

EDITOR'S PICK

## Locust Grove woman pleads guilty to six embezzlement charges

Keith Epps

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**A** Locust Grove woman who stole at least \$240,000 from another woman pleaded guilty Tuesday to six felony embezzlement charges.

Carol Ann Newman, 70, had power of attorney over the victim. She entered the pleas in Spotsylvania Circuit Court, where she will be sentenced July 26. Judge Joseph Ellis ordered her into the Rappahannock Regional Jail following her guilty pleas, calling her actions “egregious.”

According to Spotsylvania Commonwealth’s Attorney Travis Bird, Newman met the victim years ago while teaching a crafts class at a nursing home in Northern Virginia.

She befriended the woman, who is wheelchair-bound and has no living relatives, and became her power of attorney after the victim suffered a stroke.

Bird said the investigation showed that Newman performed her duties correctly at first, but around 2008 began draining funds from the woman’s sizable retirement account.

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Between 2008 and 2014, evidence showed that Newman set up three personal accounts and one business account under the name Magic Fingers Quilting using the victim’s money. Funds were regularly diverted from the victim’s account into accounts owned by Newman.

Bird said investigators have accounted for about \$240,000 so far but are still looking.

“She drained her life savings,” Bird said.

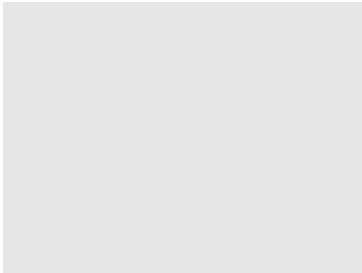
Court records state that Newman lost about \$41,000 by sending money to Ghana, Africa for what turned out to be some sort of romance scam.

The victim, whose retirement account totaled about a half-million dollars at one point, became suspicious when she was told she had to move to less-expensive nursing homes in Spotsylvania and later Culpeper. She was then told that she was out of assets and would have to obtain Medicare.

The woman contacted social services and Spotsylvania Detective Joe Cagnina conducted an investigation that resulted in Newman's arrest in September of last year.

Newman requested Tuesday that she be allowed to remain on bond until her sentencing. Through her lawyer, she said she needed to tie up some loose ends and was still working with friends on restitution.

Bird argued that she has had plenty of time already and that if her friends are true friends, they will continue to assist in the restitution efforts whether she's in jail or not.



Carol Newman

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**By Keith Epps**

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