

# Man enters plea before trial

## 23-year-old charged with 8 felonies in connection with drive-by

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The second man charged in a drive-by shooting that injured two people last year entered an Alford plea Wednesday.

"It's in my best interest to do so," defendant Jemal Antonio Scott, 23, told the judge when asked if he was pleading guilty because he was guilty.

An Alford plea means the defendant does not admit to the incident, but acknowledges that there is enough evidence to convict him or her.

Scott did so in Lynchburg Circuit Court moments before he was scheduled to face a jury trial on eight felony charges, including two counts of malicious wounding, two counts of shooting from a vehicle, two counts of using a firearm during a felony, possessing a firearm as a felon and maliciously discharging a firearm.

Defense attorney William Quillian said after the hearing that his client had gone



**Scott**

back and forth about how to deal with the situation.

"I know it has been a decision he'd thought and prayed about," Quillian said. "He's probably (pleading) to save a lot of people from going through a very trying and painful experience."

The charges against Scott stem from an incident Oct. 13, 2004 when witnesses told police that Scott and Kevin Napier, 23, drove by 1003 Pierce Street and opened fire on the small group of people sitting out front.

Jeremy Hubbard, 18, was shot in the foot and Desmond Jackson, 19, was hit in

the back as they scrambled for their lives, Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Chuck Felmlee told Judge Mosby Perrow.

Scott initially lied to police about his involvement, but after learning that codefendant Napier had confessed and implicated him, he admitted he was there and said he had fired only one shot, Felmlee said.

Scott told police that Hubbard had flashed a gun at them earlier that day. Napier told police the same story, adding that he found it disrespectful that Hubbard

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