

Man pleads guilty to felony assault

A Geneva man pleaded guilty Monday to a felony assault in an alcohol-related crash that left a military pilot paralyzed.

Stephen Smith, an assistant district attorney for Geneva County, said Kenneth Smith pleaded guilty to the charge Monday in front of Circuit Court Judge Ben McLaughlin.

Kenneth Earl Smith, 36, faces between two and 20 years in prison for the first-degree assault conviction. He will be sentenced later.

Smith was also charged with driving under the influence in the crash, which was his fifth DUI. But Stephen Smith said it was Kenneth Smith's first DUI conviction since 1996. The June 24, 2007, crash left Florin Hinrichs, 28, severely injured.

Stephen Smith said Hinrichs, who is from Germany, was at Fort Rucker doing his helicopter flight training. Hinrichs was a passenger in a vehicle struck by the car driven by Kenneth Smith at the intersection of Alabama Highway 27 and Geneva County 64.