

700 to get call for Rand jury

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Notices will be placed in the mail tomorrow summoning 700 persons for duty as prospective jurors for the trial of Andre Rand in the kidnap-murder of Jennifer Schweiger, a 12-year-old with Down's syndrome.

The 700 prospective jurors are believed to be the largest number ever called for a criminal trial on Staten Island, said the Division of Jurors of the County Clerk's Office.

County Clerk Mario J. Esposito, who also heads the Island's jury system, said 350 will be instructed to report on Sept. 19 and the balance the following day. The prospective jurors will report on both days at 9:30 a.m. to the central jury room in the County Courthouse, opposite the St. George ferry terminal.

The trial judge, Justice Norman J. Felig, said he hopes to complete selection of a 12-member jury, plus alternate jurors, "in a week or two." The prosecution has indi-

cated that it alone intends to call 60 witnesses, and the trial is expected to span about six weeks.

The record number of prospective jurors is being summoned because of the widespread publicity that the case has received, including during a massive search for the girl's body by hundreds of volunteers, police and others over a period of more than a month.

"Given the notoriety of the case," Felig said, "the majority of those prospective witnesses

called undoubtedly will have some knowledge of the matter."

It will be Felig's task, along with the prosecutor, Assistant District Attorney John Loughrey, and the defense attorney, Jerome V. Giovinazzo, to determine whether whatever information prospective jurors have on the case, together with other factors, will affect their ability to sit as fair and impartial jurors, should they be selected.

Earlier in the pretrial proceedings, Giovinazzo had moved unsuccessfully for a change of venue because of the publicity accorded the case. The Appellate Division, as is its custom, directed jury selection to take place but gave

Giovinazzo permission to renew his motion to shift the trial to another county should there be difficulty in obtaining unbiased jurors.

Felig had favored using the Civil Court in West Brighton for only the jury selection process, contending that one of its courtrooms offered more space than any available in the Supreme Court, enabling him and attorneys to question more prospective jurors at one time and thus speed selection of a jury.

However, other court administrators decided to keep jury selection in the Supreme Court for security and other reasons.

Felig said the decision to keep jury selection in the Supreme Court still does not alter his basic

contention that there are inadequate "accommodations" in the County Courthouse, especially for dealing with large numbers of prospective jurors.

"One of the shortcomings of our facility is that we can't even empanel a jury for a trial to be conducted here," Felig said.