you
13 looked out there? Who was out there?

14 A. I saw Darlie and Darin Routier.

15 Q. Okay. Do you see Darlie Routier here
16 in the courtroom today?

17 A. I haven't even looked. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Is that the woman seated here
19 with the red dress on?

20 A. Yes, it is.

21

22 MR. TOBY L. SHOOK: Your Honor, if the
23 record could reflect that the witness has identified the
24 defendant?

25 THE COURT: Yes.

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1 BY MR. TOBY L. SHOOK:

2 Q. And, where was Darlie Routier and her
3 husband, Darin Routier?

4 A. They were in the front yard. Darlie
5 was to the south of the sidewalk, and Darin was to the
6 north of the main sidewalk.

7 Q. Okay. And, was their Pathfinder
8 parked out in the front?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. Where was that parked?

11 A. It would be almost to the south
12 boundary of their yard.

13 Q. Okay. Was there something there that
14 had been placed in their front yard near the fountain
15 they had?

16 A. There were many funeral wreaths, there

17 were stuffed animals, flags, signs that people had placed
18 there.

19 Q. Okay. And as you looked out there,
20 what were the -- Darin and Darlie Routier doing?

21 A. Darin was taking the animals and flags
22 off of the wreaths.

23 Q. What types of animals were on the
24 wreaths?

25 A. Well, some of them were teddy bears
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1 and other kinds of little, just small animals.

2 Q. And where was Darlie when he was doing
3 this?

4 A. Most of the time, she was on the other
5 side of the sidewalk that goes up to their house.

6 Q. Okay. Can we see it sort of here in
7 the aerial photograph, where they were? I'll bring it up
8 to you.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do you see the fountain here?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Darlie was on this side, close to this
14 tree. He was on this side, and the wreaths were mostly
15 on this side closer to the fountain.

16 Q. And you are looking out here from your
17 window?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. If you could point again here
20 on the photograph, and I'll bring it down to the jurors.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. This area here, is where Darin was by
23 the fountain?

24 A. Yes. He was on the -- the wreaths and
25 such were here, he was on this side and she was over
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1 closer toward this tree.

2 Q. Okay.

3

4 THE COURT: Mr. Mosty, can you see
5 that?

6 MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY: Yes, sir.

7 THE COURT: Okay.

8

9 BY MR. TOBY L. SHOOK:

10 Q. And your house is 5802?

11 A. Yes, sir, 5802.

12 Q. And when you -- you heard some noises.

13 What is the first noise that you heard?

14 A. It sounded sort of like children

15 laughing, that kind of thing.

16 Q. And, what did you see then?

17 A. Well, as I watched for a few minutes,

18 the -- Darin would take a stuffed animal off of one of

19 the wreaths and toss it over to Darlie and she would jump

20 up and catch it, and then she would toss it back to him

21 and he would chuck it toward the vehicle, the back end of

22 the vehicle was open, and if he threw it in, she would

23 jump up and cheer.

24 Q. Okay. What else did you see?

25 A. Well, he took a flag off of one of

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1 them, and she cheered as he climbed up the water fountain

2 and put it at the top of the fountain and it stayed there

3 for several months, or weeks anyway.

4 Q. Okay. Then what did you see them do?

5 A. Well, they started -- after they got

6 most of the animals off and I didn't stand there the

7 whole time, but I looked again, because I was waiting to

8 go out and get the mail. I didn't want to go out there

9 while they were out there doing that.

10 So I looked again, and they were

11 taking the wreaths and dragging them around toward the

12 back, I assume for the trash.

13 And so, I quickly made a run out to

14 the mailbox to check the mail before I left.

15 Q. Okay. This was on the 18th of June of

16 1996?

17 A. Yes, sir, it was the 18th.

18 Q. As best you recall?

19 A. I know it was.

20 Q. Okay. Did you find out later that day

21 that Mrs. Routier was taken into custody, later on that

22 day?

23 A. My other daughter called me at the --

24 where I was.

25 Q. I don't want you to get into what

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1 anyone else told.

2 A. No, sir, I'm just --

3 Q. But did you learn that later on?

4 A. Yes, I watched it on TV.

5 Q. Okay.

6

7 MR. TOBY L. SHOOK: Okay. That's all
8 we have, Judge.

9

10 CROSS EXAMINATION

11

12 BY MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY:

13 Q. Ms. Watts, if I understand, that's why
14 you're positive it was the 18th, because it stuck in your
15 mind that that's the same day of the arrest?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. That is why you are so sure about that
18 date?

19 A. Yes, I am sure.

20 Q. Can you see this?

21 A. Not just real clearly.

22 Q. Okay. From there?

23 A. The lights are -- there's a little
24 glare.

25 Q. I'm trying to figure out some way to
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1 do this without cutting off the Judge and so everybody
2 can see.

3

4 THE COURT: That's quite all right,

5 Mr. Mosty. Go ahead.

6 You may want to step down, ma'am. And
7 watch your step going off there. Watch your step going
8 down there, please. Yes. Okay. All right. Make sure
9 that everybody can see it all right.

10

11 (Whereupon, the witness
12 stepped down from the
13 witness box, and approached
14 the jury rail, for the
15 purpose of further describing
16 the exhibit to the jury.)

17

18 BY MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY:

19 Q. Now, Ms. Watts, let's see, is this --
20 that is the front of your house there?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Okay. How far is that from where the
23 Routiers were standing?

24 A. Oh, it's not very -- just a street
25 width and our yard.

- 1 Q. Okay. And you were upstairs in
2 your --
3 A. Oh, no, I had a downstairs bedroom.
4 Q. Downstairs bedroom?
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. Where is it located?
7 A. Oh, he will have bring it down so I
8 can reach it.
9 Q. All right.
10 A. My bedroom is right near this window.
11 Q. It's on the left if I were looking
12 from the street?
13 A. Yes, sir.
14 Q. Okay. That is where you first, or
15 something first came to your attention?
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. Do you have curtains or blinds or
18 something?
19 A. I have mini blinds.
20 Q. Were they open?
21 A. No, I lift it up if I need to -- if I
22 hear a noise that I need to see.
23 Q. If I understand, have you ever had a
24 conversation with Darlie Routier?
25 A. No.

- 1 Q. Never have even talked to her?
2 A. No.
3 Q. She's never been to your house, she
4 has never been -- vice-versa?
5 A. No.
6 Q. Okay. So you looked out this window?
7 A. Yes, sir.
8 Q. Where was this vehicle parked?
9 A. It was parked closer down here.
10 Q. Okay.
11 A. Very close to -- I think it's a fire
12 hydrant.
13 Q. Okay. The property -- closer to the
14 Routiers' property line?
15 A. Yes, sir. It was not in the front.
16 Q. Which way was it facing?
17 A. It was facing south.
18 Q. So the back of it would have been
19 facing toward the side?

20 A. Right.

21 Q. And you saw Darin Routier in the
22 fountain area?

23 A. In front of the fountain, yes.

24 Q. What was he doing?

25 A. Well, he took the teddy bears or other
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1 stuffed animals off of the wreaths, and tossed them to
2 her.

3 Q. And she was standing over here?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. So he -- from that fountain, he threw
6 them across?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. To where she was standing?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. How far would that be?

11 A. Maybe 10 or 12 feet.

12 Q. That is just 10 or 12 feet?

13 A. Well, he didn't stay stationary there.

14 He moved at times, and she moved at times.

15 Q. But she always stayed on this side?

16 A. Until they started moving the wreaths.

17 Q. Okay. But this teddy bear throwing,
18 he is standing on one side, and she is standing on the
19 other side, then you say she would pick up --

20 A. Either catch it, or if she didn't
21 catch it, she would pick it up and toss it back to him.

22 Q. And throw it back over the sidewalk?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Anybody else out there?

25 A. No, sir. I am pretty well there --
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1 during the day.

2 Q. No, I am talking about anyone else in
3 the area?

4 A. Oh, no one was around that area, no,
5 sir.

6 Q. Okay. And then, how many times would
7 they throw it back and forth?

8 A. Usually she just tossed it back once,
9 then he would throw it towards the car, the vehicle.

10 Q. So, hold that straight, Mr. Mulder.

11 So he would get it over here?

12 A. Um-hum. (Witness nodding head
13 affirmatively.)

14 Q. He would throw it over one time to
15 this side?
16 A. Um-hum. (Witness nodding head
17 affirmatively.)
18 Q. She would throw it back?
19 A. Um-hum. (Witness nodding head
20 affirmatively.)
21 Q. And then Darin would throw it?
22 A. That's true.
23 Q. Way over by the car?
24 A. Yes, and sometimes it went in.
25 Q. Sometimes I guess it landed in the
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1 street?
2 A. I don't know that it went in the
3 street, but maybe down below.
4 Q. All right. In the yard?
5 A. But not what I call in the street.
6 Q. Okay. And how many times did this
7 happen?
8 A. Three or four times.
9 Q. Three or four of those?
10 A. Yes, sir.
11 Q. Okay. And they all happened the same
12 way?
13 A. Just about.
14 Q. What time of day was this?
15 A. Approximately, 10:30 or 11:00 o'clock.
16 Q. And you never saw any other cars?
17 A. No.
18 Q. Come up?
19 A. No, sir.
20 Q. How long did you watch, total?
21 A. I watched a couple of minutes and then
22 I did some packing because I was going to be going to my
23 daughter's. Then I looked again, because I wanted to see
24 if they were still there. I just didn't want to go out
25 to the mailbox at that point.
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1 Q. Okay. So the first part is when they
2 are having -- throwing stuff, and then you sort of went
3 away?
4 A. I went back to the bed to pack.
5 Q. Okay. And then you came out and you
6 saw something with regard to the flowers?
7 A. I did not come out.

8 Q. Okay. I'm sorry. You came back to
9 the window?
10 A. I came to the window.
11 Q. Same window?
12 A. Same, I only have one.
13 Q. Okay. You saw something with flowers?
14 A. They took the -- well, first, he took
15 the flag and put a flag up on top of the fountain.
16 Q. Okay. A little flag?
17 A. It's just one of those, maybe, 8 by
18 10s, or something like that.
19 Q. An American flag?
20 A. Yes, sir.
21 Q. He put it on top of the fountain?
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. Then they started doing something with
24 the wreaths?
25 A. They started dragging them, they were
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1 dead.
2 Q. Okay. They were dead wreaths?
3 A. They started dragging them around the
4 side of the house, and when they did that, then I went
5 out.
6 Q. Okay. So the first part was taking
7 things off of the wreaths?
8 A. Yes.
9 Q. Flags or teddy bears or whatever might
10 be on it because the wreaths were dead?
11 A. Yes, sir.
12 Q. And then the second part of it was
13 taking the wreaths themselves?
14 A. Yes.
15 Q. Where did they take them?
16 A. Well, they took them around the side
17 of the house. I can't see where they put them.
18 Q. So they went out of sight?
19 A. Yes, sir.
20 Q. How many trips did that take?
21 A. I only waited for one.
22 Q. And then you went outside?
23 A. I ran to the mailbox and got the mail.
24 Q. Okay. You went back in?
25 A. Yes.
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1 Q. That's all you saw?
2 A. I left.
3 Q. Anything else you saw that day?
4 A. No, sir.
5 Q. That's it?
6 A. Yes, sir.
7
8 MR. DOUGLAS MULDER: How am I doing?
9 MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY: You are doing
10 fine. Thank you.
11 THE COURT: All right. Ma'am, you may
12 have a seat. Watch your step going up there, please,
13 ma'am.
14
15 (Whereupon, the witness
16 Resumed the witness
17 Stand, and the
18 Proceedings were resumed
19 On the record, as
20 Follows:)
21
22 MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY: That's all I
23 have.
24 THE COURT: Anything else?
25
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1 REDIRECT EXAMINATION
2
3 BY MR. TOBY L. SHOOK:
4 Q. When you saw them doing that, how did
5 you feel, Ms. Watts?
6
7 MR. RICHARD C. MOSTY: I'll object to
8 that.
9 THE COURT: I'll sustain the
10 objection.
11 If you will just step, be very careful
12 stepping down, ma'am.
13 Ma'am, I've got to warn you of one
14 more thing: When you are not testifying, you have to
15 remain outside the courtroom. Don't talk to anybody
16 about your testimony to anybody that has testified.
17 In other words, don't compare it. You
18 may talk to the attorneys for either side. If someone
19 tries to talk to you about your testimony, tell the side
20 who called you.
21 THE WITNESS: All right. Thank you.
22 THE COURT: Thank you. You may step

23 down.

24 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.