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Alternate chosen for Spence jury

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A 58-year-old claims examiner with the Waco Veterans Administration Regional office was selected Monday as an alternate juror in the capital murder trial of David Wayne Spence.

Twelve jurors and one alternate have been selected for Spence's trial, the first of four capital murder cases expected to be tried in the July 1982 homicides in which teen-agers Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and Kenneth Franks were stabbed near Lake Waco.

Jury selection will continue until a second alternate has been chosen.

Five people summoned as potential alternate jurors were dismissed by prosecutors and defense attorneys Monday as the third week of jury selection began in 54th State District Court.

A 39-year-old crew leader at Owens-Illinois and a 45-year-old construction worker were rejected as jurors by court-appointed defense attorneys Hayes Fuller and Russ Hunt.

A 25-year-old machine operator at Aigner Co. was excused by McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell and Assistant District Attorney Ned Butler.

A 48-year-old auto parts buyer for Joe L. Ward Co. and a 27-year-old electrical technician for M&M Office Systems were excused for cause by Judge George Allen after recommendations from both sides.

Prosecutors have used nine of their allotted 15 strikes to excuse jurors and the defense

has used 11.

Court officials are predicting that testimony in the case possibly will begin Monday and last up to four weeks. The state is expected to call about 45 witnesses.

Spence, 25, Muneer Mohammad Deeb, 25, Gilbert Melendez, 29, and Anthony Melendez, 25, each are charged with three counts of capital murder and face death by injection or life imprisonment if convicted in the triple slaying.