

# Trial set to begin in slaying of woman

• Jury seated for man  
accused of hiring killer  
to slash woman's throat

*Beacon Journal staff report*

A jury has been seated and lawyers have been told not to talk about the capital murder case of an Atwater man accused of paying \$200 to have his son's mother murdered.

Opening arguments in the trial of David G. Thorne will be heard Tuesday in Stark County Common Pleas Court.

Courts are closed Monday in honor of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Thorne, 27, is charged with complicity to aggravated murder. Prosecutors, who are seeking the death penalty, say Thorne paid a friend to kill Yvonne C. Layne, a mother of five, in Alliance.

The seven-woman, five-man jury was seated Thursday. The panel includes eight alternate jurors. Most cases involve two or three alternates.

Judge Richard D. Reinbold Jr. said the extra alternates are a precaution because of the widespread flu bug that has hit everywhere this winter.

Reinbold also granted a motion by defense lawyers Jeffery D. Haupt and George Keith prohibiting attorneys from talking publicly about the trial until the case is resolved.

The 26-year-old woman's throat was slashed in her Devine Street home in Alliance as four of her five sons slept in nearby rooms late March 31 or early April 1. The

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# JURY

• Prosecutors say man paid \$200 for slaying

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other son was staying with Layne's parents.

Thorne is Layne's ex-boyfriend and the father of her fourth son.

Prosecutors allege Thorne's displeasure with child support payments fueled his desire to have Layne killed.

Thorne is accused of paying Joe I. Wilkes, 19, of Ravenna to murder Layne. Wilkes had met Layne once before, according to prior testimony.

Wilkes accepted a plea bargain from prosecutors and was sentenced to life in prison with parole eligibility after 30 years. As part of his plea agreement, he must testify against Thorne.