

Witnesses point finger at Rand

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An employee of the former Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook, suggested yesterday that Andre Rand may have taken a roundabout way to reach the center's administration building, if that was his aim, when the witness saw him walking with Jennifer Schweiger on the afternoon of July 9, 1987.

The witness, Judy Newsome, was one of four

center employees who testified yesterday that they observed Rand walking side-by-side with the 12-year-old girl on the center's grounds at about 3 p.m. on that date, the last day she was seen alive. Four more persons also said they saw the two together that afternoon.

The eight witnesses raised to 10 the number of prosecution witnesses who have testified at Rand's Supreme Court trial that they saw Jennifer walking



Andre Rand is led out of court after a number of witnesses pointed him out as the man they saw walking with Jennifer Schweiger on July 9, 1987. ADVANCE PHOTOS/FRANK J. JOHNS

with an older man, beginning at 2 p.m. about a block from her home in Westerleigh and continuing along a route of some 28 blocks where they were observed entering the center's grounds. One witness said he last saw the two walking in the direction of a campsite that Rand maintained in a wooded area in the middle of the institution's 380-acre site.

Justice Norman J. Felig on charges that he kidnapped and murdered the girl, who had Down's syndrome. Her decomposed body was found Aug. 12 in a grave about 100 yards south of Rand's campsite.

Ms. Newsome's observation was made in response to a question put to her under cross-examination by Rand's lawyer, Jerome V. Giovinazzo, and went to the defense's contention that Rand believed Jennifer may have been a resident of the center and wandered off, and he decided to escort her back. Giovinazzo maintained that his client intended to take Jennifer to the administration building, but the two became separated before they reached it and did not see each other again.

Ms. Newsome, together with two fellow employees, Linda Russ and Beverly Jackson, said they were seated at a window in the cafeteria of Building 17 having lunch at 3 p.m. when Rand walked slowly past the window with Jennifer, pushing his olive-green, girl-style bicycle. The bicycle was admitted into evidence by the judge.

The center employees all said they knew Rand from having seen him about the center and in the company of a resident, Barry Simmons. They said the girl wore her hair in pigtails and carried a yellow shoulder bag.

The witnesses said Rand walked in the direction of Building 26, a vacant building nearby. The testimony of the witnesses, as well as earlier witnesses, indicated Rand was familiar with the grounds.

"If you wanted to go to the administration building, how would you do it?" Giovinazzo asked Ms. Newsome.

A. "You would have to go all the way around and then you go down the block."

The judge: "Building 26?"

Q. "And that would be quite a distance would it be not?"



Floyd Muse



Rhonda Romano



Jeffrey Mulligan