

Vero Man Sentenced In Shooting of Friend

By ANNE KRUEGER

Post Staff Writer

VERO BEACH — Looking like he was ready to go to Disco Dom's, 35-year-old Arthur Arndt yesterday was sentenced to 15 years in prison for the murder of his best friend, Angelo Mole.

The top of his shirt was unbuttoned to reveal a heavy cross pendant. His gray suit and neatly trimmed beard fit right in with the disco look.

Mole's father sat in the front row of seats in the courtroom, staring intently at the man who pleaded guilty to second degree murder in the death of his 34-year-old son Dec. 3.

Circuit Court Judge Royce Lewis told Arndt he understood the tragedy.

"This, of course, was a tragic incident involving the death of an individual who I understand was your best friend. It's a case of carrying a firearm. You wouldn't be here if you hadn't been carrying a gun that night," Judge Lewis said.

Arndt must serve a minimum of three years in prison before he will be considered for parole. He has already served 62 days in the county jail.

Circuit Court Judge Royce Lewis told Arthur Arndt he understood the tragedy. "This, of course, was a tragic incident involving the death of an individual who . . . was your best friend . . . You wouldn't be here if you hadn't been carrying a gun that night."

"Deadly Dom's," they jokingly call the beach bar now.

The usual crowd was at Disco Dom's Thursday night. The murder in front of the building doesn't appear to have decreased the number of customers at Vero Beach's only disco.

Employees clam up when questioned about the murder. That's in the past, they say. We just want to forget it. It's just where Arndt happened to end up the night he shot Mole.

A few couples dance to the music of Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive."

Monday, Arndt told Lewis he didn't believe he was guilty of second degree murder, but feared he would be found guilty of at least manslaughter. Since both carry

the same sentence, he pleaded guilty to avoid a trial.

Arndt, an unemployed dry wall hanger, is divorced, with five children ranging in age from 10 to 18. He discussed the plea with his sister before appearing in court, he told Lewis.

Mole's father was in the courtroom then, in the same front row seat. He had to be quieted by Bailiff Dan Fleischmann after jerking forward and muttering during Arndt's plea.

As Arndt walked by him, Mole shook his fist at him.

"You'll pay for this," he said, following Arndt out of the courtroom.

Mole's voice grew louder once out of the courtroom. He stood by the stairway while Arndt walked down. Mole's wife tried to restrain him.

"Remember this fact!" he said as he ran after Arndt down the stairs.

"Disco seems to bring people out to touching each other," says Domenic Mancini, owner of Disco Dom's. The change to disco last September has brought out a wider age group with a better style of dress to the bar, Mancini said.

"There's a happier spirit in the room since we went disco," he said.

Mancini doesn't disco himself.

"I love to dance, but I don't have the time anymore," Mancini said.

He doesn't like to talk about the murder there.

Arndt, Mole, and Mole's girlfriend Diane Barrett were at Disco Dom's together Dec. 3. They had gone there after stopping off at Rick's Dugout.

Arndt got into an argument with another customer. After Mole intervened, the two went outside in front of the bar. After a brief scuffle, Mole was shot in the neck, with the bullet going through his brain.

He was pronounced dead an hour later at Indian River Memorial Hospital.