

Herald-Dispatch

May 22, 2001

Section: Local

Page: 1C

W.Va. murder suspect agrees to extradition from Ohio

David E. Malloy

Staff

By DAVID E. MALLOY
The Herald-Dispatch

dmalloy@herald-dispatch.com

CHESAPEAKE, Ohio - A Ritchie County, W.Va., man accused of killing his wife and a neighbor agreed Monday to be sent back to West Virginia to face two counts of murder.

Hubert Lusk Jr., 44, of Harrisville, W.Va., signed papers permitting authorities to send him back to Ritchie County Monday morning before Lawrence County Municipal Judge Don Capper. The judge gave Ritchie County authorities until 6 p.m. Friday to pick up Lusk from the Lawrence County Jail where he is being held on \$1 million bond.

Lusk is charged with the April 22 murder of his wife, Rhonda Lee Lusk, 39, and a neighbor, Francis Dale McDonald, 67, in the garage at McDonalds' home in Harrisville.

He was arrested on a fugitive from justice warrant last month by Lawrence County sheriff's deputies after trying to contact relatives in eastern Lawrence County.

"He wasn't really fighting extradition," Philip Heald, an Ironton lawyer representing Lusk, said Monday. "He wanted to make sure he had a lawyer lined up in West Virginia. He just wanted to make sure all his bases were covered."

Heald said Mark Underwood, a Huntington lawyer, had been retained to represent Lusk. Underwood couldn't be reached for comment Monday.

Lusk refused to return to West Virginia without a court order during an earlier court appearance.

If Ritchie County officials for some reason don't pick up Lusk by Friday, the judge agreed to set another court appearance for May 29 in Chesapeake.