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Salem Statesman Journal

March 21, 2025

The Salem veterinarian who [pleaded guilty in February to driving drunk and killing a 26-year-old woman](#) in a 2023 hit-and-run was sentenced Friday to nearly 10 years in prison.

Eric Webb, 51, was [charged with manslaughter](#), but pleaded down to a reduced charge of criminally negligent homicide, in addition to failure to perform duties of driver to seriously injured persons, driving under the influence of intoxicants and aggravated driving while suspended or revoked. He was scheduled to begin a three-day bench trial the day he pleaded guilty.

Prosecutor David Wilson asked Marion County Judge Tracy Prall to impose a 10-year sentence, citing Webb's eight previous DUI convictions and previous time incarcerated.

"This case is being framed as a case that's about addiction," Wilson said. "The state won't deny that there's an addiction involved here, but this case goes beyond addiction."

Prall chose to impose a sentence of 117 months. For the last 45 months, Webb will be eligible for alternative incarceration programs. She said her decision was made with the intent of encouraging Webb to get treatment for his substance use issues.

"This crash was avoidable, was 100% avoidable," Prall said. "Mr. Webb has been given so many opportunities to recognize that his addiction is one that controls his life and to make the choice to stop driving."

Prall described Webb's choice to flee the scene as "egregious" and said it is evident how "strong of a hold" addiction has on him.

Webb read a statement to the court, apologizing to the family of Julia Aubrey Wade, who died as a result of the crash, and expressing his regret for the choices he made.

"Not one single day goes by, not one single second passes by, that I don't think about them and this accident and what they must be going through," Webb said. "My actions are inexcusable and deplorable and I'm so sorry ... I wish I could apologize to Ms. Wade in person and God hope she hears me now."

Wade's mother, who did not identify herself, shared a brief statement in court. She asked Prall to impose the 10-year sentence Wilson recommended.

"He chose to drink and get drunk, he chose to drive, he hit my daughter and left her there," she said. "Nothing will bring my daughter Aubrey back, but hopefully if given a long enough sentence, Eric Webb will be able to achieve sobriety, get his mental health in order."

Hit-and-run injures 26-year-old who later died in coma

On Jan. 21, 2023, Salem Police [responded](#) to a hit-and-run at about 8:30 p.m. at the intersection of Lancaster Drive and Rickey Street SE, police said. Wade was found seriously injured and taken to Salem Health hospital.

She was later transferred to Oregon Health & Science University in Portland where she remained in a coma until April 27, 2023, when she died, according to a [GoFundMe](#).

Wilson said the truck Webb was driving was registered to him, despite having previously had his license revoked for life.

Witnesses who called 911 said the crash looked "bad" and said the driver "fled the scene," leaving Wade in the roadway, according to the probable cause statement for Webb's arrest.

A driver behind Webb said he saw Webb's pickup truck traveling at about 45 to 50 mph and the light at the intersection turned yellow as Webb drove through it, according to the statement.

The driver said he saw "a body flying through the air above the pickup," and saw Webb's truck pull over briefly before accelerating away and driving west on Highway 22, according to the statement. The driver followed Webb, saw him drive through a red light, get onto Interstate 5 and accelerate up to about 90 mph. Another witness said he believed Webb was driving at least 60 mph prior to the crash.

Webb's vehicle was located by Keizer Police, who said he began to "actively elude them," before he was stopped and arrested. While being taken to a DUI room for questioning, Webb said "he knew he was going to prison" and "he did not know how someone could of survived something like that," police allege in the probable cause statement.

Webb, a small-animal vet at The Pet Clinic, told police he had left a late work Christmas party where he had two beers, according to the statement. He also confirmed he had taken his seizure medication that day and he had been warned against consuming alcohol while taking the medication, police said in the statement said. Wilson said Webb later told his wife he'd had four drinks.

Webb acknowledged hitting a pedestrian and said he "believed they were dead," police allege in the statement. He told police he "believed he was going to prison and wanted to enjoy the last moments of freedom he had left," so he left the scene, police allege in the statement.

The arresting officer said in the statement Webb had an "odor of an alcoholic beverage" on his breath, his eyes were watery and his face was flushed.

Wilson said Webb's blood alcohol concentration at the time of the crash would have been about 0.06%, below the legal limit of 0.08%, but the other drugs in his system, used for seizures and migraines, would have interacted with the alcohol. He said other drivers would

have testified at trial that they saw Wade running across the street and Webb would have been able to stop had he been sober.

Webb had history of DUII convictions, records show

Webb has eight previous DUII convictions dating back to 2008, according to court records. In his most recent DUII conviction in 2019, he was sentenced to two and a half years in prison and his driver's license was suspended for life.

He also has previous convictions for fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, tampering with physical evidence, criminal driving while suspended, violating the open-container law, recklessly endangering another person, aggravated assault and second-degree criminal mischief.

Webb was on post-prison supervision and was enrolled in Bridgeway Recovery Services drug and alcohol treatment at the time of the crash.