

TWENTY-SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
PARISH OF WASHINGTON
STATE OF LOUISIANA

DOCKET NO.: 26-CR9-158767 DIVISION "I"

STATE OF LOUISIANA
VERSUS
TROY SCOTT JORDAN

ARRAIGNMENT AND MOTIONS HEARING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS taken before the
Honorable REGINALD T. BADEAUX, III, Judge Presiding,
Twenty-Second Judicial District Court, Parish of
Washington, State of Louisiana, on the 20th day of
JANUARY 2026, in Franklinton, Louisiana.

REPORTED AND TRANSCRIBED BY:
BELEN B. CROSS, CCR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
STATE CERTIFICATE NO. 24031

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2
3 A P P E A R A N C E S
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6 ON BEHALF OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, PROSECUTOR:
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8

9
10 DOUG FREESE, ESQUIRE

11 TIFFANY DOVER, ESQUIRE

12 ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEYS

13
14 REPRESENTING TROY SCOTT JORDAN, DEFENDANT:
15
16

17 ROY K. BURNS, JR., ESQUIRE

18 LAM TRAN, ESQUIRE

19 ERNIE BAUER, ESQUIRE (NOT PRESENT)

INDEX

4	<u>PAGE</u>
5	
6	CAPTION 1
7	APPEARANCES 2
8	PROCEEDINGS 4
9	RULING OF THE COURT. 29
10	REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 33
11	
12	DEFENSE WITNESSES:
13	<u>PHILLIP LEONARD</u>
14	DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. BURNS 7
15	CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. FREESE 11
16	<u>TROY SCOTT JORDAN</u>
17	DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. BURNS 16
18	CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. FREESE 18
19	REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. BURNS 24
20	<u>THOMAS MINARIK</u>
21	DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. BURNS 24
22	(NO CROSS-EXAMINATION)
23	
24	EXHIBITS:
25	STATE'S EXHIBIT NO. 1, BOND HEARING 25
26	(Affidavit for arrest warrant dated 12/19/25)

PROCEEDINGS

(WITH COUNSEL PRESENT FOR THE STATE AND THE DEFENDANT, TROY SCOTT JORDAN, PRESENT AND ACCOMPANIED BY HIS COUNSEL, THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDINGS WERE HELD IN OPEN COURT:)

THE COURT:

Okay.

MR. CUCCIA:

And then, Your Honor, we're going to switch over to the supplemental docket, arraignment docket number six, Troy Jordan.

MR. BURNS:

Good morning, Judge.

THE COURT:

Good morning.

MR. BURNS:

May it please the Court, the defendant, Mr. Jordan, is present in open court today. It's my understanding there are two matters before the court.

The first one would be his arraignment and then, also, I have filed a motion for a bail reduction, which I'll have a very short hearing over.

So at this time, he's going to stand up. This is an indictment, so I'm asking that the indictment be read and he enters his own plea, if that works for the State.

MR. FREESE;

Doug Freese and Tiffany Dover here on behalf of the State of Louisiana. We are certainly happy to see him arraigned before addressing any other

1 matters.

2 **MR. BURNS:**

3 Thank you. And my name is Roy K. Burns, Jr.,
4 attorney for him, Judge. We, and I use that term
5 collectively, I have filed a motion to enroll as
6 attorney of record, which I think was granted,
7 along with Mr. Ernie Bauer and Lam Tran as
8 co-counsel. Roy K. Burns, Jr. is the lead
9 counsel.

10 **THE COURT:**

11 Okay. Madam Clerk, would you read that bill
12 of indictment into the record, please?

13 **MADAM CLERK:**

14 (As read) State of Louisiana, Parish of
15 Washington, Twenty-Second Judicial District Court,
16 term 2026, the Grand Jurors of the State of
17 Louisiana, duly impaneled and sworn in and for the
18 body of the Parish of Washington;

19 In the name and by the authority of the said
20 state, upon their oath, find and present that Troy
21 Scott Jordan on the date below in the Parish of
22 Washington and within the jurisdiction of the
23 Twenty-Second Judicial District Court of
24 Louisiana, for the Parish of Washington, did
25 violate:

26 Count one, R.S. 14:30.1, second degree
27 murder, Troy Scott Jordan on or about October 23,
28 2017 by committing second degree murder of Donna
29 Arceneaux, contrary to the form of the statutes of
30 the State of Louisiana, and in such cases, made
31 and provided and against the peace and dignity of
32 the same;

1 J. Collin Sims, District Attorney, Twenty-
2 Second Judicial District Court, State of
3 Louisiana, true bill, foreperson of the Grand
4 Jury.

5 **MR. BURNS:**

6 How do you plead, sir?

7 **THE DEFENDANT:**

8 Not guilty.

9 **MR. BURNS:**

10 Thank you. Judge, we would ask that his
11 not-guilty plea be entered upon the record of this
12 particular matter.

13 **THE COURT:**

14 So ordered.

15 **MR. BURNS:**

16 All right. Judge, if it's okay with the
17 State of Louisiana, as well as the Court, at this
18 time, I filed a motion for not only a bill
19 particulars in this -- not a bill particulars, I'm
20 sorry, a preliminary examination as well as a bail
21 reduction.

22 Now, it's my understanding -- does the State
23 have any anything that they could offer me in
24 terms of paper as the probable cause for having
25 Mr. Jordan indicted today? Is there anything that
26 you could provide to me?

27 **MR. FREESE:**

28 Sure. The indictment that establishes
29 probable cause and more. There is no preliminary
30 examination to be held because probable cause has
31 already been determined by virtue of the grand
32 jury indictment.

1 That motion is moot. Therefore, the only
2 thing that would remain is his motion for
3 reduction or modification of bail.

4 **MR. BURNS:**

5 That is correct. I was just hoping that the
6 State had something for me to deal with on the
7 facts of the case, but we'll get that in due
8 course.

9 And, again, I don't know how the State
10 intends to do it, but I do have a contract with
11 the State of Louisiana district attorney's office
12 for -- I use an open file electronic discovery
13 that I know that they're going to send to me.

14 I know that. All right. Thank you.

15 **THE COURT:**

16 Yes. The motion for preliminary exam will be
17 dismissed as moot.

18 **MR. BURNS:**

19 Thank you, Judge. Note our objection for the
20 record on that.

21 I'll call my first witness, Judge.

22 **THE COURT:**

23 On the bond reduction?

24 **MR. BURNS:**

25 Yes, Your Honor.

26 **THE COURT:**

27 Okay.

28 **MR. BURNS:**

29 And you have the option to grant a bail, if
30 he can make it, with conditions. And that's what
31 Mr. Phillip is going to do.

32 Raise your right hand to be sworn.

(PHILLIP LEONARD,

after having been first duly sworn, did testify on his
oath as follows:)

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. BURNS:

Q. State your name, sir.

A. Phillip Leonard.

Q. And speak up. I'm a little hard of hearing.

A. Yes, sir. Phillip Leonard.

10 | Q. And what do you do for a living, sir?

11 | A. I own Magnolia Monitoring.

12 | Q. And what is Magnolia Monitoring?

13 A. It's a pretrial GPS, alcohol, probation and parole,
14 alcohol GPS monitoring company.

15 *Q.* And does that company do business here in Washington
16 Parish?

17 | A. Yes.

18 | Q. You have clients?

19 A. Yes. We're based in the Twenty-Second Judicial
20 District.

21 Q. As well as St. Tammany Parish?

22 | A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. And you supply GPS devices to defendants?

24 | A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. Did you bring one of those units with you?

26 A. Yes. I brought what we call "the cuff" today. It
27 installs as a cuff.

28 | *Q. It's a cuff?*

29 A Yes sir

30 0 Is that on the ankle or is that on the hand?

31 | A It's an ankle monitor

32 Q. And it's basically tamper-proof?

1 A. Yes. In a sense, yes. It's got two stainless steel
2 rods that connect on each side of it.

3 Q. Okay. And it would be fitted on Mr. Jordan's ankle;
4 is that correct?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. What does that unit do?

7 A. It tracks as realtime as it could possibly be. So
8 it's going to track every fifteen seconds and plot a point
9 every thirty.

10 Q. Okay. So it's a realtime tracking device connected to
11 him; is that correct?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And have you used that device in Washington Parish and
14 the Twenty-Second Judicial District before?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. And how many times?

17 A. We have over, I think, twenty of these particular
18 units out in the field.

19 Q. All right. And is there a geographic location or what
20 I call "a fencing area" that you could put on that to
21 keep him -- let's think out, go big to small.

22 As a bond condition in the Twenty-Second Judicial
23 District, can you put a fence around the Twenty-Second
24 Judicial District in it on him? And if he violated that,
25 what happens?

26 A. The Court would be notified immediately. The zones
27 would store to the device. So as soon as he was to exit a
28 zone or enter a zone, you would get a notification.

29 Q. Okay. So, again, you can put in a zone?

30 A. Yes. You can put a zone in.

31 Q. As big as the Twenty-Second Judicial District Court;
32 is that correct?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. And how about as small as his home?

3 A. Yes. It's fully customizable, as big or as small as
4 you want it.

5 Q. Okay. So whatever the Judge would say would be
6 reasonable, you can adapt your machine to; is that
7 correct?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Is there an expense associated with that particular
10 device?

11 A. Yes. It's what we call "offender pay." So they're
12 responsible for the cost of the monitoring.

13 Q. Okay. So the person who wears it, they're responsible
14 for the cost; is that correct?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. And if they don't pay that?

17 A. They're reported for noncompliance at that point.

18 Q. Okay. And have you reported defendants or people who
19 have worn that here in the Washington Parish, Twenty-
20 Second Judicial District, have you reported those things
21 to the Court before?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. If there's a violation, they are reported immediately;
24 is that correct?

25 A. Yes, sir.

26 Q. And then they're brought back into court and revoked,
27 I guess?

28 A. Yes. They have some sort of motion or hearing based
29 on the noncompliance issue.

30 Q. All right.

31 **MR. BURNS:**

32 That's all the questions I have. I tender

you to the State of Louisiana.

CROSS-EXAMINATION

BY MR. FREESE:

Q. Good morning, Mr. Leonard. How are you?

A. I'm doing well. And yourself?

Q. I'm doing fine. Do you have any information regarding the facts underlying the defendant's indictment on the charge of second degree murder?

A. Not really, no.

10 Q. Do you have any information regarding his personal
11 history that would influence a judge's decision regarding
12 what the appropriate amount of bail to set would be?

A. No, sir.

14 Q. If I understand correctly, the only thing that you can
15 tell the Court is that if a judge, irrespective of the
16 amount of bail he or she chooses to set, elects to make
17 monitoring a condition, that you can provide electronic
18 monitoring that is reliable?

A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. Okay.

MR. FREESE:

I don't have any other questions, Judge.

MR. BURNS:

Judge, do you have any questions?

THE COURT:

No.

MR. BURNS:

I have no further questions. Thank you, Sir, for being here.

THE WITNESS:

Not a problem. Thank you. Yes, sir.

MR. BURNS:

1 Judge, for your perusal, I would like to hand
2 to the Court all of the people who are in
3 Washington Parish Jail who are charged with second
4 degree murder.

5 I've taken the opportunity to put their bail
6 obligation before you. So I'd like to have you
7 accept this.

8 **THE COURT:**

9 Did you show it to Counsel?

10 **MR. BURNS:**

11 Yes. They have it.

12 **MS. DOVER:**

13 So the only thing -- I separated them,
14 Mr. Burns -- these are people that are not charged
15 with second degree murder. They are attempted
16 secondary murder. And I would take issue with
17 this one as it is an overdose homicide
18 (indicating).

19 But these I have no objection to.

20 **MR. BURNS:**

21 Okay. That's fine. How about the attempted
22 one, too? That would just give some --

23 **MR. FREESE:**

24 No, no, no. Attempted murder is not an
25 analogous charge.

26 **MS. DOVER:**

27 Right. Right.

28 **MR. BURNS:**

29 Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

30 If the State has no objection, Judge, I will
31 remove the ones that they don't like and give that
32 to the Court for your perusal (tenders document).

1 **THE COURT:**

2 Okay. Thank you.

3 (Perusing) All right.

4 **MR. BURNS:**

5 Thank you, Judge. Now, Judge, just for
6 informational purposes to you, this defendant's
7 bail is \$2 million. And so with that being said,
8 again, let me go from here.

9 I think the State has the ability to
10 contradict anything that I have to say about this,
11 but I'm asking the Court to take a look at
12 Art. 313.1, which is the Court's guidelines of how
13 you establish what a person's bail might be.

14 The criminal history of defendant. Upon
15 information and belief, Judge, he had no criminal
16 history. Now I stand to the State and see if they
17 would like to contradict that.

18 **MR. FREESE:**

19 We're not answering questions for him. We'll
20 make our own presentation when he's done.

21 **MR. BURNS:**

22 That's fine. That's fine. Not a problem. I
23 just wanted to try to make it easy on them and the
24 Court.

25 The nature and seriousness of the danger to
26 any other person or the community. Now, my
27 argument would be that, by their allegation, this
28 would be a domestic abuse case.

29 And so there's no other person out here that
30 would be at risk of harm for him to have a bail
31 that he can make, as well as the community, Judge.

32 He has no prior criminal history.

1 Going to item number three, documented
2 history or record of substance abuse by the
3 defendant. There is no history that this man has
4 any substance abuse problem and/or alcohol
5 problem.

6 However, he stands ready at the call of the
7 Court to take any and all drug testing that might
8 be available, that you might want. He does not
9 drink, he does not use illegal substances, and he
10 does not smoke.

11 Now let's acknowledge item number four is a
12 two-part test for you, Judge. The seriousness of
13 the offense charged.

14 It is very serious. We don't acknowledge
15 that -- his charge is second degree murder. That
16 is a very serious offense.

17 However, the weight of evidence against the
18 defendant, it is my opinion from my view of what
19 information I have available and that this case is
20 excessively old, that the weight of evidence
21 against him is extremely small.

22 I would suggest to the Court that, from the
23 information that I have, there are about five
24 theories and this is, in my mind, a circumstantial
25 case because there's no eyewitness.

26 But I can already see five different defenses
27 that would be available to him to play before a
28 jury. And the first one would be suicide.

29 Three months after this case was being -- the
30 death -- being investigated by the sheriff's
31 office, the sheriff's office put out --

32 **MR. FREESE:**

1 Judge, I'm going to object. He's effectively
2 testifying. If he has a witness he wants to put
3 on to say these things, that's fine. But his
4 appreciation of events is not relevant here.

5 His arguments regarding the evidence that is
6 presented by him would be.

7 **MR. BURNS:**

8 So the answer, Judge, I'm going to finish out
9 on that issue, is do you disagree that the
10 sheriff's office put out suicide --

11 **MR. FREESE:**

12 Judge, I am not answering questions.

13 **THE COURT:**

14 They're not answering questions.

15 **MR. FREESE:**

16 I am not his witness.

17 **THE COURT:**

18 I'm not answering questions either.

19 **MR. BURNS:**

20 I understand. I've got it, Judge.

21 **THE COURT:**

22 I could read a law book almost as good as
23 you.

24 **MR. BURNS:**

25 Okay. Then the last one, Judge, is the risk
26 that the defendant might flee. This man was born
27 and raised in Washington Parish, in the
28 Franklinton area. He had been married. He has
29 two children.

30 **MR. FREESE:**

31 Judge, again, objection. It's easy to put on
32 evidence to establish this. He is not a witness.

1 **MR. BURNS:**

2 Go take the stand.

3 **(TROY SCOTT JORDAN,**

4 after having been first duly sworn, did testify on his
5 oath as follows:)

6 **DIRECT EXAMINATION**

7 **BY MR. BURNS:**

8 **Q.** All right. What is your name, sir?

9 **A.** Troy Scott Jordan.

10 **Q.** All right. Would you give the Court a narrative of
11 your life from the time that you were born here until the
12 time you were arrested?

13 Are you married? Do you have children?

14 **THE COURT:**

15 I don't have time for his life story,
16 Mr. Burns. I've got a Zoom conference with
17 doctors in ten minutes. So wrap it up.

18 **MR. BURNS:**

19 Well, I think we can do this.

20 **THE COURT:**

21 That would be great. If not, we're going to
22 have to recess this while I handle that other
23 matter.

24 **BY MR. BURNS:**

25 **Q.** All right. So give us five minutes worth of "you".

26 **A.** I was born here.

27 **THE COURT:**

28 No. Direct his testimony. I don't want to
29 hear an open narrative.

30 **MR. BURNS:**

31 Okay.

32 **BY MR. BURNS:**

1 Q. How old are you?

2 A. Fifty-nine.

3 Q. Where do you reside?

4 A. Isabel.

5 Q. And what is the municipal address of that?

6 A. 52355 Parker Road North, Bogalusa.

7 Q. All right. Are you a landowner?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. How many pieces of property do you have here?

10 A. At the place where I live.

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. I own three pieces of property in Franklinton.

13 Q. All right. And do you have a job?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. What is your education?

16 A. Radiologic technologist, ultrasound technologist.

17 Q. Where are you employed?

18 A. Riverside Medical Center. I've worked there for

19 thirty-six years.

20 Q. All right. Can you go back there?

21 A. I'm assuming I can after this.

22 Q. All right. Do you have children?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What is their names and ages?

25 A. Zachary Jordan, 24. He's in college. And Madison

26 Jordan, 21.

27 Q. All right. And do you have a passport?

28 A. No. Not as I'm aware of, no.

29 Q. Okay. And can you drive?

30 A. Yes.

31 Q. Read, write, and understand the English language?

32 A. Yes.

1 **Q.** In the event that the Judge would give you a bail that
2 you would be able to make, will you show up at all
3 proceedings of the Court?

4 **A.** Yes.

5 **Q.** Do you represent any threat of harm to anyone?

6 **A.** No.

7 **Q.** Now, tell the Judge, how much, you feel like, of a
8 bail that you could make, cash, property or surety. How
9 much of a bail do you think you could make with a premium
10 of 12 percent?

11 **A.** Probably 500,000.

12 **Q.** All right. And you would buy a bail bond for \$60,000;
13 is that correct?

14 **A.** Yes, sir.

15 **Q.** And would you comply with all conditions that the
16 Judge would put on your bail?

17 **A.** Yes.

18 **MR. BURNS:**

19 That's all the questions I have.

20 **THE COURT:**

21 Okay.

22 **CROSS-EXAMINATION**

23 **BY MR. FREESE:**

24 **Q.** Sir, you indicated that you have two children; is that
25 correct?

26 **A.** Yes, sir.

27 **Q.** Your daughter's name is Madison?

28 **A.** Yes.

29 **Q.** Have you ever struck your child, Madison? Have you
30 ever slapped her in the face?

31 **A.** No.

32 **Q.** Have you ever called her a whore?

1 A. Not that I'm aware of.

2 Q. Have you ever called her a slut?

3 A. Not that I'm aware of, no.

4 Q. Specifically, while Ms. Arceneaux was still alive, did
5 you abuse your child in those ways?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Were you arrested for domestic abuse battery with
8 child endangerment upon Ms. Arceneaux approximately a year
9 before her death?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. In that case, you were prosecuted and that case was
12 dismissed at her request; is that correct?

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Were you abusive in your relationship with
15 Ms. Arceneaux?

16 A. Sir?

17 Q. Were you abusive in your relationship with
18 Ms. Arceneaux?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did you ever strike her?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Did you ever threaten her?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did you impose rules upon her that she must live by in
25 terms of who she could speak to or how she may dress?

26 A. No. We wrote a list, maybe, of things that might help
27 our relationship.

28 Q. And did you instruct her that she was not allowed to
29 talk to her ex-husband unless you were able to monitor the
30 conversation?

31 A. No.

32 Q. Did you ever follow her as she brought her daughter,

1 Ellie, to her ex-husband?

2 A. I drove by there.

3 Q. Drove by --

4 A. I didn't follow her.

5 Q. -- to a place where you knew that a child exchange was
6 going to take place?

7 A. But I wasn't following her.

8 Q. You just coincidentally drove by?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Were you present in the house on the night that she
11 was killed?

12 A. No.

13 Q. It is your testimony that you were not there at the
14 time that a bullet entered her body and killed her?

15 A. No.

16 Q. It is your testimony -- excuse me. Did you enter the
17 house with another person and find her body?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Who was that other person?

20 A. Michelle, Michelle Thomas.

21 Q. And why did you and Michelle enter the house?

22 A. We went to check on her.

23 Q. And why did you go to check on her?

24 A. Because we were worried about her. I hadn't heard
25 anything from her all day and we were worried after the
26 threat she had made.

27 Q. What threat had she made?

28 A. She was sending text messages late that night,
29 threatening suicide.

30 Q. Are you referring to somewhere between midnight and
31 4 a.m.?

32 A. Yes.

1 Q. And you went to that residence just before midnight,
2 correct; roughly twenty hours after 4 a.m., correct?

3 A. The next night.

4 Q. So was it twenty hours later or was it a day and
5 twenty hours later that you went by the house?

6 A. It was the next day, the next night.

7 Q. Again, twenty hours later or a full day plus twenty
8 hours later?

9 A. The next night.

10 Q. Well, I understand you're saying the next night. I'm
11 trying to clarify. Are you talking about more than one
12 full day or less than one full day?

13 A. Probably less than one full day.

14 Q. And you did not elect to go and check on her yourself
15 at any time since you had last communicated with her, some
16 twenty hours earlier; is that correct?

17 A. Right.

18 Q. You had a key to that residence, correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You used the key to enter the residence, correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You could have checked on her at any time after you
23 say that she made that threat, correct?

24 A. Yes. But I went to, the next day after I brought the
25 kids to school, I went and brought Madison to get pants or
26 something that day. And then not hearing from her that
27 evening, I started getting worried at that point.

28 Q. It's your testimony here today, you did not become
29 worried until sometime much closer to the hour that you
30 went to the house and entered with Michelle?

31 A. Later that evening.

32 Q. So it was not until after you had taken Madison

1 shopping, at some point during the daytime, that you
2 became concerned for her?

3 A. That evening. Because I didn't see her on Messenger.
4 She was usually always on Facebook Messenger, and I didn't
5 see her on that. And, you know, I figured she'd be
6 sleeping until late. It was late phone calls.

7 And so later that evening I started getting worried
8 about her.

9 Q. And how long were you in a relationship with
10 Ms. Arceneaux?

11 A. Two years.

12 Q. And during that two years, did you become familiar
13 with her personal habits?

14 A. I would say yes, somewhat.

15 Q. Would you agree that she is a person who took personal
16 hygiene very seriously?

17 A. I'd say yes.

18 Q. And so much so that she would bathe regularly twice a
19 day, correct?

20 A. Not accurate.

21 Q. Not accurate?

22 A. No, sir.

23 Q. How often would she bathe?

24 A. It varied depending on what she was doing.

25 THE COURT:

26 All right. Court is going to be in recess
27 for fifteen minutes. I'm going to take this Zoom
28 conference. Mr. Tran, we're going to need you in
29 chambers also.

30 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A ZOOM CONFERENCE HELD IN
31 CHAMBERS ON ANOTHER DOCKET MATTER.)

32 THE COURT:

1 All right. Court is back in session.

2 **BY MR. FREESE:**

3 **Q.** Just one more line of questioning, Mr. Jordan. Where
4 currently is the cell phone that you had at the time that
5 Ms. Arceneaux was killed?

6 **A.** I'm not sure.

7 **Q.** Well, let me be clearer. What I'm talking about is
8 the cell phone that your girlfriend, Suzette, told you
9 during a jail call that the police were looking for with a
10 warrant and she did not want you to tell us or tell her
11 where it is. Where is that phone?

12 **A.** I'm not 100 percent sure where it's at.

13 **Q.** Well, why are you not certain as to where it is?

14 **A.** I would have to look for it.

15 **Q.** Is it in your house right now?

16 **A.** Possibly.

17 **Q.** Have you instructed anyone to remove it?

18 **A.** No.

19 **Q.** If it is not in your house, where would it be?

20 **A.** It used to be in my truck.

21 **Q.** Is that a cell phone that you are still using?

22 **A.** No.

23 **Q.** It has been replaced by a newer version of a phone?

24 **A.** Right.

25 **Q.** But you never got rid of it?

26 **A.** No. I kept it.

27 **Q.** So that phone, to the best of your knowledge, is
28 currently in your house or in your vehicle?

29 **A.** Yes.

30 **Q.** Okay.

31 **MR. FREESE:**

32 Your Honor, I have no further questions.

REDIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. BURNS;

Q. Just point blank, did you kill Donna Arceneaux?

A. No.

MR. BURNS:

That's all the questions I have.

THE COURT:

Thank you, Mr. Jordan. You can step down, sir.

MR. BURNS:

I've got one more witness, Judge.

THE COURT:

Okay.

(THOMAS MINARIK,

after having been first duly sworn, did testify on his
oath as follows:)

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. BURNS:

Q. State your name, sir.

A. Thomas Minarik.

Q. How do you spell it?

A. M-i-n-a-r-i-k.

23 Q. Minarik, okay. Thank you. I struggle sometimes with
24 easy names. Where do you live?

A. I live here in Franklinton.

26 Q. All right. How long have you known Mr. Jordan?

A. Since the day he was born.

28 Q. All right. Now, do you know what his reputation is in
29 the community for truthfulness and honesty?

A. One hundred percent great.

Q. First thing, do you know what it is?

A. Sure.

1 **Q.** All right. And what is it?

2 **A.** It's wonderful.

3 **Q.** He has a reputation for truthfulness, honesty that is
4 wonderful?

5 **A.** Certainly.

6 **MR. BURNS:**

7 That's all the questions I have.

8 **MR. FREESE:**

9 No questions.

10 **THE COURT:**

11 Thank you. You may step down, sir.

12 **MR. BURNS:**

13 Submit it. Ask for a bond reduction, Judge,
14 to \$250,000.

15 **MR. FREESE:**

16 Judge, the State has evidence that it will
17 present, that being we're going to mark it as
18 State's Exhibit 1, bond hearing. I have a copy
19 for the Defense. And that is the affidavit for an
20 arrest warrant in this case.

21 For the record, this is the warrant that was
22 presented to Your Honor and executed by Your Honor
23 on December 19, 2025.

24 **MR. BURNS:**

25 Judge, no objection. I'm happy to have it.

26 **THE COURT:**

27 Okay. Let it come into evidence.

28 **MR. FREESE:**

29 With that submission, the State has no
30 further evidence. If Defense Counsel has argument
31 in support of bail, I will respond.

32 **MR. BURNS:**

1 Of course, Judge. Going back, so, Judge,
2 again, this is me at the point of argument. I
3 would say this is the best case I've ever had for
4 the purposes of you granting a bond reduction.

5 And, again, I would refer you again to
6 Art. 313.1. The criminal history of the
7 defendant, none. The nature of the seriousness
8 and danger to any other person or the community
9 posed by this defendant, none.

10 Documented history of substance abuse of the
11 defendant, none. The seriousness of the offense,
12 I've already acknowledged very serious offense.
13 The weight of evidence against the defendant,
14 again, I think it's very low.

15 I would suggest to the Court that this case
16 is what would be called "a cold case". He has
17 been here for the entirety of this proceeding,
18 right here.

19 The risk that the defendant might flee? The
20 answer is, I've not heard one bit of evidence that
21 this defendant might flee. In addition to that,
22 Judge, after this contradictory hearing, you have
23 the ability to change the bond and set every
24 special condition.

25 Now, I've also put testimony, uncontradicted,
26 that this man -- his reputation for truthfulness
27 and honesty is high.

28 We have also put on the testimony of the
29 Magnolia Monitoring Company; that as an additional
30 condition that you might want, would be that you
31 put a GPS on him realtime. You put a fence around
32 wherever you want him to go or not go, Judge.

1 And, in addition to that, Judge, as a special
2 condition, we would agree -- I don't even think he
3 has a gun to be frank with you. But, again, any
4 gun forfeiture in the nature of domestic
5 relations, he would forfeit, give to somebody
6 else, or whatever.

7 He will have no guns on his person and he
8 would agree to any and all drug testing that the
9 Court would allow. That's my argument.

10 **THE COURT:**

11 All right.

12 **MR. FREESE:**

13 Your Honor, my response would be as follows:
14 First, with respect to Defense Counsel's assertion
15 that the defendant has no prior criminal history,
16 that is clearly incorrect.

17 By his client's own testimony, he
18 acknowledged that he was arrested for domestic
19 abuse battery with child endangerment, that
20 prosecution was instituted, later dismissed at the
21 request of Ms. Arceneaux. So that is actually an
22 incorrect statement.

23 It is a very serious offense and each
24 homicide case is unique and different. His
25 evidence presented of bond set in other cases is
26 not relevant to the question of whether or not
27 bail set in this case was constitutionally
28 excessive.

29 The weight of the evidence here, contrary to
30 Counsel's assertion, is compelling. Over a period
31 of time, enhancement in the quality of information
32 that can be gleaned through DNA testing has

1 enabled the government to develop information
2 establishing the defendant's DNA being present on
3 the scene; on a towel that was used to help
4 obscure evidence, and on the victim's body, and on
5 the holster for a firearm, the firearm in
6 question.

7 Those are things that put him on the scene
8 and put him on the scene concurrently with or
9 after her homicide.

10 And, further, the affidavit before you
11 includes a lengthy recitation of the
12 qualifications of a forensic scientist, who does
13 crime scene reconstruction in addition to being
14 able to offer expert testimony in a variety of
15 other disciplines, who makes it clear that the
16 evidence is inconsistent with suicide, agreeing
17 with the pathologist who classified it as
18 homicide, and that there would have been some
19 intervening object between Ms. Arceneaux's body on
20 the bed, between her body and the bed sheet
21 itself, and that that object would have been
22 removed from the scene.

23 So we have evidence of obstruction of
24 justice, which has not been charged here because
25 that is prescribed. Because when you do a good
26 enough job distorting a crime scene, not only is
27 there sometimes at least a delay, you sometimes
28 avoid prosecution at all.

29 Unfortunately, for this gentleman, he's not
30 getting that lucky. The evidence is there to
31 support the charge. The evidence is there to show
32 that he obstructed justice.

1 And to suggest that he should benefit in some
2 way because he didn't flee in all the years since
3 this crime -- no kidding, he thought he got away
4 with it because of what he did to doctor the crime
5 scene after the fact.

6 The combination of murdering a domestic
7 partner or someone with whom you had a domestic
8 relationship, someone who trusted you, someone who
9 gave you access to the home in which she lived,
10 and then modify the scene in order to hide your
11 own guilt supports bail as set and is consistent
12 with the fact that a grand jury has returned an
13 indictment in this case.

14 **THE COURT:**

15 All right. Well, after considering all the
16 evidence and the testimony of the witness, I will
17 amend the bond to \$500,000 cash, property or
18 surety.

19 After all, the bond amount is meant to ensure
20 defendant's appearance at any and all court
21 appearances, not to punish him.

22 And I do take into account he's got no
23 serious record of history. There was an arrest
24 for domestic violence, that's the only one I know
25 of, that was dismissed, as is often the case when
26 you've got a noncompliant alleged victim.

27 This would be a different story if he had
28 marched into the McDonald's with an AR-15 and shot
29 up the place. Of course there would be no bond
30 then.

31 So I'll set his bond at \$500,000 cash,
32 property or surety. If he makes that bond, he is

1 to remain on home incarceration, at his own
2 expense, through the auspices of Magnolia
3 Monitoring, which will put a 300-foot radius on
4 him at his home.

5 He's not to go outside of that, except for
6 the following explicit exceptions:

7 One, to go to and from work, if he does have
8 employment. He'll have to arrange that with the
9 monitoring company. He'll have to give them what
10 his work hours are. I don't anticipate that to
11 exceed twelve hours. I'm thinking that will be
12 like 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.;

13 Also an hour on Sundays for church or to meet
14 with his lawyer or to go to doctor's appointments,
15 all of which will have to be arranged with the
16 monitoring company in advance so they know when he
17 leaves the house, they can check and see if he's
18 going to an appointment or not.

19 Other special conditions, if he makes that
20 bond, is, of course, he's not to leave the
21 jurisdiction of the Twenty-Second JDC, which is
22 St. Tammany and Washington Parishes, without
23 express written order from the Court. If he does
24 that, I'll consider him in violation of his bond.

25 Three, he's not to possess any firearms or
26 any other dangerous instrumentalities. If word
27 gets to me that he is in possession of any such
28 things, I will revoke his bond ex parte.

29 Four, he's not to have any contact with the
30 Arceneaux family or their relatives, except
31 through his attorneys.

32 Also this monitoring device with Magnolia

1 Monitor is to be placed on him before he bonds out
2 of jail.

3 Okay. That should do it.

4 **MR. BURNS:**

5 Thank you, Judge.

6 **MS. DOVER:**

7 Judge, we're going to set him on the 4/1 and
8 4/6 dates.

9 **THE COURT:**

10 Okay.

11
12 (Whereupon, this proceeding was concluded.)

13 * * * * *

REPORTER'S PAGE

I, Belen B. Cross, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, the officer, as defined in Rule 28 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and/or Article 1434(B) of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure, before whom this proceeding was taken, do hereby state on the Record:

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Belen B. Cross, CCR

Official Court Reporter

Certificate No. 24031

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2 I, **Belen B. Cross, Certified Court Reporter** in and
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10 understanding;

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15 am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

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25 I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript has been
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