

Prosecution winds up case in Bandler murder trial

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The prosecution yesterday wrapped up its case against Richard Wayne Bandler, a 37-year-old psychotherapist accused of murdering Live Oak resident Corine Christensen.

Christensen, a 31-year-old prostitute, was shot in the face in her condominium Nov. 3, 1986.

Bandler is the co-founder of a behavior-control technique called Neuro-Linguistic Programming. He is charged with the murder based mainly on the testimony of James Marino, an associate of his who was in Christensen's home at the time of her death. Marino has testified that Bandler pulled the trigger and killed Christensen. Bandler's defense consists of pointing the finger at Marino.

Testifying yesterday was Harry Allison, the estranged husband of Paula McFarland, who is Bandler's girlfriend.

Allison said McFarland telephoned him last year in a panic, saying that Bandler had confessed the murder to her.

"Paula said she was extremely upset and that she was afraid," Allison said. "Her voice was cracking and she was rattled."

Allison said McFarland told him she had to get herself and the children away from Bandler.

But Allison said he told her not to talk on the telephone because he feared Bandler had it tapped. He said he spoke with McFarland about a week later and she was no longer upset.

Allison also said he spoke with Bandler about three weeks ago in an effort to get in touch with McFarland and his children.

"He asked me if I had been talking to the cops and if I had told them that Paula had told me that he (Bandler) confessed," Allison said.

Assistant District Attorney Gary Fry asked, "Did he (Ban-

When Bandler was arrested later that evening in McFarland's home, McFarland said she told sheriff's deputies she had been with him all evening. She later admitted that was untrue.

dlar) say, 'It's not true. I didn't confess. I didn't kill Corine Christensen.'"

"No," Allison responded.

But defense attorney Gerald Schwartzbach did his best to discredit Allison's testimony.

In questioning Allison about a painting business in Philadelphia that Allison said he partly owns, Schwartzbach got Allison to admit he didn't know the first name of one of his business partners and the last name of the other.

Schwartzbach also grilled

Allison about some inconsistencies in his testimony, such as why he was willing to leave his children with McFarland if she was living with someone he thought was a murderer, and why he called Bandler if he believed him to be a murderer.

Earlier in the day when McFarland was on the stand, she had responded, "Absolutely not," when asked whether she had called Allison and told him Bandler had confessed.

McFarland described how Bandler and Marino arrived at her home the morning after the killing.

She said Marino left shortly after arriving. McFarland said she sent her two children to school with a neighbor and spent the rest of the day with Bandler drinking and snorting cocaine.

Another witness testifying for the prosecution was Robert Tanner, a crime-scene investigator for the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office. He detailed the many kinds of ammunition found in the trunk of Bandler's car, including bullets that could be used in a .357-caliber revolver, which has been identified as the murder weapon.

The defense called the first of its witnesses yesterday afternoon.

Colleen Duneway, who once rented a home from Marino, testified that he told her Christensen "ripped him off of \$10,000."

"He said he had a plan and he would wait until the time was right," she said. "He said he had done it (shot people) in the past and got away with it."