



Matthew Leske

Leske gets 12 years

Matthew Leske, 20, of Kinston, was sentenced by Geneva Circuit Judge Kenneth Quattlebaum on Thursday for the killing of Brent Cook of Samson on Dec. 26, 2007.

Leske was convicted of manslaughter by a Geneva County jury on June 18, and faced between two and 20 years in prison for the Class B felony.

Both the state and the defense called several witnesses during the sentencing hearing. The mothers of both the victim and the defendant took the stand. The defense also called a psychiatrist who testified that Leske was not a dangerous person and acted reasonably during the tragic events that took place in the early morning hours of Dec. 26.

District Attorney Kirke Adams argued to the court that the true Leske was reflected in his MySpace page where he showed no remorse for his crime. Adams said the defendant never took responsibility for the shooting during the trial and continued to blame others during the sentencing hearing.

Adams said to the court, "The law is clear that the taking of human life in self-defense is reserved for the most extreme circumstances, and this clearly was not one of those circumstances. The jury found the defendant guilty of manslaughter, which means that 12 people concluded that he was aware of the risk in his actions with the rifle and he recklessly disregarded those risks, which resulted in Brent Cook's death."

Quattlebaum reviewed all the evidence and pronounced all the aggravating and mitigating circumstances that he found and then sentenced Leske to 12 years and remanded him to custody to begin serving his sentence in prison.