

September trial set for accused killer of Schweiger girl

BY ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

An early date in September, after Labor Day, was settled on yesterday for the start of Andre Rand's Supreme Court trial for the murder-kidnapping of Jennifer Schweiger, a 12-year-old with Down's syndrome.

Justice Norman J. Felig settled on the trial date after conferring with Assistant District Attorney John Loughrey and defense attorney Jerome V. Giovinazzo on problems presented by the trial.

Among the problems are Loughrey's expectation of calling between 60 and 70 witnesses and the possibility that the trial may last several months.

Meanwhile, Felig put down Aug. 15 for the start of hearings on all pending defense suppression motions. These are challenges to methods employed by police to obtain Rand's identification, audibility hearings on tape recordings of various conversations in which the defendant took part, statements made by Rand to authorities and the seizure of various physical evidence.

Rand, a 43-year-old drifter, was seen walking with the girl near her home in Westerleigh on July 9, the date she disappeared. Witnesses said they saw the two walking hand-in-hand as they continued on a route that took them onto the grounds of the former Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook, about a mile from the girl's home.

A massive search followed the girl's disappearance in which hundreds of volunteers took part. The girl's body was discovered Aug. 12 in a shallow grave a short distance from where police said Rand maintained a campsite.