
Man gets probation in senior's death

By Kerry Tesoriero
Staff Writer

A Stamford man who backed a truck over a 79-year-old woman last year in Shippan, killing her, was sentenced yesterday to two years probation.

Eleferios Koutinas, 31, of 65 Van Buskirk Ave., had pleaded guilty to criminally negligent homicide with a motor vehicle in the July 2, 1999, accident that killed Carmen Salazar Rueda.

Assistant State's Attorney Steve Weiss sought a three-month prison sentence for Koutinas.

"He shouldn't have been driving in the first place," Weiss said yesterday, noting Rueda's license had been suspended.

The victim's son said he was disappointed that he was informed about the sentencing after it had been completed.

Koutinas' attorney, John Thygerson of Norwalk, argued for Koutinas to receive a suspended prison sentence, pay fines and make a contribution to charity.

Judge Richard Tobin issued a nine-month suspended prison sentence, followed by two years probation, \$1,200 in fines and a \$500 charitable donation.

The victim's family may

choose the charity that receives Koutinas' donation, according to the sentence.

Salazar Rueda's son, Julio Moncayo Salazar, said yesterday he was disappointed that he was informed about the sentencing after it had been completed. Moncayo, who speaks only Spanish, said would have liked to attend the sentencing.

He also said he believes his

mother's death warranted a stricter sentence.

Salazar Rueda, who walked using a cane, was waiting to cross Shippan Avenue when Koutinas was backing out of a driveway in his employer's box truck.

A witness saw Salazar Rueda fall to the ground and the truck roll over her, according to a police report.

She was trapped under the truck until Stamford firefighters removed her. She died four hours later at Stamford Hospital. A medical examiner determined the cause of death was multiple blunt force injuries.

— *Special Correspondent Fabiola Trivino contributed to this story.*