

'Cold-case' killer gets life without parole, reaches out to victim's family

Detroit News, The (MI) - Friday, August 8, 2008

Author: Christina Stolarz and Candace Begody / The Detroit News

'Cold-case' killer gets life without parole, reaches out to victim's family

By Christina Stolarz and Candace Begody

The Detroit News

MOUNT CLEMENS — Convicted kidnapper and killer Arthur Ream told a packed courtroom today that he didn't rape **Cindy Zarzycki**, but he didn't deny killing her more than two decades ago.

"Not everything is the way it seems," said Ream, 59, who was sentenced today to life in prison without parole. "I did not touch her in any sexual way. I know they (**Cindy's** family) have no reason to believe me."

Ream said he'd take any type of lie-detector tests to confirm, and also reached out to **Cindy's** father, Edward **Zarzycki**, for permission to write him from prison to disclose the details surrounding the incident. **Cindy** disappeared on April 20, 1986 from an Eastpointe Dairy Queen.

"Maybe it would help us both if he knew everything," Ream said.

It's the first time Ream spoke since the start of his estimated week-long murder trial; a Macomb County jury found him guilty of first-degree premeditated murder on June 18, although a body was never found.

Ream's defense attorney, Timothy Kohler, said he planned to file a motion for a new trial.

Authorities didn't offer Ream a deal even though he led investigators to a 22-acre wooded Macomb Township site last month where remains were found that are believed to belong to **Cindy**.

While the bones were determined to be consistent with those of a teenage Caucasian girl, DNA testing is being conducted at the University of West Texas to make a positive identification.

"It was very important they learned of that," Judge Mary Chrzanowski told Ream, referring to his decision to divulge the location of **Cindy's** body. "That indeed put a final closure to **Cindy's** life. It took a big man to do that because you didn't have to.

"But, the sad part about this case is that we're never going to know the truth. The truth is what the jury said and we have to live with that."

Ream's sentencing closes another chapter for family and friends of **Cindy** who've searched, waited and prayed for her and answers to her April 20, 1986 disappearance. They were relieved that a Macomb County jury declared on June 18 that **Cindy** was dead – and not simply a runaway – when they found Ream guilty without a body.

The relief continued when Ream led authorities to **Cindy's** shallow grave on a wooded riverbank.

And while relatives are waiting for confirmation that the remains are indeed **Cindy's**, they're confident because several items, including a purse, necklace and homemade cassette tapes, were found with the remains.

Circuit Judge Mary Chrzanowski's courtroom was full Thursday of **Cindy's** family and friends. **Cindy's** sister, Connie Johnson, addressed the court.

"I speak on her behalf today," said Johnson, of Howell. "The defendant's cruel and evil actions took away her voice and her civil rights – her right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Johnson asked Chrzanowski to give Ream life in prison because "he's shown no regret, no remorse.

"He must pay for his actions."

Prosecutors allege Ream got to know **Cindy** after she formed a relationship with his son, Scott. They say Ream fabricated an invitation to a fictitious surprise birthday party for Scott to lure her to the ice cream shop. However, Scott's birthday was in January, nearly four months earlier than the alleged abduction, Macomb County Assistant Prosecutor Steve Kaplan said.

Ream, who didn't testify during the trial, is serving a prison sentence in the West Shoreline Correctional Facility in Muskegon County on an unrelated molestation charge.

You can reach Christina Stolarz at (586) 468-0343 or cstolarz@detnews.com.

Edition: Online

Section: Metro

Record Number: det24593707

Copyright (c) The Detroit News. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of Gannett Co., Inc. by NewsBank, inc.