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Crash victim remembered as loving person

By CARY CASTAGNA, POLICE REPORTER

Crystal Ann Taman will be remembered as the pillar of her family, a devoted dental assistant and a loving human being who had a warm embrace for everyone she met. Hundreds of mourners packed Cropo Funeral Chapel yesterday afternoon to pay their final respects to the 40-year-old mother of three killed last Friday in a three-vehicle crash in which a Winnipeg police officer has been charged.

"Mom loved everyone. She didn't have to know you to like you," her family said in a statement read by Rev. Don McIntyre.

No friends or relatives spoke at the funeral but in another statement read by McIntyre, Cory Encontre described her sister as the "heart of the family" and the "strongest person I've ever known." Taman was also remembered for her sense of humour, including an ability to imitate Homer Simpson.

Among her volunteer activities, the member of the Manitoba Metis Federation had been serving as a vice-chairwoman for one of the organization's 22 chapters.

SAD TIME FOR EVERYBODY

MMF president David Chartrand told The Sun yesterday Taman helped promote Metis rights and recruit new members. "It's a sad time clearly for everybody," Chartrand said.

Red MADD (Mothers Against Drinking and Driving) ribbons were handed out at the funeral. A Cropo employee estimated there were about 700 people in attendance.

Taman was stopped at a red light on Highway 59 north of the Perimeter Highway about 7 a.m. Friday, when her 1991 Chevrolet Sprint convertible was rear-ended by a 1995 Dodge Dakota truck.

Derek Harvey-Zenk, a Winnipeg cop, is charged with impaired driving causing death, refusing a breathalyser, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death and criminal negligence causing death.

A former correctional officer at Headingley Jail, Harvey-Zenk, 31, has been placed on paid administrative leave and has had his driver's licence revoked.

The constable was allegedly drinking with other officers at a lounge in the Garden City area last Thursday night, a source said. He was driving to his Winnipeg home from East St. Paul when the crash occurred, a source said.

Harvey-Zenk was "very quiet" following the fatal collision, East St. Paul Police Chief Harry Bakema said yesterday. "He appeared very distraught and never really spoke."

Harvey-Zenk graduated from Winnipeg police recruit class No. 132 in November 2001 and plays on a hockey team made up of corrections officers.

East St. Paul police have asked for assistance from the Winnipeg police professional standards unit. An RCMP traffic analyst has also joined the investigation. "If there are some people who drove by and maybe didn't stop, we'd like them to come forward," Bakema said.

East St. Paul police Sgt. Norm Carter said there have been about a half-dozen other

accidents, none fatal, at that same intersection in the two or three years it has existed.