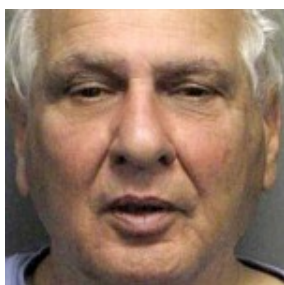


Prosecutors link murderer to Tahoe woman

By Gary Klien, Marin Independent Journal

Joseph Naso, the 79-year-old man convicted last week of murdering and dumping four women in the 1970s and '90s, is also the prime suspect in the murder of a former Lake Tahoe woman who was found in Tiburon in 1981, prosecutors disclosed in court Wednesday.

Sharileea Patton was 56 when her body washed ashore near the former Tiburon Naval Net Depot off Paradise Drive. She had been strangled and placed inside two plastic garbage bags.



Joseph Naso

The reason the case is surfacing now is because prosecutors want to include Patton's murder as even more evidence why Naso should receive the death penalty. Prosecutors are asking Judge Andrew Sweet to let them present evidence about other alleged Naso sex crimes that were excluded from the trial, including the Patton case.

The jury that convicted Naso returns to court next week to decide on his sentence. Naso argued that the jury should not be allowed to hear about the Patton investigation because the allegations cannot be proved.

Investigators found a Naso diary that mentioned a woman with

references to Leavenworth, Lake Tahoe and the Los Angeles area.

Patton – who also used the last names Heckert, Duvalle and Withrow – was a former resident of the Los Angeles area and worked for the county sheriff's department. She later moved to Lake Tahoe, but a few weeks before her death, she relocated to the Bay Area in search of work.

Naso was arrested in South Lake Tahoe in April 2011 on the murder charges out of Marin County. He had been in custody on unrelated charges.

In 2010 Naso spent a year in El Dorado County jail for a probation violation. In 2008 he had been convicted of committing a burglary in South Lake Tahoe.

Lake Tahoe News contributed to this report.