

## Newton Man Pleads Guilty To Murder

By Sarah Gilbert

A Newton man pled guilty Monday to murdering his estranged wife on Christmas Eve, 2007.

Darrin Keith Johnson, 42, of Newton, Alabama entered a plea of guilty to murder before Circuit Judge P. B. McLauchlin.

McLauchlin asked District Attorney Kirke Adams to state for the record the allegations against Johnson. Adams said the state would prove that on Dec. 24, 2007, Johnson used a knife and stabbed Allison Fuller Johnson multiple times causing her death. Johnson admitted he was guilty of the murder as stated.

McLauchlin presented the range of punishment of 10 years to 99 years or life for murder with a possible enhancement for use of a deadly weapon of a minimum of 20 years. In addition, McLauchlin said Johnson could be fined up to \$60,000. Johnson said he understood the range of punishment.

McLauchlin withheld sentencing pending an investigation and a sentencing hearing to be set in about a month.

"This was a heinous crime, but what made it even worse was that he committed this murder on Christmas Eve in front of their two children," Adams said. "These domestic situations are very dangerous and can result in serious violence, like this one did." Adams went on to say, "I understand that Johnson is pleading guilty and taking responsibility for his crime, but it doesn't change the fact that he took a life and the lives he affected by this violent murder."