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Former Clackamas deputy sentenced over relationship with cadet

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By Tom Wolfe, The Oregonian

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OREGON CITY -- A former Clackamas County deputy pleaded guilty today to a charge stemming from his sexual relationship with 17-year-old Sheriff's Office cadet.

The case of Donald Louis Mainero, 31, took a surprising twist when the judge agreed to dismiss a count of contributing to the sexual delinquency of a minor at the urging of the victim, now 18. She told the court that she plans to marry Mainero. The delinquency charge would brand him as a sex offender and threaten their financial future.

"I'm not apologizing for falling in love with Don Mainero," she said. "I'm a teenager. My feelings overcame my judgment."

Mainero, who was also originally charged with sex abuse, pleaded guilty in a plea bargain to official misconduct, a misdemeanor, for violating a Clackamas County Sheriff's Office order involving cadets that prohibits "fraternization, close social relationships or dating."

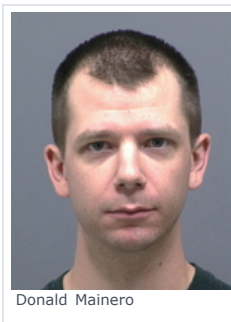
Clackamas County Circuit Judge Douglas K. Van Dyk sentenced Mainero to 20 days in jail, 80 hours of community service and three years' probation.

Mainero spoke briefly. He said he regretted bringing shame to the Sheriff's Office but echoed his fiancee's sentiment and would not "apologize for falling in love."

Deputy District Attorney Mike Regan urged the judge to deny the compromise because Mainero knew that he was violating orders and also had sex with a second female cadet, who was an adult.

Several Oregon law-enforcement agencies experienced sex-abuse scandals involving cadet programs in recent years, but the Mainero case does not represent a pattern of criminal abuse in the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, according to several current and former department employees and cadets.

-- Steve Mayes: stevemayes@news.oregonian.com



Donald Mainero

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