

Judge considers lower bond in murder case

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A judge heard arguments Thursday at a bond reduction hearing for a Geneva County man charged with beating his girlfriend to death, along with severely assaulting her friend and setting fire to the friend's home afterward.



Phenico Hornsby

Geneva County District Attorney Kirke Adams told the court Phenico "Phenix" Hornsby remained a flight risk more than a year after the murder. Hornsby, 43, of Bellwood, was charged with killing Jewel Bingham on June 28, 2007. He was also charged

Your opinion

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with inflicting the injuries Caria Lick suffered, which included blunt force trauma to the face, head and the rest of her body.

He has been held on a \$300,000 bond since his arrest four days after the murder.

"The nature of these crimes in this case justify the bond that's been set," Adams said. "It's not like Mr. Hornsby turned himself in. There was a four-day manhunt. They found him in Covington County."

See **BOND, 4A**

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Bond

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Hornsby faces a string of charges including murder, attempted murder, first-degree arson, first-degree theft of property, third-degree burglary, second-degree assault, misdemeanor third-degree theft of property and misdemeanor criminal trespassing.

"All the alleged crimes are

connected," Adams said. "The property crimes are alleged to have occurred while he was on the run from law enforcement."

Adams said no trial date has been set. He said the prosecution is waiting for lab reports to be completed in the case.

Hornsby and Bingham reportedly lived with Lick for a short period in the Bellwood community, but had moved out just prior to the murder, according to a previous *Eagle* report. Lick was assaulted in

her Bellwood home, which was also set on fire after the assault. Geneva County Sheriff's investigators later found Bingham's strangled and beaten body left in woods in the Bellwood community, according to *Eagle* reports.

David Holmes, Hornsby's defense lawyer, could not be reached for comment.

Adams said Geneva County Circuit Judge P.B. McLaughlin Jr. took the arguments at the hearing under advisement and would make a ruling at a later date.