

Jury sees videotape of Evans' interview

By FOSTER'S DAILY DEMOCRAT
and ASSOCIATED PRESS

DOVER — Shortly before he was charged with the beating death of his girlfriend's 21-month-old daughter, a former Keene school board member told police they should have no mercy on whoever killed the girl.

Chad Evans, 30, of Rochester is on trial for second-degree murder and assault in the November 2000 death of Kassidy Bortner, while he was living with the child's mother, Amanda Bortner, 19.

On Wednesday, prosecutors played a videotape of an interview Evans gave police in Kittery, Maine. The child died at the Kittery home of Jeffrey Marshall, who was baby-sitting her.

On the tape, investigators asked Evans what should happen to whoever killed Kassidy. "Probably string 'em up," he replied.

Evans told police that, the night before the girl died, he picked her up from Marshall's home, noticed that she was act-

ing strangely, and said she fell over when he stood her up in his driveway.

Evans' lawyers contend the real killer is Marshall. They said Kassidy began to show bruising only after Marshall and his girlfriend, Jennifer Conley, Amanda Bortner's sister, began baby-sitting.

In the interview, police told Evans the injuries that killed Kassidy were inflicted the night before she died.

"She was with me last night and she was also with Jeff last night," Evans said.

Evans also said Amanda Bortner called Kassidy "the little bitch" in the weeks before her death.

"Amanda would sometimes hit her. She bruised from that," Evans told police during the taped interview, saying he thought Kassidy was anemic at the time. Evans also told police Bortner started calling the child names during the final weeks of

"She's a little bitch. She's a

little s--t," Evans said in the interview.

At various times in the interview, Evans said the toddler was whiny, jealous and demanding of her mother's attention. Bortner made similar statements during her testimony last week.

Authorities say Kassidy died of a blunt force injury to her head and that her body was covered with bruises of varied ages. In addition to the closed head injury that caused her death, Kassidy had bone fractures in her arms and legs and pin-like abrasions on the bottoms of her feet. Throughout the trial proceedings, the state and defense have tried to paint different pictures of the time frame in which Kassidy's injuries occurred.

The state alleges Kassidy began showing signs of abuse after her mother moved her to Evans' home. The defense maintains the many people who witnessed the child's bruises saw them in the month before her death — after Marshall began baby-sitting her.

Under cross-examination by the defense, several witnesses

have indicated Bortner was cruel to Kassidy by locking the toddler into an upstairs bedroom and ignoring her cries. Several witnesses, including Bortner, testified that when she started her job at Old Navy around Nov. 6, 2000, she brought the child to her sister Jennifer Conley's apartment where Conley and Marshall took turns baby-sitting the child.

Marshall was home alone with Kassidy after Bortner dropped her off on the morning of Nov. 9, 2000. Bortner, Conley and Marshall described bruises on Kassidy's face to police following the child's death.

Prior to the viewing of Evans' videotape on Wednesday, Bortner's friend Cathy Nuremberg was called by the state and testified to changes she saw in Bortner before and after she met Evans.

Nuremberg said that when Kassidy was born, "(A man) was her boyfriend and was the father of Kassidy for a while. ... Amanda was definitely the dominant of the two. She had control of the relationship. ... He did what she wanted him to do."