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Guilty

says he did it 'wrong,' he says 25-to-life sentence



David Berkowitz the day he was arrested

in the other five Son of Sam killings before Corso in the case. Berkowitz stood before the Court Justice William Kappeler similar guilty pleas in the Donna Lauria, 18, on July 29, Martina Suriani, 18, and Alexander April 1, 1977. All three were killed and were murdered in that

was expected to plead guilty to Son of Sam killings, which occurs early in the afternoon. The second of two extraordinary security measures revealed to a shocked courtroom

that Berkowitz had claimed credit for setting 2,000 fires in New York City since 1974. He said a spot check of the claims, contained in Berkowitz' diaries, revealed that the fires had occurred.

Sentencing for Berkowitz in the first four murders was set for May 22.

Berkowitz, dressed in a blue suit and white open-neck shirt, was handcuffed when he was brought into the courtroom.

With the handcuffs removed, Berkowitz stood before Corso and answered a long series of questions designed to determine if he understood the consequences of his plea.

"Do you know the penalty for second-degree murder?" Corso asked.

"Twenty-five years to life," Berkowitz

answered in a clear, firm voice.

After about 25 minutes of questioning, Corso granted Berkowitz' request that he be allowed to change his plea to guilty from innocent by reason of insanity. A minute later, the court clerk asked if he was pleading guilty, and at 10:32 a.m., Berkowitz said, "Yes."

The plea was to a charge of second-degree murder for killing Miss Moskowitz and first-degree assault in the wounding of her date, Violante.

Justice Kappelman led Berkowitz through a similar series of questions in the Bronx killings.

Leon Stern and Ira Jultak, attorneys for Berkowitz, made it clear to Corso that their

client's plea was contrary to their advice.

"It is considered judgment of counsel that he is incompetent and we take exception of your finding of competent," Stern told Corso.

Among those witnessing Berkowitz' appearance were Jerry and Neysa Moskowitz, parents of the killer's last victim in a night-time murder spree that lasted one year and two days.

Also present were Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lauria, parents of Donna Lauria, Son of Sam's first victim on July 29, 1976.

Berkowitz was led into the courtroom as extraordinary security existed throughout the 11-story courthouse.

and Laetrile

er Laetrile. However, Schachter does not believe his progress is so satisfactory that he need the intensive treatments any longer, Schachter said Friday in an interview. He said he has reduced the amount of Laetrile the youngster has been receiving by 75 percent after noticing indications that the disease was going into remission.

The boy's parents, who recently moved to New Jersey, have been battling for months to refuse conventional treatment such as chemotherapy in favor of a natural program, which includes Laetrile.

The boy was stricken last fall with leukemia, his parents refused to follow doctors' advice to start chemotherapy and instead took him to Jamaica for natural treatments. Upon returning, local officials and the state began a court battle to force chemotherapy.



En route to oil rig

Atlantic copter crash kills 2, injures 3

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — The search for oil and natural gas off the East Coast produced its first fatalities when a helicopter crashed into the chilly Atlantic on a flight to an offshore drilling rig.

The helicopter's co-pilot and a federal drilling inspector were killed and three people were injured Sunday when the twin-engine aircraft crashed and capsized in 42-degree waters about 40 miles east of Atlantic City. They were flying to Shell Oil's semi-submersible drilling rig, the Western Pacesetter II, about 70 miles off the coast.

A Coast Guard helicopter plucked the survivors from a rubber raft and flew

them to the Atlantic City Medical Center in nearby Pomona.

Authorities said Coast Guard divers recovered the dead from inside the helicopter, which floated upside down just below the surface.

Officials of Petroleum Helicopters Inc. of Lafayette, La., which owned the 19-passenger, French-built Puma helicopter blamed the crash on a mechanical malfunction but said they did not know the exact cause.

The pilot "was having problems so he tried to set it down in the water," Carl

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Tests negative — Cancer outbreak still a mystery

RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Medical detectives using radiation, water and soil tests have found no apparent cause for a cluster of 32 cancer cases discovered here, state officials have reported.

Stewart G. Pollock, counsel to Gov. Brendan T. Byrne, and Dr. Peter W. Preuss, a state special assistant on cancer in toxic substances, made the disclosures during the weekend.

"We asked all of the people monitoring to let us know immediately if some unusual substance or agent were present or some unusual concentration were present," Preuss said. "We have not gotten any information like that."

Two killed in crash

A Coast Guard rescue helicopter hovers over a partially submerged oil rig copter that crashed into the ocean Sunday off Atlantic City, N.J. Two persons were killed and three injured.—AP Photo

Nursing home report says officials win, patients lose

NEW YORK (AP) — Special Prosecutor Charles J. Hynes says state and local officials helped a group of nursing home operators make almost \$3 million off Medicaid and the sale of a nursing home development they had built in Broome County.

Hynes, whose office investigated the Willow Point Nursing Home and the Health Related Facility, said his probe of the 342-bed facility "reveals shockingly exorbitant profits flowing into the hands of private businessmen" with a corresponding loss of service and care for the aged.

Hynes made no criminal accusations, but he recommended that the report be cir-

culated to various authorities for possible disciplinary or other action.

He said official malfeasance in the case took the form of an illegal secret agreement at public expense, close dealings between public officials and the business interests without concern for taxpayers' rights, inflated costs and dereliction of duty that resulted in a nearly \$2.2 million Medicaid loss.

"Cronyism, indifference, negligence or worse, on the part of public officials, can bring about the same unfortunate results as criminal or civil fraud, he said.

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Invalids' solitude filled by trio of angel guardians

By JAMES ELLISON
Staff Writer

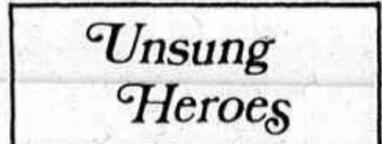
Think of Morris Abramowitz, Esther Seif and Margaret Mercurio as "angels." George Stutz and Sarah Lobel do.

For in the Pelham Parkway section of the Bronx, the three "angels" — Angel Guardians for the Elderly, that is — are helping their fellow senior citizens get over the obstacles they face every day as invalids.

"The few bright spots in my day are the shopping they do for me, the meals they bring me and their visits," said Stutz.

"They're my only visitors," said Mrs. Lobel.

Angel Guardians for the Elderly (AGE for short) is a non-profit organization founded five years ago by Pete Crescenti,



a Yonkers resident. "It's really heart warming to see what a visit from one of our aides can do for a person," he said. "Very often, it's all that a senior has to look forward to."

The AGE workers arrange transportation and outings for shut-ins, make sure that those who are unable to cook for themselves get meals regularly or shop for gro-

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GEORGE STUTZ, PETE CRESCENTI (INSET) AND ESTHER SEIF
Crescenti's program aids the elderly

