

Motorist, 38, sentenced to year in jail after drunk driving crash

Friday, Sept. 28, 2007

A Lexington Park man who pleaded guilty to driving while under the influence from a two-vehicle crash last December that seriously injured a teenager has been sentenced to serve one year in jail.

A judge ordered Thomas Michael Rothman, 38, a petty officer first class at Patuxent River Naval Air Station, begin serving the first 30 days of his sentence last week and the remainder starting next July .

Two days before Christmas last year, Brittany Ann Bodnar, now 19, of Valley Lee was driving a 1997 Chevrolet Cavalier south on Route 235 near Hermanville when Rothman's 1995 Toyota sport utility vehicle pulled out from a private driveway and collided with the car, according to a report by Trooper M.R. Grimes of the Maryland State Police.

Bodnar, who joined the Lexington Park Volunteer Rescue Squad shortly before the crash, has undergone surgery six times resulting in almost \$300,000 in medical expenses since the accident, St. Mary's Assistant State's Attorney Kevin McDevitt said after last week's sentencing hearing before District Judge Robert Riddle.

"Her legs were shattered. Her ankles were shattered," McDevitt said.

Bodnar and Rothman were taken to St. Mary's Hospital after the crash, police reports state, and a blood test revealed Rothman had a blood-alcohol content of .27 percent.

In a letter to the court, a Navy captain wrote that Rothman had won Sailor of the Year honors in his mission program, combat air medals while serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and was a runner-up for the Naval Air System Command's Sailor of the Year.

John Wharton