

# ✓ Trailside jury still deliberating

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LOS ANGELES (AP) — Nearly a month after being convicted of two notorious Santa Cruz County murders, Trailside Slayer David Carpenter awaits a jury's decision on what his punishment will be.

The Superior Court jury completed its fifth day of deliberation Wednesday without a decision in the sentencing portion of Carpenter's trial. He could receive the gas chamber or life in prison without possibility of parole.

Judge Dion Morrow allowed the jury to

recess deliberations early Wednesday so a panelist could keep a medical appointment.

Carpenter, 54, was convicted July 6 of the first-degree murders of Ellen Marie Hansen and Heather Scaggs, both 20, in separate attacks along forest trails in Santa Cruz County in 1981.

He was also convicted of raping Scaggs and trying to murder Hansen's boyfriend, Steven Haertle, then 20.

Carpenter was described variously as a mentally ill victim of child abuse and as a "calculating, intentional" criminal by defense and prosecution witnesses during the trial's penalty phase.

Carpenter still faces trial on five counts of murder in 1980 slayings along Marin County trails.