

News Release

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Contact: Naomi Nation
(843) 958-1945
Naomi@scsolicitor9.org

Felony DUI results in nine year sentence

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Sixty-one year old Samuel Thompson, Jr. of Moncks Corner, SC, abruptly changed his mind and entered a plea of guilty just before the beginning of the second day of testimony in his trial on charges of Felony Driving Under the Influence. Testimony at trial revealed that on September 20, 2011, Thompson struck a car occupied by Margaret Deas on I-26 Eastbound near the Rutledge Avenue exit at approximately 1:45. Mrs. Deas, age 77, died from internal injuries hours after the accident. Circuit Judge Deadra Jefferson sentenced Thompson to a term of nine years with the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Under the sentencing law governing Felony DUI, Thompson is not eligible for parole.

Witnesses had told the jury that the car driven by Thompson was travelling at a high rate of speed when it swerved and struck the guard rail and careened into the center median and then the vehicle driven by Deas. Two opened mini-bottles of banana schnapps were found in Thompson's vehicle after the accident. Thompson was also reported to be acting in an intoxicated manner at the scene and later at the hospital. Assistant Solicitor Gregory Voigt told the court that the next witness, a toxicologist, was prepared to testify that the blood sample taken from Thompson at the hospital revealed a blood alcohol level of .238, nearly three times the legal limit.

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