

EDITOR'S PICK

Locust Grove woman gets 9 years for taking \$240,000 from nursing home resident

Keith Epps

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SHE WILL SERVE 9 YEARS FOR EMBEZZLING FROM HANDICAPPED 'FRIEND'

Newman

Phil Jenkins

Keith Epps

A 70-year-old Locust Grove woman was ordered Tuesday to serve nine years in prison for stealing more than \$240,000 from a woman she'd befriended in a nursing home.

Carol Ann Newman, 70, had previously pleaded guilty in Spotsylvania Circuit Court to six felony embezzlement charges. Judge Joseph Ellis sentenced her to 30 years in prison, with all but nine years suspended.

Ellis' sentence far exceeded the recommended state sentencing guidelines, which called for a maximum penalty of just over five years.

The evidence presented by Commonwealth's Attorney Travis Bird showed that Newman met the victim, Arlene Raynor, years ago while teaching a crafts class at a nursing home in Northern Virginia.

Raynor, 66, who is wheelchair-bound and has no living relatives, gave Newman power of attorney after suffering a stroke.

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Newman performed her duties correctly at first, the investigation showed, but began draining the woman's large retirement account in 2008. Between then and 2014, Newman set up multiple personal accounts and a business account using Raynor's money. She also sent about \$41,000 to Ghana, Africa, for what turned out to be a romance scam.

Raynor had lived in the Northern Virginia home for about a decade before learning she could no longer afford it. She then spent a year in a Fredericksburg-area home before that also became too expensive.

She is now living in a home in Culpeper and her bill is being paid by the federal government.

"Ms. Raynor was very popular and content at the Northern Virginia facility, but thanks to Ms. Newman, for the rest of her life she won't be able to live where she wanted to," Bird said. "The same thing should happen to Ms. Newman, at least for an extended period of time."

Bird also apologized to Raynor for referring to Newman as her friend.

"[Raynor] was never her friend. She was just a piggy bank [Newman] could raid," he said.

Newman apologized several times Tuesday, but her remorse was too late for Ellis, who said her actions "shocked the conscience of the court."

Ellis also ordered Newman to pay \$241,000 in restitution, though he acknowledged it was unlikely Raynor would ever see that money.

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