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AURORA WOMAN GETS PRISON TERM FOR MAY 2009 FATAL CRASH THAT KILLED TWO ON MOTORCYCLE ON ROUTE 47 JUDGE DECIDED AGAINST PROBATION SENTENCE, ISSUES 7-YEAR TERM

February 8, 2012

An Aurora woman will serve a prison term for a May 2009 crash on Route 47 in which two people were killed and several others were injured.

Alia N. Bernard, 27 (d.o.b. 7-30-1984), of the 1500 block of West Galena Boulevard, Aurora, was sentenced today by Associate Judge Allen M. Anderson to seven years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

On Dec. 9, 2011, Bernard pleaded guilty to two counts of aggravated DUI, each a Class 2 felony.

At about 8:20 a.m. May 23, 2009, at the intersection of Route 47 and Smith Road in Blackberry Township south of Elburn, a vehicle in the southbound lane on Route 47 had stopped to turn left onto Smith Road, waiting for several northbound motorcycles to pass. Two additional southbound vehicles had stopped behind it. A fourth southbound vehicle, a 1999 Toyota Solara driven by Bernard, approached and struck the third vehicle in the rear. The collision created a chain reaction that pushed the third vehicle into the path of the oncoming motorcycles. A 2000 Harley-Davidson Softtail struck the third vehicle, and motorcycle's driver, Wade Thomas, 44, of St. Charles, and the passenger, his wife, Denise Thomas, 45, also of St. Charles, were killed. Toxicology tests showed that Bernard had marijuana in her system at the time of the crash.

Bernard was sentenced to seven years in prison on each count – one count for each victim killed in the crash. The terms are to be served concurrently.

According to Illinois law, Bernard must serve at least 85 percent of the sentence. She was given credit for 1 day in the Kane County jail. Bernard had been free on \$5,000 bond.

The case was prosecuted by Kane County Assistant State's Attorney Jody Gleason.