

Man sentenced to prison in bicyclist's death Victim's family tells of loss of son, husband and father

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By [FRANCIS MCCABE](#)

The loss of her son in a drugged driving crash is a wound that won't heal, Sharon Berger told a District Court judge Wednesday.

"It's like a hole in my heart that never goes away," Berger said during her tearful testimony at a sentencing hearing for the man who killed her son, Gary Lommason.

Charley Matanza, 52, was driving a Chevrolet Suburban about 3 p.m. June 29, 2009, when he drove onto a sidewalk and hit Lommason, who was riding a bicycle near Desert Inn and Sandhill roads.

The 43-year-old was entangled by the Suburban's undercarriage and dragged. He was pronounced dead after being taken to a nearby hospital.

Matanza, who has a history of drug use, was using Xanax and passed out while driving at the time of the crash. On Wednesday he was sentenced to six to 20 years in prison by Judge David Barker.

Lommason was married and a father of three. He was in the U.S. Army reserve and served in two wars in the Middle East. In Las Vegas, he worked as a security guard for Boulder Station, patrolling parking lots on a bicycle.

Including his mother and wife, five members of Lommason's family asked the judge to sentence Matanza to the maximum allowed under the law, which was eight to 20 years.

Barbara Lommason testified that her husband's death has turned her family upside down.

She described how she had to explain the death six times to her daughter, who was 8 at the time.

"I miss talking to him. I miss hearing about his day and telling him about mine. I miss his hugs and his kisses. I miss holding hands as we walked through the mall or casino or whatever. I miss hearing him laugh as he woke up his youngest daughter every morning by tickling her awake. She misses that too," Barbara Lommason said.

At the hearing, Matanza apologized to the family for his actions and asked for their forgiveness.

Matanza pleaded guilty in July to driving under the influence of drugs causing death.

Contact reporter Francis McCabe at fmccabe@reviewjournal.com or 702-380-1039.

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