

TOP STORY

Man who sped away from police pleads guilty

Keith Epps

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A man who led police on an hour-long pursuit through Spotsylvania and parts of two other counties earlier this year pleaded guilty to three charges Monday in Spotsylvania Circuit Court.

John Bernard Lillis Jr., 41, of Spotsylvania, was convicted of felony eluding, possession of illegal drugs with the intent to distribute and DUI. As part of a plea agreement worked out by prosecutor Kelly Green and defense attorney Aisha Singh, Lillis will face a maximum sentence of three years when he is sentenced Jan. 27.



Lillis

According to the evidence, narcotics officers were stationed outside the Hard Times Cafe in Spotsylvania on March 3 conducting surveillance on Lillis' vehicle. Police had received a tip that Lillis was selling a variety of illegal drugs.

Lillis was followed as he drove away from the nightspot, and police initiated a stop at the McDonald's at Mine Road and U.S. 1. A detective approached the vehicle and ordered Lillis to stay put. Lillis then sped away, according to police.

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The ensuing pursuit went through much of Spotsylvania and into parts of Louisa and Hanover counties. During the chase, court records state that Lillis ignored numerous traffic signals, repeatedly crossed median yellow lines and reached speeds of up to 90 mph. He struck a mailbox at one point.

The pursuit continued for a considerable distance even after police flattened one of Lillis' front tires. Lillis drove on a bare rim before finally stopping at a Virginia State Police roadblock in Hanover. Lillis finally got out of the vehicle after being threatened with the release of a police dog.

Fentanyl and Tramadol were recovered by police, along with \$1,228 in cash from Lillis' pocket.

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