

Boonsboro woman gets probation in DUI crash that hurt passenger



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by Don Aines

A Washington County District Court judge on Wednesday sentenced a Boonsboro woman to probation before

judgment after she pleaded guilty to drunken driving in a June crash that pierced her vehicle with 90 feet of guardrail and injured a passenger.

Traffic accident

District Judge Mark D. Thomas placed Patricia Anne Evans, 51, of Gilardi Road on 18 months of supervised probation, and also ordered her to undergo evaluation and treatment as necessary.

Probation before judgment allows a conviction to be stricken if a defendant successfully completes the terms of probation.

A Washington County Sheriff's Office deputy responded to a one-vehicle crash on Edgewood Drive at 2:18 a.m. on June 13, Assistant State's Attorney Leon Debes told the judge.

A deputy measured a 250-foot set of tire tracks from where the vehicle left the road and struck the guardrail, he said.

The guardrail had gone through the engine and passenger compartments, with "approximately 90 feet of guardrail sticking out the back of the vehicle," Debes said.

A witness told a deputy the vehicle was traveling at a high rate of speed and could be heard accelerating before going out of sight around a bend. The witness heard the crash and went to the scene, he said.

"In his opinion, she was obviously drunk," Debes said of the witness' observation of Evans.

The passenger, Domingo Luyo, was taken to a Baltimore hospital for treatment, he said.

Evans refused a blood test, but police subpoenaed test results from Meritus Medical Center where she was treated. Those results showed a blood-alcohol level of about twice the presumptive legal limit for intoxication, he said.

Evans pleaded guilty to driving under the influence, which carries a maximum sentence of one year in jail.

Debes told Thomas that the prosecution looked into whether Evans could be charged with driving under the influence resulting in life-threatening injuries, which carries a three-year maximum sentence.

However, Luyo's doctor described the injury as "limb-threatening," rather than life-threatening, he said.

Had the guardrail pierced the vehicle a few inches differently in either direction, the crash could have been deadly, Debes said.

John Salvatore, Evans' attorney, requested probation before judgment, noting that she had no prior major traffic offenses and has attended counseling since the crash.

Evans had also lost a son in a crash in 2001 in which she was not at fault, and alcohol was not involved, he told the judge.