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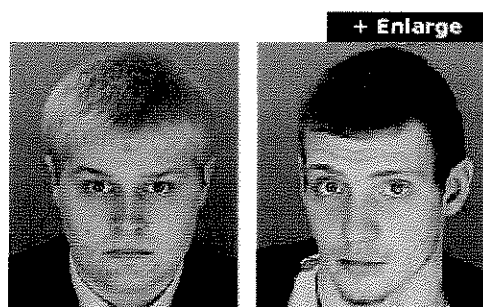
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Men Plead Not Guilty To Burning Cross

Records Show 19-Year-Olds Have Criminal Histories

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Travis Nesbitt & Jonathan Waite

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, Mich. -- Three men have pleaded not guilty to allegedly burning a cross on the property of a black family last year.

Travis Nesbitt and Jonathan Waite entered not-guilty pleas to the charges of ethnic intimidation and conspiracy to commit ethnic intimidation at their Tuesday arraignment in an Independence Township court.

The third man, Joshua Willhite, was arraigned Friday. He is being held on unrelated charges in the Oakland County Jail.

All of the men are 19 years old and have criminal records.

The three are accused of burning a wooden cross in the family's yard on Aug. 13.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) had offered a \$1,000 reward in the case.

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office said investigators received several tips that led them to the three men.

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