

Inside a Seaside apartment, a gruesome scene

Prosecutors believe toddler and her brothers were tortured

By Kyle Spurr
EO Media Group

In the months before Evangelina Wing was murdered, prosecutors believe the 2-year-old and her brothers were tortured, burned, bitten and caged in the Seaside apartment their mother shared with a boyfriend.

Blood spatter was found in almost every corner, staining holiday decorations and the wall behind a Christmas tree.

The gruesome scene uncovered when the toddler was found dead in December 2014 is being described as among the worst child-abuse cases in Clatsop County.

Randy Lee Roden, 28, the live-in boyfriend of Dorothy Wing, the children's mother, is accused of torturing and murdering Evangelina Wing. An autopsy found the toddler apparently died from blunt-force trauma.

Roden is also accused of abusing the two brothers, Patrick Wing, now 3, and Peydon Kahclamat-Harding, now 7. The boys are living with family in California.

A two-day hearing in early April in Clatsop County Circuit Court addressed the defense lawyers' request to dismiss the case or at least exclude evidence, including the adult-sized bite marks found on the three children, the blood spatter in the apartment and the use of the term "torture."

Many of the defense lawyers' tactics were viewed by prosecutors as Hail Mary attempts to throw out the case before the trial begins in September.

"The defense wants to sanitize this case," Clatsop Coun-



Defense attorney Conor Huseby leads Randy Roden away after a hearing at Clatsop County Courthouse in February 2015.

ty Chief Deputy District Attorney Ron Brown said. "We need those details."

Judge Paula Brownhill said she will take the arguments and testimony into consideration and make a ruling within the next few weeks.

Roden, who is facing the death penalty if convicted, watched the hearing via video link from prison, where he is serving an eight-year sentence for violating probation from a previous domestic violence conviction. At one point, he became agitated with defense lawyers Conor Huseby and Robert Axford, and had to be muted.

"I can't believe you are flipping a coin and throwing my life away," he said.

Expert testimony

The prosecution called five expert witnesses: Clatsop County Medical Examiner JoAnn Giuliani; Deputy State Medical Examiner Clifford Nelson; Oregon State Police forensic scientist Chrystal Bell; Cathleen Lang, who

Roden's lawyers are basing their case on their expert's claims that the children's injuries were from a dangerous flesh-eating virus.

specializes in child abuse pediatrics; and Richard Fixott, a forensic odontologist.

The defense did not call any witnesses, claiming their expert — Janice Ophoven, a pediatric forensic pathologist — was unavailable. Roden's lawyers are basing their case on Ophoven's claims that the children's injuries were from a dangerous flesh-eating virus known as methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus infection. She says the toddler likely died from complications of the infection, rather than from blunt-force trauma. The two brothers also showed signs of the infection, she said.

Because signs of the infection were never investigated, the defense wants Roden's case dismissed.

"In failing to do any meaningful testing to confirm the presence of a massive and deadly bacterial infection in this case, the state has failed Mr. Roden and put his life in jeopardy," his lawyers wrote in a court filing.

Graphic evidence

At the hearing, state experts said the infection was present on the children, but did not account for the physical abuse and broken bones. Court documents reveal Evangelina Wing was found with injuries around her entire body, including two black eyes, a broken arm, bruises over her entire face and chest and hemorrhaging around her head. Patrick Wing had a broken bone in his pelvic region and extensive bruising. Peydon Kahclamat-Harding made statements to doctors about

people lighting paper on fire in his nose and ears.

"The defense has a novel theory that Evangelina Wing's death was caused by MRSA," prosecutors wrote in a court document. "This is made up from whole cloth. They are trying to whitewash the terrible physical evidence that exists."

Peydon, who was 5 at the time, told investigators "they chained him and locked him in a cage like a dog." Investigators found a metal bed frame that was barred on the sides in the hallway, and possibly used as a cage. In addition, investigators believe the crawl space in the apartment may have been used to trap the children.

Chrystal Bell, who documented the bloodstain evidence at the scene, testified there was blood spatter in every room, including on holiday decorations and on the wall behind a Christmas tree. The findings told her the blood was in flight and likely came from people of "shorter stature."

Bell said the spatter in the bathroom was not consistent with a story Roden told police about Evangelina falling from the toilet onto a child's plastic potty.

Prosecutors say the case relies heavily on the graphic evidence and expert opinion, since there are no eyewitnesses other than the children and defendants.

Dorothy Wing, 26, pleaded guilty earlier this year to first-degree manslaughter and two counts of first-degree criminal mistreatment. She was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison, contingent on her truthfully testifying at Roden's trial.

The prosecution believes the evidence points to Roden, while the defense says it points to Wing.

Both Roden and Wing told investigators about incidents where Evangelina fell coming from a bus stop, fell off of a toilet and got in tussles with her brothers. Before her sentencing, Wing said, she wished she never left her children with Roden.

Intellectually disabled?

Roden has pleaded not guilty to 15 charges. He is accused of aggravated murder for the intentional maiming or torture of the toddler and having a pattern and practice of assault.

His defense lawyers argued at the hearing this week that he does not qualify for the death penalty because he is intellectually disabled. They explained how the Georgia native was held back in grade school and never graduated high school. When he lived with Dorothy Wing, the defense said, he gave her his money because he was unable to pay bills on time and handle his finances.

The defense said he always relied on Wing, and did not know the children needed medical attention.

"The defendant in this case suffers from an inability to function in day-to-day life," the lawyers wrote.

If Roden was mentally disabled, the prosecutors said, they would agree he would not be eligible for the death penalty. But prosecutors do not believe he is mentally disabled.

Prosecutors noted he did poorly in school because of his bad behavior and delinquency. As an adult, they say, he held a high-paying job working on bridges, including the Astoria Bridge.

"He was a user (of women)," Deputy District Attorney Dawn Buzzard said. "That's how he was able to get by."

SEASIDE POLICE LOG

March 25
12:50 a.m., 400 block Second Avenue: Caller reports a man making his way down the street kicking cars. Officers are unable to locate the subject.

3:23 a.m., 700 block Avenue S: Caller reports two subjects rifling through garbage behind a store. Officers are unable to locate subjects.

11:37 p.m., N. Roosevelt: Caller reported to police "creepy people with kids" hanging out by the outlet mall. Police responded, and found nothing unusual.

March 26
8:53 a.m. UNK: Police receive a 911 call that was apparently a pocket dial. Male and female voices, it was noted, were "chatting away." On call back, voice mail was not set up.

10:06 p.m. N. Promenade: Teens reported drinking and making a ruckus dispersed before police arrived.

March 27
10:44 p.m., N. Holladay Drive: A confused elderly person was given a ride back to their residence by patrolling police officers.

11:32 p.m., N. Roosevelt Drive: Officers responding to a complaint about some people having a loud verbal altercation; subjects were told to gather up their belongings and hit the road.

March 28
8:44 p.m., The Cove: A loose dog running on the beach was brought to the police and lodged in the kennel.

March 29
12:44 a.m., Duane Street: An individual sought on a warrant was arrested.

5:08 p.m., S. Columbia and Avenue G: Caller reports a pickup truck with a trailer blocking the view of a stop sign; police arriving at the area decided the truck was legally parked.

March 30
9:38 a.m., Broadway: Caller advises police she has been inside a store 15 minutes and no attendant or store employee is present. A cell phone is lying on the business's counter. Responsible party is contacted by police and advised.

10:00 a.m., Holladay Drive: Caller wants police to know about a

person who is throwing garbage in somebody else's cans. The complainant about person is contacted and advised.

1:12 p.m., S. Holladay: Caller reports people living in a crawl space.

15:21 p.m., S. Columbia: A man yelling at his dog is reported to the police by a caller who said a man was yelling at a woman. Police responding to the call said only a man and his dog were on scene.

March 31
1:00 a.m., Turnaround: A large noisy party on the beach was asked to keep it down.

8:38 a.m., Fifth and Necanicum: Some people sleeping in their RV were advised of the No Camping laws within the city limits.

11:53 a.m., S. Holladay: Caller reports a woman sitting at the end of a private driveway who did not seem to be in distress; officers made contact with the woman who said she would get moving.

7:30 p.m., Highway 101: Seaside police assist Gearhart police on an intoxicated person call.

7:37 p.m., N. Holladay Drive: Mother reports son has not come home at the designated time; son is located shortly after at the Astoria Column.

April 1
2:47 p.m., Avenue A: An elderly man reported to be having a problem driving was reported by a caller to the police. Police were unable to locate the man and there was no evidence of his trouble driving.

7:06 p.m., 600 block Broadway: Caller reports an intoxicated woman stumbling around in traffic; police were unable to locate the person.

7:37 p.m., Broadway: Caller reports a couple of kids smoking marijuana. Officers were unable to find them.

11:14 p.m., 800 block 12th Avenue: Homeowner reports people in his home who do not belong there. Police find an extremely intoxicated individual who didn't understand what was going on or why he'd been reported.

April 2
3:54 a.m., Napa: An individual received a warning to move and

not camp within city limits.

5:30 a.m., Cove parking lot: Multiple people were warned they could not camp within city limits.

7:25 a.m., South Y: Subjects were warned against illegal lodging.

April 3
16:10 p.m., Ninth Avenue: Caller reports through a third party the sound of gun shot; police following up say the complaint was unfounded.

7:51 p.m., N. Holladay Drive: A caller to the station asked to speak to a police officer regarding information the caller wished to share.

April 4
12:42 a.m., N. Holladay Drive: Police respond to a possibly suicidal subject. No further information given.

11:58 a.m., S. Prom: Police receive information from a caller about a possible video surveillance of a suspicious person in

the neighborhood where there have been multiple bike thefts.

4:04 p.m., 12th Avenue: Caller reports finding a hypodermic needle. Officers search the area to no avail.

April 5
1:44 a.m., 1st and Roosevelt: Police give a courtesy ride to a person en route to their hotel.

2:17 a.m., 200 block Broadway: An intoxicated person is given a courtesy ride by police back to their lodging.

9:13 p.m., S. Lincoln: Caller asks police to do a welfare check on his wife who he has been unable to contact for 6 days. Police go to the residence and see the woman moving around inside the house but she refused to answer the door. The caller is notified of this.

April 6
6:07 a.m., N. Wahanna: A person who contacted the police to search the premises after

discovering a door had been ajar all night was relieved to learn nothing was missing and there was no sign of a break in.

2:31 p.m. Third Avenue: Caller reports possible domestic violence overheard over the phone when talking to a client. Police checking learn a wife was hollering at her husband about a pile of items about to topple over. No crime was committed.

4:54 p.m., Broadway and Holladay: Caller reports two small

children riding around loose in the back of a pickup truck. Police are unable to locate the vehicle.

April 7
11:58 a.m. Broadway and Edgewood: Caller reports concern for a dog locked in a vehicle. Police check on the dog, which seems fine. Police will return to recheck the dog's condition.

12:17 p.m., Avenue B: A report of an assault is added to the police log. No further information was given.




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