

Man who allegedly discharged gun in apartment awaits trial behind bars

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A peculiar incident at a northside Austin apartment on November 12 has resulted in a man awaiting trial on several felony charges behind bars.

Lawrence Abner, 33, Austin, reportedly went into a neighbor's apartment and fired a handgun into the floor.

Statements from the apartment's occupants related that Abner came into the apartment and wanted to sell the gun, a .22 caliber Sturm Ruger automatic, to the couple. Abner allegedly wanted the male to go into a bedroom with him, but the man said he was unsure of Abner's intentions and refused to do so.

Shortly after, the gun was discharged into the apartment floor, and the male fled to another apartment, while the female barricaded herself in a bathroom.

Captain Paul Clute and Patrolman Derek Smith were dispatched to the apartment building on Wilbur Avenue. Capt. Clute talked to Abner while outside the apartment door, trying to get Abner to willingly open the door.

After some hesitation, Abner walked outside. He was placed in handcuffs and patted down, but no gun was found on him. Officers did locate a controlled substance on the suspect, however.

Entering the apartment, Capt. Clute reported finding bullets and a loaded handgun lying on the bottom shelf of an end table. It was identified by the couple as the weapon Abner was trying to sell.

Abner was placed under arrest and transported to the Scott County Security Center. There, jailers said they found a bullet and a hypodermic needle on Abner as he was being processed.

Charges filed in the case include a Class B felony of unlawful possession of a firearm by a serious violent felony and Class D felonies of criminal recklessness and possession of a syringe. Abner was also charged with possession of a controlled substance, identified as Alprazolam.

Abner's initial hearing was held in Scott Circuit Court on Thursday, November 15. His jury trial is scheduled for April 1, and he has received the services of a public defender. Bond is set at \$75,000 corporate surety/full cash.

Abner has been transferred to the Clark County Jail in Jeffersonville to await his trial.