

Trailside Murders

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Carpenter pleads double jeopardy

SAN RAFAEL (AP) — David Joseph Carpenter, convicted for the 1981 "trailside" killings in Santa Cruz County, has pleaded double jeopardy during his arraignment on five Marin County murders in 1980.

Double jeopardy means a person can not be tried twice for the same crime.

Carpenter claimed Thursday in Marin County Municipal Court that the plea was justified because the Los Angeles judge who sentenced him to die in San Quentin's gas chamber for the trailside slayings also

declared him guilty of the Marin County murders.

The unusual plea came as part of Carpenter's long-running arraignment on the murder charges.

Public Defender Frank Cox said that in sentencing Carpenter, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Dion Morrow said there was "overwhelming proof of five Marin County premeditated murders." Carpenter was sentenced to death in the killings of Ellen Marie Hansen and Heather Scaggs, both 20, along Santa Cruz

County hiking trails.

Cox charged that Morrow already found Carpenter guilty of the Marin murders and asked, "What are we doing here? Some judge has to face up to whether he was convicted (of the Marin murders) in Los Angeles or not."

To Marin County Deputy District Attorney John Posey, it was all "just more riddle talk by Frank Cox."

Marin Municipal Court Judge William Stephens said he will rule on the plea and other motions on Feb. 8.