

Trailside Murders

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✓ Carpenter looked 'spaced out' after shootings in Felton park

By FELIX GUTIERREZ
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LOS ANGELES — Trailside Slayings suspect David Carpenter walked into a forest clearing "like he was taking a Sunday afternoon stroll" as a bleeding man yelled "You better run lady, that's the man who shot me," a camper testified.

Maureen Morse testified Thursday that Carpenter was the man who walked into clearing shortly after Steven Haertle and his girlfriend were shot March 29, 1981 at Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park.

"All of a sudden he (Haertle) jumps up, yelling and screaming and pointing at a clearing," said Ms. Morse, a onetime nursing assistant who treated Haertle's neck wound at a park picnic table.

Under questioning by defense attorney Larry Biggam, Ms. Morse said the man she identified as Carpenter "didn't look around. He was in a daze, like he was spaced out.

"It was like he was on a Sunday afternoon stroll," she said.

Haertle and his girlfriend, Ellen Marie Hansen, were on a hike in the redwood park when they were shot. She died on the trail where Haertle, now 23, was wounded.

The prosecution also alleges that Carpenter killed Heather Scaggs, 20, a co-worker of Carpenter's, in 1981. Her body was found May 26, 1981 in Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

Carpenter is standing trial in Los Angeles because of pretrial publicity in Northern California. He also is accused separately in five other killings along trails in Marin

County north of San Francisco in the fall of 1980. Those cases have yet to come to trial.

Superior Court Judge Dion Morrow, who is hearing the case, said Thursday that the prosecution hopes to rest its case by next Thursday. The defense is expected to begin its presentations by June 26 and the case should go to the jury around July 4.

Carpenter has served 17 years in prison for attempted murder, rape, robbery and kidnapping. He is charged with two counts of murder, one count of attempted murder, one count of rape and one count of attempted rape in the two attacks.

Ms. Morse testified that Haertle approached her and her then-fiance, Fred Morse, at an observation tower clearing. While she treated Haertle, Morse walked down the trail to try to find Ms. Hansen.

"He was telling us his girlfriend was up on the mountain, that she had been shot. He was afraid she was dead," Ms. Morse said. Haertle fled after the man she identified as Carpenter appeared in the clearing and she went down the trail to try to find her fiance.

Morse testified that when he turned to light his fiance's cigarette, "I saw the girlfriend (Ms. Hansen) there off to the right side of the trail."

The witnesses said Ms. Hansen had a slight pulse when Ms. Morse first checked it. A few minutes later the pulse was gone.

In other testimony Thursday, Melissa Guyon, 15, of Santa Cruz, said she saw a man who looked like Carpenter drive a red Fiat in and out of a dead-end street near an exit from the park shortly after the time of the shootings.