

Both men arrested by Indiana State Police on June 28 with a reported ten pounds or more of raw marijuana in their car have entered not guilty pleas in Scott Circuit Court.

A 2011 Chevy Impala was stopped in northbound traffic just before 9 a.m. that Saturday near the 28 mile marker of Interstate 65. The stop was made by ISP Master Trooper Josh Banet based on a traffic infraction he had observed. Banet is a member of the ISP Interdiction Team from the Sellersburg post.

Trp. Banet reported that while he was talking to the two occupants, he smelled "...the overwhelming odor of raw marijuana..." coming from the car. He called the post, requesting Trp. Nathan Abbott and his dog, Kilo. When the officer and trained drug-detecting dog arrived, Kilo "alerted" when walked around the vehicle, indicating the presence or odor of illegal narcotics.

A subsequent search of the car revealed around ten pounds of marijuana. It was packaged in one-gallon plastic bags.

Street value was estimated at over \$10,000.

Kentel C. Peoples, 23, of Alpharetta, Ga., and his passenger, Thomas McElwain Jr., 22, of Indianapolis, were both placed in custody and transported to the Scott County Security Center in Scottsburg.

Men arrested in car on I-65 with raw marijuana plead not guilty to charges

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On June 29, each was charged in Scott Superior Court with dealing in marijuana and possession of marijuana, both Class D felonies. Peoples was also charged with maintaining a common nuisance, another D felony, while McElwain was charged with visiting a common nuisance, a Class A misdemeanor.

During their initial court hearings, each entered not guilty pleas and Pro Tem Judge Joseph Payne set their jury trials for September 18.

Their bonds were each set at \$30,000 corporate surety or 10% cash.

McElwain was assigned a public defender, according to court records.