

Wine Called Real Demon In Slaying

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DANBURY — For months before the start of the "Brookfield Demons" murder trial, the talk was all about the "devil possession" defense of Arne Cheyenne Johnson — a defense proponents said would prove that the 19-year-old Johnson was innocent of stabbing his best friend.

While defense lawyers talked about exorcisms and evil spirits, police and state prosecutors disclosed little about their case against Johnson.

They called it "a routine murder" and "an open-and-shut case," and they scoffed at demonic involvement.

The defense was handed a major setback Oct. 28 last week when Judge Robert J. Callahan announced he would not allow defense lawyers to argue that Johnson was possessed by demons.

And last week, prosecutors asserted that wine — not demons — was at the root of the February stabbing of Alan Bono, 40, outside the dog kennel he managed in Brookfield.

The state contends Johnson and Bono had been drinking heavily, argued over Johnson's girlfriend, Debbie Glatzel, 26, and ended up fighting. Prosecutors say Johnson stabbed Bono and then fled through the woods.

Prosecutors are expected to continue presenting their case Tuesday, taking most of the week to complete it.

Defense lawyers maintain that Bono — not Johnson — had been drinking and that the state's evidence is flimsy.

Defense lawyer Martin Minnella still hopes to persuade Callahan to allow presentation of evidence of demon possession to explain his client's actions.

According to testimony, Johnson was at the Mug 'N' March Cafe on the afternoon of Feb. 16, when a waitress said she served him and Bono three carafes of red wine. With them were Glatzel and three members of their families.

By late afternoon, the group was back at the apartment Johnson and Glatzel shared on the kennel grounds. Sometime after 6 p.m., a neighbor heard loud noises and saw two unidentified people run out of the couple's apartment toward Bono, who stood near the kennel. At 6:40 p.m., police and an ambulance driver arrived to find Bono lying face up, with four "half-moon shaped" stab wounds below his rib cage.

Over the objections of Minnella, Callahan allowed the jury to hear Leo J. Hengstler, the ambulance driver, recount what he heard when he arrived to find the dying Bono, Glatzel and her father near the body.

"Oh Daddy, he didn't mean to do it," Hengstler said a distraught Debbie Glatzel kept repeating. "You know how he gets when he's been drinking."

While Hengstler stayed with Bono, Brookfield Patrolman Joseph Lamparelli went with Glatzel's brother, Carl, down a tree-lined path after Johnson. "Cheyenne did it," Lamparelli said Carl Glatzel told him. Although he did not find Johnson, the officer said he did find a wood-handled knife police believe is the murder weapon.

Police arrested Johnson around 7 p.m.

Prosecutors are relying heavily on the testimony of those who saw Johnson Feb. 16 and on statements members of the Glatzel and Johnson families gave immediately after the stabbing.

Minnella has said there will be "conflicting testimony" between the state's family members gave to police and what they will testify to in court.

Members of the Johnson and Glatzel families have yet to testify.

Johnson, said Minnella, does not remember what happened Feb. 16. Debbie Glatzel said outside the courtroom this week she does not recall saying what Hengstler testified he overheard and that she might have been referring

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