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ALBUQUERQUE
New Mexico, U.S.A.

January 13, 2002

Bail reduced for co-defendant in Hossencofft homicide case

By S.J. Ludescher
Tribune reporter

Bill Miller, a recently named co-defendant in the Girly Hossencofft homicide case, is expected to be out on bond soon.

Miller was in court before state District Judge Frank Allen on Friday afternoon with a motion to have his bail reduced from $1 million cash-only to a $250,000 combination of cash and real estate collateral. Allen granted the reduction.

Miller and Diazien Hossencofft, the husband of the missing woman, have been charged with killing her even though her body has never been found. The former bank employee, 36 years old at the time of her disappearance, has been missing for 18 months.

Linda Henning, Diazien Hossencofft's girlfriend, is also charged in the estranged wife's death. Henning, 47, and Hossencofft, 35, have both been held in City-County Jail without bond since they were arrested under an indictment handed down in November 1999. Both could face the death penalty and have pleaded not-guilty.

Miller, 50, was arrested Feb. 12 and charged with conspiracy to commit first degree murder. He has been held in City-County Jail since then. He had been under investigation, authorities said, since he testified in the 1999 grand jury hearings against Hossencofft and Henning.

Miller, who authorities said was a friend of Diazien Hossencofft, testified that Hossencofft had twice asked him for help in killing his wife.

On Friday the two long rows of court seats were filled with family and friends of Miller, ready to testify to the judge about his character and ask for his release.

Allen agreed that he "was entitled to some kind of bond."

Miller's long-time residency in Albuquerque, stature in the community and the absence of a criminal record were factors in his decision to reduce bail, Allen said.

Miller's defense attorney, Ray Twohig, told Allen that his client had "cooperated fully with authorities."

Paul Spiers, assistant district attorney, argued that Miller had been merely "shadow

boxing with detectives" as they attempted to uncover further evidence in Girly Hossencofft's disappearance. Miller's apartment was first searched under a warrant issued in October 1999.

In December 2000, police obtained another search warrant and confiscated items which they believed were connected to the case from Miller's residence. Seized articles included fishing supplies, a tackle box, miscellaneous fishing items and two cat hair samples.

Although Girly Hossencofft's body has not been found, search warrant records show that police found large pools of blood in her apartment that had been wiped away.

Authorities have also determined that bloody clothes, a bloody cloth, gauze and duct tape with blood and hair stuck found near Socorro all belong to Girly Hossencofft.

Diazien Hossencofft maintains that his wife is still alive.

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