

2/26/88

Tuesday, February 26, 1988

Link To East Area Rapist Probed In Couples' Slaying

By Wayne Wilson
Bee Staff Writer

Sheriff's detectives in Sacramento and Santa Barbara are investigating the possibility that the killing of a Goleta Valley orthopedic surgeon and his psychological girlfriend was committed by the East Area rapist, The Bee's staff writer said.

The victims, Drs. Robert J. Offerman, 44, and Debra A. Manning, 35, were found shot to death in the bedroom of Offerman's Santa Barbara County condominium on Sunday, Dec. 30, according to Santa Barbara Sheriff's Sgt. William Baker.

Baker would not be specific, but he said there were "some things" about the killings and other robberies and burglaries in the vicinity that seem to go "beyond mere coincidence" as they compare with the East Area rapist activities in Sacramento.

Detectives in Sacramento reported to Santa Barbara Sheriff's Sgt. James D. Beverly was dispatched to Santa Barbara last week to compare reports with the Santa Barbara detective investigating the crime, said sheriff's spokesman Bill Miller.

"It looked very much like the same MO (method of operation), but not enough far out to jump up and say it's the same guy," Miller said. "Some people feel stronger than others, but nobody can say that they feel definitely it's the same guy."

Miller said investigators in Sacramento would be meeting soon to discuss the developments in Santa Barbara, but there had not been a "consolidated meeting" on the matter as of Monday.

Information that a similarity existed between the methods of operation of the Goleta Valley killer and the East Area rapist originally came from the California State Department of Justice, Miller said.

If the Santa Barbara killings were committed by the same man believed to be responsible for some 44 sexual assaults in Northern California, it would mean that law enforcement's worst fears concerning the rapist had come to pass.

On May 17, 1977, the rapist told his 31st victim and her husband that he would kill her next two victims.

The attacks continued without a fatality, but psychologists and psychiatrists at the time released a psychological profile of the rapist indicating that he was a "probable paranoid schizotypic" who might be violent or self-destructive if threatened.

And his assaults had become more and more bold as he chided his pursuers. The rapist's earlier attacks came against women who were either alone in their homes or who had small children. Later, his attacks involved couples.

In September 1977, the rapist struck in Stockton before returning to Sacramento for a series of seven more assaults.

Then, after one final Sacramento attack on April 14, 1978, his 39th in the city and county, the rapist apparently moved his base of operations to other Northern California localities.

Subsequent assaults occurred in Modesto, Davis, Concord, San Ramon and Danville.

Only two of the rapist's first 44 victims reported being injured — a

Sacramento woman who suffered minor cuts and a Davis woman who was hospitalized after being beaten into submission — but many detectives believe a third person belongs on the wounded list — a Groveton rapist who was shot in the stomach Feb. 18, 1977, by a prosecutor and his father chased from their backyard.

Up to that time, the rapist had displayed a knack to accomplish his attacks: He began using a gun shortly with the shooting incident.

In his attacks against couples, which involved more than 15 husbands and girlfriends, the rapist tied the men in bed, placed officers on their backs to alert him of any movement by the men, then led the women to other parts of the house or apartment to commit the sexual acts.

The double killing in Santa Barbara occurred at about 3 a.m. Dec. 30, according to Santa Barbara County coroner's reports. That was the rapist's favorite time for attacks.

Neighbors heard the substance, Baker said, but did not report them, thinking they were holiday firecrackers.

The bodies were found later that morning by a friend of Offerman's who had come to pick him up for a weekend date, Baker said.

Offerman was in the process of dissolving his marriage, and Manning had been granted a final divorce on the Friday before the killings, authorities said.

Offerman had been in practice as an orthopedic surgeon in Santa Barbara since 1968. Manning practiced in clinical psychology, yes based in near by Santa Maria.

Homecoming

By Ted Bell
Bee Staff Writer

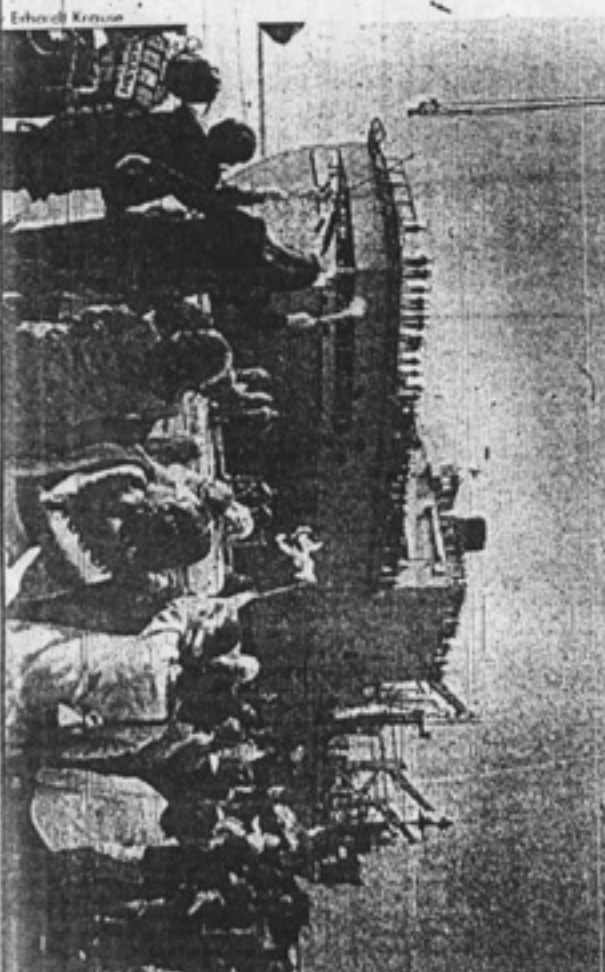
ABOARD USS WABASH — A U.S. Navy ship tied up in Alameda Monday, becoming the first ship to return home from the carrier battle groups

- 1. home from the carrier battle groups
- 2. to be proving in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean since the Iranian crisis began
- 3. Families and friends
- 4. began
- 5. welcomed their welcome and fire-
- 6. boats thundered tons of water sky-
- 7. ward in honor.
- 8. "I love it!" shouted a sailor aboard
- 9. the older USS Wabash. "Look at that
- 10. jam, jam, jam, and everything! It's
- 11. home!"

A few yards down the ship's parked rails, some of his mates laughed as they restrained another sailor as he



mentally tense at-sea replenishments during a normal Pacific deployment. The crew got 190 under their belts after six months and came home after posting 231 such operations. Despite the heavy work schedules and prolonged high-speed steaming, the sailors and officers said morale was the highest they had seen, and they had amusing and chilling stories to tell.



Edward Kruse