

BREAKING

## Ex-softball coach already serving 184 years for child molestation gets 106 more in Spotsylvania

Keith Epps

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**A** former softball coach from Orange County had another 106 years added Monday to the already whopping prison term she's accumulated for molesting two girls starting in the 1990s.

Cathy Smith Rothgeb, 58, was sentenced in Spotsylvania County Circuit Court to 106 years for 11 felony convictions that include multiple counts of forcible sodomy, object sexual penetration and indecent liberties.

Combined with the 184 years she received in Orange for charges involving the same victims, Rothgeb is now serving a total of 290 years.

Rothgeb was convicted in Spotsylvania in November by Judge Ricardo Rigual, who sentenced her Monday.

According to the evidence presented by Commonwealth's Attorney Travis Bird and prosecutor Rob Foss, the victims were members of Rothgeb's softball teams during her many years as a volunteer softball coach. She also coached at Orange High School.

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One girl was 9 when the abuse started in the early 1990s and continued until she was 15. Court records show that Rothgeb provided coaching instruction at the girl's home in Orange multiple times a week and befriended the girl's mother.

She told the child that she loved her and nicknamed her "Baby Cakes," according to the evidence. The victim said she didn't tell anyone about the abuse because Rothgeb had convinced her that she would be taken away from her mother if anyone found out.

Court records show that when the girl was 15, Rothgeb drove the teen to a back road and put a gun to her head. She told the teen she would harm the girl, her family and herself if she told anybody about the sexual contact.

Most of that child's abuse occurred in Orange, but there were several incidents in Spotsylvania as well, including one at a county motel where the victim had a birthday party.

About the time the first victim turned 15, Rothgeb turned her attention to a second girl, who was also 15 at the time. That attention lasted into the victim's early adult years.

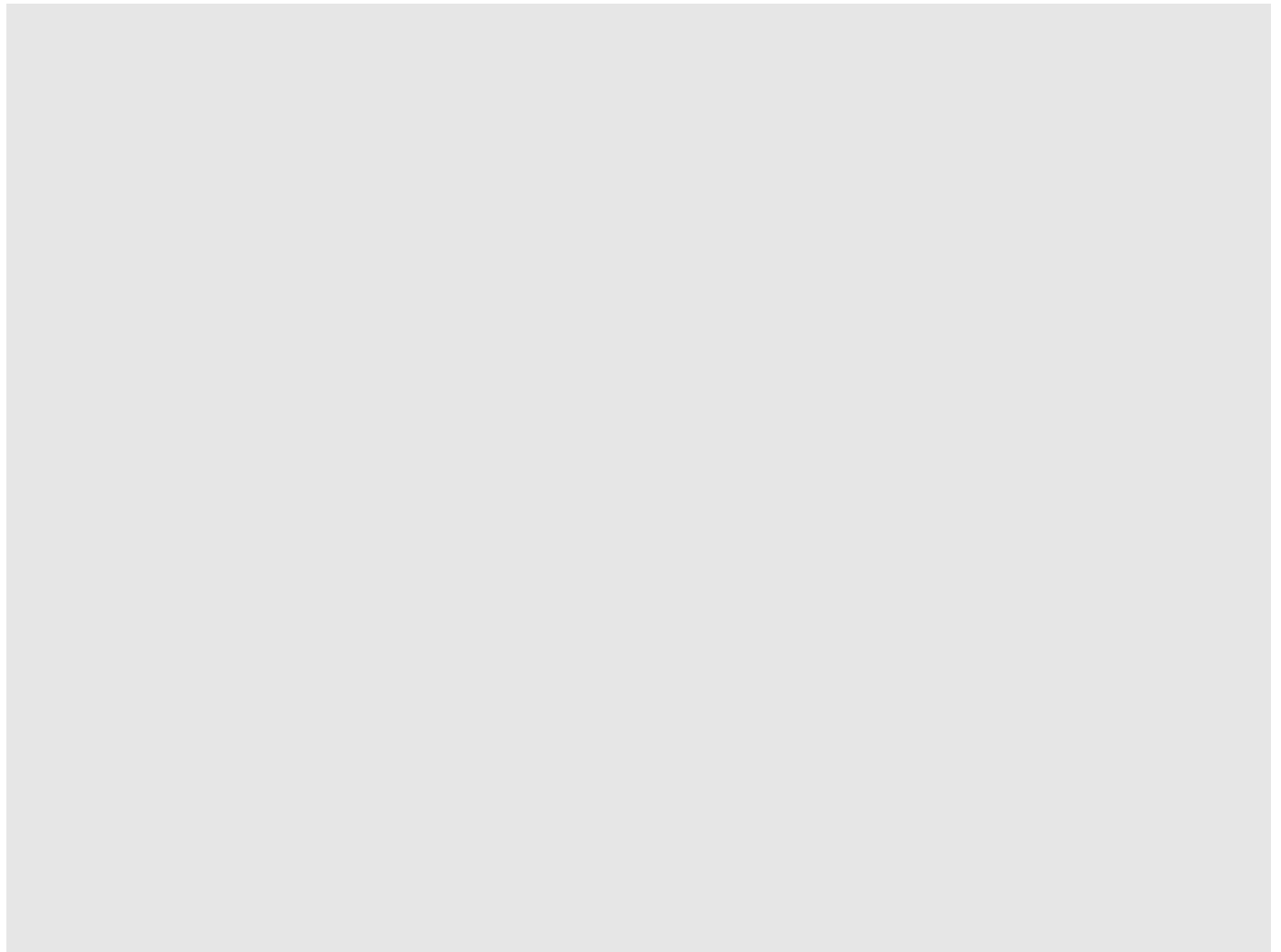
Rothgeb frequently told the second victim that she loved her and talked about using her son's semen to impregnate the girl so they could have a child together, according to the evidence.

When Orange County High School won the state softball championship, Rothgeb had her initials placed in the victim's championship ring and had the victim's initials placed in hers.

The second victim was a freshman in college when she decided to end the relationship. During a conversation at a motel, Rothgeb allowed the now young woman to see a gun she had. The victim told Rothgeb she'd have to go ahead and kill her because she was no longer going to live in fear.

During Monday's sentencing, both victims referred to comments attributed to Rothgeb that she "shouldn't go to jail for loving someone." Bird told the judge, "Don't sent her to jail for loving someone ... send her to prison for violating the innocence of children."

Attorney Wendy Harris represented Rothgeb in the Spotsylvania cases.



Rothgeb

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