

SPARTANBURG COUNTY MAN RECEIVES 21-YEAR PRISON TERM FOR ALCOHOL-RELATED FATALITY

A Spartanburg County man received a 21-year prison sentence today for causing an alcohol-related traffic fatality.

Circuit Judge Derham Cole sentenced Jerry James Carruth, 56, of 82 Arbours West Lane, on a charge of felony driving under the influence with a death. Carruth, who is a repeat DUI offender, will have to serve 85 percent of the sentence before he is eligible for early release. Cole also ordered Carruth to pay a \$10,000 fine.

Carruth took responsibility for the April 5, 2002 traffic accident that claimed the life of Tony Allen Howard, 42, of 510 Sims Chapel Road. The accident occurred about 8:45 p.m. on Highway 221 near the Highway 295. Carruth was traveling south on Highway 221 at a speed of about 100 mph when he slammed his 1997 Buick into the rear of Howard's 1998 Chevrolet pickup. The truck overturned before it came to rest in a ditch on the right shoulder of the road. Carruth's car came to rest off the left shoulder of the road.

"This is as aggravated of a case of felony driving under the influence that we could put before the court," Solicitor Trey Gowdy said during the sentencing hearing.

Howard died as a result of injuries sustained in the wreck. Carruth registered a reading of .20 or higher in blood alcohol tests taken after the wreck.

For more information, contact Murray Glenn at 809-4892.