

CAPITOLA HOMICIDE

Robbery charge to be added to homicide

Defense attorney to ask for a delay in entering a plea

By **STEPHEN BAXTER**

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SANTA CRUZ — A new charge of robbery will be added to murder allegations against Marcos Robert Chavez in court today in the slaying of 36-year-old paramedic student Aaron Carpenter, according to court documents.

Capitola police arrested Chavez on Dec. 11 at his studio apartment on the 3200 block of

Virgil Lane in Capitola on suspicion of Carpenter's murder.

Chavez's attorney, Jerry Vinluan, said he expected to appear in court with Chavez on Thursday and will ask to delay entering a plea because information is still being gathered in the case.

Carpenter died from a slash to his jugular vein and carotid artery, according to a coroner's report.

Prosecutors alleged that a knife and a cloth-

ing iron were used as deadly weapons.

Carpenter was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army after an injury. Carpenter was a student at Cabrillo College who did work-study at the Santa Cruz County Vets Center on 41st Avenue in Capitola.

Prosecutor Celia Rowland declined to comment on how Carpenter and Chavez met and the circumstances of the alleged murder and



Marcos Chavez served in Afghanistan as a member of the U.S. Marines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SEE ROBBERY ON B2

ROBBERY

Continued from B1

robbery.

Christie Chavez, the mother of 23-year-old Marcos Chavez, said Marcos Chavez had been a sergeant in the U.S. Marines and returned from Afghanistan in late 2010. He moved to Capitola around January 2011 to attend Cabrillo and complete about four more years of reserve military duty. Christie Chavez said her son's arrest was a shock. She thought it was a hoax at first when a detective called.

Marcos "was a good guy out there trying to do something productive. We're as mystified as everyone else," Christie Chavez said Wednesday. "It's been the most devastating thing that you can imagine for me and my family."

Christie Chavez said Marcos Chavez looked "shaken" when she visited him in County Jail on Saturday.

"He looked like someone who had been through a horrible, horrible trauma — like someone who had been in a horrible car crash," she said.

Marcos had no criminal record in Santa Cruz County.

He was born at Dominican Hospital in 1988. His family

lived in Capitola until he was about 12 months old when the family moved to Bend, Ore. He has two older half brothers and a younger sister.

At age 12, the family moved again to Oroville, north of Sacramento. He attended Oroville High School and graduated from Challenge Charter High School, Christie said.

Marcos liked to ride BMX and was more comfortable one-on-one with friends rather than with a big group, she said. Marcos was looking for a way to pay for college when he joined the military, she said.

Marcos chose the Marines because he wanted to challenge himself and be prepared

for combat if the situation arose, Christie Chavez said.

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