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Castle Rock Man Sentenced to Community Corrections in Deadly DUI Crash

Castle Rock, CO 28-year-old Samuel Robert Michael from Castle Rock has been sentenced to four years in community corrections for a deadly DUI crash that killed 69-year-old Kraig Kazda and injured his wife, Michelle.

The sentence came despite strong arguments from the District Attorney's Office and the victim's family urging the court to incarcerate him. Michael also had previously pled guilty to several charges in the case including vehicular homicide, DUI, and careless driving resulting in serious bodily injury.

On February 22, 2025, the couple were walking to their car in a crosswalk at North Wilcox and First Street in Castle Rock when Michael, driving a Ford F-150, struck them. Kraig Kazda later died from his injuries, and Michelle sustained head and knee trauma.

Responding Castle Rock Police officers noted a strong odor of alcohol coming from Michael and observed slurred speech. Michael refused to complete field sobriety tests, but a subsequent blood test several hours later revealed a blood alcohol level more than one and half times the legal limit.

During the sentencing hearing, the court heard more than two hours of emotional testimony from family members and responding officers. Kraig and Michelle had met as teenagers and had recently moved to Castle Rock from Montana to be closer to their grandchildren.

The family says they were “shocked and disappointed” with the sentence and will push for stricter punishment for DUI offenders. “There’s no real consequence to drinking and driving and apparently killing someone,” said Burtel Bailey, the Kazda’s son-in-law. “I definitely think the laws need to change in Colorado.”

Castle Rock Police Chief Jack Cauley commended the work of his officers while acknowledging the family’s disappointment. “This was a heartbreaking and completely preventable tragedy,” said Cauley.” Our officers helped ensure justice was served for the Kazda family. No sentence can undo the pain caused, but accountability matters.”

Chief Deputy District Attorney Jake Adkins and Senior Deputy DA Corrie Caler thanked law enforcement and said the DA’s Office will continue to advocate for stronger punishment for drunk drivers. “The penalties in this case fall short of what the family and our community deserve,” said Caler.

Adkins added, “There are crimes in Colorado that guarantee prison time. Somehow driving drunk and killing someone isn’t one of them. Until lawmakers fix that, we’ll keep seeing outcomes like this one that do little to deter future senseless deaths.”

District Attorney George Brauchler called the case a sobering reminder of the need for legislative reform. “If you drive drunk and kill someone, you can walk out on probation,” said Brauchler. “If we’re going to value life, then by God, we need to change vehicular homicide to make it a mandatory prison charge.”

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