

## Execution

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Lopez. However, repeated attempts by both prosecutors and defense attorneys to locate Hernandez were unsuccessful.

Despite his contention that he has been convicted of a crime he did not commit, DeLuna long ago resigned himself to whatever destiny awaited him.

"Sometimes, I get the feeling if they are going to kill me, then kill me. I don't want to have to be here longer than I have to," DeLuna said in the death row interview, which took place before he knew when he would die.

"If I get a date, I don't want any interference. I don't want anyone stopping it," he said. "I'm tired of waiting. I see a lot of people going crazy. Time does that to people."

But DeLuna does not want to die. He said his incarceration on death row has made him realize just how much he wants to live.

"When I was young, I could care less. Now, I care a whole lot about life," he said. "I regret all the things I've done in the past. I want to start my life all over again."

DeLuna said he is the only member of his family who has ever been in trouble with the law. His first scrape with authorities occurred when he was 20 years old.

At that time, he was convicted of attempted rape and unauthorized use of a vehicle in Dallas County. He served about three years in prison before he was paroled.

Shortly after returning to his hometown of Corpus Christi following his parole, DeLuna was arrested for Ms. Lopez's stabbing death.

Several witnesses placed DeLuna at the service station at the time Ms. Lopez was killed. Some saw DeLuna enter the store with a knife; others saw him struggling with the woman; and some saw him flee the store. DeLuna was arrested while hiding under a truck in a nearby neighborhood.

Despite his desire to live, DeLuna said he preferred death to facing a hopeless existence on death row.

"What's the point of staying here on death row for 10 years if they are going to execute you anyway?" he said.

# City man gets execution date for '83 slaying

By Linda Carrico  
STAFF WRITER

Since arriving at death row three years ago, convicted killer Carlos DeLuna has yearned for a second chance at life.

"I'm no monster. I'm not an evil person. I feel I can still do good for society," DeLuna said in a recent interview.

DeLuna lost that chance yesterday when he was sentenced to die by lethal injection before sunrise on Oct. 15 for the slaying of a Corpus Christi service station cashier.

Visiting District Judge Wallace "Pete" Moore of Houston set DeLuna's execution

date at a hearing in the 94th District Court in Corpus Christi.

DeLuna's sentencing came a month after the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin overruled all points of appeal raised by DeLuna and his attorney, James Lawrence.

DeLuna is the second of three death row inmates from Corpus Christi to be scheduled for execution this year.

Richard Andrade is scheduled to die before sunrise on Aug. 20 for the 1984 sexual assault and stabbing death of Cordelia Mae Guevara, 28, at a Leopard Street bar she owned.

Troy Kunkle has not yet received an execu-

tion date even though the Court of Criminal Appeals recently upheld his conviction and death sentence for the 1984 robbery and fatal shooting of Steven Horton of Flour Bluff.

DeLuna will die for the knife-slaying of Wanda Jean Lopez, 24, who was killed on Feb. 4, 1983, during a robbery of the Sigmore Service Station at 2602 S. Padre Island Drive.

At the time she was stabbed to death, Ms. Lopez was describing her assailant to a Corpus Christi police dispatcher on the telephone.

A tape recording of Ms. Lopez's conversation with the dispatcher revealed she hysteri-

cally pleaded with her attacker to take all the money in the store before he killed her.

Her final words - "You want it, I'll give it to you, I'll give it to you, I'm not going to do nothing to you. Please!" - were heard only by her murderer and a helpless police dispatcher listening on the telephone.

DeLuna, now 24, still maintains his innocence despite a jury finding him guilty of Ms. Lopez's death and two appeals courts upholding that conviction and death sentence.

DeLuna, testifying at his own trial, claimed a man named Carlos Hernandez killed Ms.

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7/24/86

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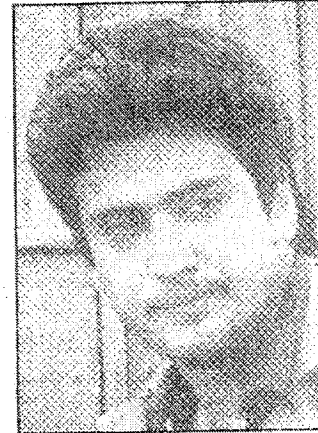
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Carlos DeLuna

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