

Spotsylvania man gets three years for fatal crash that killed his son's mother

Keith Epps

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A Spotsylvania man whose fiancée was killed in a wreck that occurred after he was driving at excessive speeds on rural county roads was ordered Friday to serve three years in prison.

Randolph Tyler Morningstar, 25, had previously pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in Spotsylvania Circuit Court. Judge Ricardo Rigual sentenced him to 10 years with seven years suspended.

The sentence was within the recommended state guidelines, which called for an active sentence of between just over two years to five and a half years.

Cheyenne Marie Phillips, 20, died as the result of a Christmas Eve 2017 crash on Lawyers Road off Courthouse Road. A 2007 Chevrolet Cobalt driven by Morningstar ran off the road, through a fence and overturned several times.

According to evidence presented by prosecutor Stephanie Fitzgerald, Spotsylvania Deputy M. Goosman was in a parking lot on Courthouse Road early that morning when a vehicle went by at high speed. Goosman estimated the vehicle's speed at more than 100 mph.

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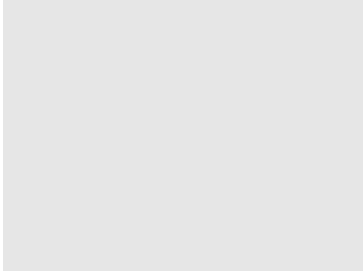
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Goosman pulled onto the road intending to make a traffic stop, but the vehicle was already out of his sight by then. The deputy searched for the speeding vehicle, but didn't see it until learning about the wreck on Lawyers Road a short time later.

Morningstar said Friday that he struggles daily over the loss of the woman who was both his fiancée and the mother of a son they had together not long before the crash. He said he hopes that one day Phillips' family will be able to forgive him.

Fitzgerald argued that Morningstar deserved a sentence above the guidelines, but defense attorney Tim Barbrow asked for mercy. Barbrow pointed out there were no drugs or alcohol involved.

“It was a tragic accident and he took full responsibility,” Barbrow said. “It’s just a sad, sad story all the way around.”



Morningstar

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