

Bowers pleads not guilty to second-degree murder

By **BOB WATSON**
News Tribune

Edward G. Bowers pleaded not guilty to second-degree murder charges Monday morning, during a brief circuit court arraignment.

The plea, entered by Bowers' attorney, Public Defender Jan King, was his first official comment in court on the charge that Bowers, 67, killed his wife, Marcella Carlock, 57, on Jan. 15.

King waived formal arraignment on the charge and Judge Richard Callahan scheduled a status hearing in the case for 9 a.m. Feb. 28.

But the Cole County Prosecuting Attorney has asked for a change of judge.

"Either side is allowed a change of judge, without any explanation to the court or anybody else," Prosecutor Bill Tackett explained. "In this case, we exercised ours."

He said a change of judge request is automatic and requires the case to be sent to Presiding Judge Thomas J. Brown III for assignment to Brown or another judge.

The new judge will have to place the case on his or her docket for another hearing, Tackett said.

Carlock's body was found on a bed in an upstairs bedroom of her East McCarty Street duplex about 4:30 p.m. Jan. 15.

Bowers was arrested by the Lafayette County Sheriff's Department about two hours

later, as he was headed west on Interstate 70.

Jefferson City Police Detective Lee Tubbesing testified during Bowers' preliminary hearing last week that Bowers had confessed to the crime during an interview in the Lafayette County Jail.

Officials have said the couple had been married about a month, and that Bowers still lived in Kansas City.

"He said he hit her with a baseball bat, then he bound her hands with duct tape," Tubbesing told Associate Circuit Judge Thomas L. Sodergren last Monday afternoon. "He bound her face with duct tape ... and then stabbed her in the chest."

Tackett said his office has been trying to determine Bowers' previous criminal history.

He apparently served a five-year sentence for robbery in the 1960s, Tackett said.

"It is not readily apparent that there is a prior murder," he said, although rumors to that effect have flowed freely.

He noted that a 50-state search involving cases before computerization began in the 1980s and '90s has slowed down the information gathering process.

If convicted of the murder charge, Bowers could face up to life in prison.

Because it's a second-degree murder charge, prosecutors can't seek the death penalty.

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