



# JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### RONALD G. McCONNELL, CARBONDALE, FOUND GUILTY OF UNLAWFUL USE OF A WEAPON AND UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF CANNABIS

A Jackson County Jury returned guilty verdicts on two criminal counts against Ronald G. McConnell, 35, of Carbondale, Illinois, for Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon and Unlawful Possession of Cannabis following a three-day jury trial, the State's Attorney for Jackson County, Illinois, Michael C. Carr, announced today.

On December 23, 2015, at approximately 4:00 p.m., the Carbondale Police Department received a 9-1-1 call from a resident of an apartment building on East Park Street in Carbondale. The caller advised that he observed a dark colored SUV occupied by two males drive into a parking spot of the apartment complex and begin conducting what he believed to be a drug transaction. The caller described seeing money and bags being passed back and forth and reported the driver of the vehicle was waving a handgun.

Officers of the Carbondale Police Department arrived within minutes of the 9-1-1 call and located two people in the suspect vehicle which was being driven by Ronald G. McConnell. While speaking to the occupants, officers noticed a strong odor of raw cannabis coming from the vehicle. During a pat down search, officers found the passenger to be in possession of \$1,026 cash and a small amount of cannabis and McConnell to be in possession of \$630 cash. Officers determined the vehicle was a rental leased to a third person. The rental company advised that neither male had permission to drive the vehicle and requested that the vehicle be towed from the scene. Prior to the tow, the officers searched the vehicle and located a loaded Colt 1911 .45 caliber handgun and two large clear bags of what later tested positive for cannabis weighing over 38 grams under the driver seat.

Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon is a non-probationable Class 4 felony and carries a maximum sentence of up to three (3) years in the Department of Corrections. Unlawful Possession of Cannabis, 30 to 100 grams, is a Class A misdemeanor and is a probation-eligible offense.

McConnell's bond was revoked, and he was remanded to the custody of the Jackson County Sheriff where he will remain in custody without bond awaiting sentencing. A sentencing date has not been set at this time.

This case was investigated by the Carbondale Police Department and the Illinois State Police Crime Lab with support from the Jackson County Sheriff's Department. Assistant State's Attorney Andrew Suthard was responsible for the prosecution of this case.