

Different view, different result?

Disappointment and frustration

April 18, 2006 | By David Heinzmann and Richard Wronski, Tribune staff reporters. Staff reporter Brendan McCarthy contributed to this report.



Evelyn Ezell said Monday's outcome of former Gov. George Ryan's trial would have been different if she had not been kicked off the jury for making false statements on her juror questionnaire before the seven-month trial began.

Ezell acknowledged that she was the source of much of the early discord on the jury. But she said she battled with her fellow jurors because she believed they were prejudiced in favor of the prosecution from the start of deliberations.

The other juror dismissed from the deliberations, Robert Pavlick, said he was frustrated that he gave up several months of his life to decide the former governor's fate and was not allowed to see the case through.

Both Ezell and Pavlick were removed from deliberations after the Tribune reported that they failed to reveal criminal proceedings in their backgrounds when they filled out jury questionnaires. Ezell was tried and found not guilty in a felony drug dealing case in 1994; Pavlick was convicted of felony aggravated drunken driving in 1996 while Ryan was still secretary of state.

Pavlick declined to discuss his questionnaire statements, but Ezell said it was all a misunderstanding.

"One of the questions I misunderstood," she said during a brief conversation with reporters on the lawn of her South Side home Monday afternoon. "I thought that if something is kicked out of court," it would not matter. Although she was charged and tried in the drug case, and charged in other cases, she had never been convicted, court records show.

Asked about the compatibility of the Ryan jury, Pavlick said, "When you put 12 people from everywhere in a room, you're not there as friends, you're there to do a job."

"The only thing I'll say is I believe that anytime you're involved in a jury, it's difficult, no matter who it is or what it is."

Asked if he was disappointed that he did not get to complete the trial, he said, "Well, sure. I mean, I put six months of my life into that."

Now, he said, he wanted to put the trial behind him and he asked to be left alone.

"I want to get on with my life. I want to get on with my work in the community and leave this all behind," Pavlick said.

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