

Accused Drunk Driver Could Get Up To 28 Years In Prison

by Sanford Schmidt
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EDWARDSVILLE - Blake A. Jones, 18, of the 8200 block of Renken Road, Worden could serve a 28-year prison term for the Aug. 13 drunk driving deaths of a well-loved Bethalto family of three.

Jones was charged Thursday with six counts of aggravated driving with a blood alcohol of 0.8 percent or more resulting in death and three counts of reckless homicide.

Killed Aug 13 were John A. Cafazza, 55; Melissa R. Cafazza, 52; and Dominic J. Cafazza, 12. Hundreds attended a candlelight vigil for the family shortly after their deaths.

John Cafazza was driving a BMW 595I and stopped at Bethalto Road and McCoy Road in Foster Township, attempting to make a left turn on McCoy Road from Bethalto Road, according to a news release from Coroner Steve Nonn.

Witnesses said Blake was driving a 2003 GMC Sierra east on McCoy Road at 67 mph in a 40 mph zone and failed to stop at the stop sign. The Sierra collided with the driver's side of the BMW.

Blake was charged with an enhanced version of the law, which would make him subject to up to 14 years consecutive terms on each charge. His bail is \$1 million. He must serve at least 85 percent of the sentence.

The charges are enhanced because three people died in the crash. Normally a conviction on those charges would result in a prison term of three to seven years.

The family was members of Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Bethalto.

Melissa, also known as Missy, was a physical education teacher at Our Lady Queen of Peace School and taught aerobics at Fitness and Fun for 25 years, the obituary said.

"John had a passion for music and loved to play guitar," the obit said. He also enjoyed sports, cooking and playing sports with his four sons.

"Dominic loved spending time with his brothers, who he looked up to and adored," the obituary said. He played soccer and baseball and attended Wilbur Trimpe Middle School.