



Ryan F. Waldschmidt  
Sheriff

Kevin P. Galske  
Chief Deputy

To: WLECHA Awards Committee

I would like to nominate Deputy Nathan Birkholz and his K9 partner, Rip for Meritorious K-9 Narcotics Find. Deputy Birkholz was partnered with K9 Rip and began their training together at Jessiffany K9 Services, in Iron Ridge WI, November 2022. After 5 weeks of training, and certifying through American Police Canine Association, Deputy Birkholz and K9 Rip became an active K9 unit with the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Office on December 3, 2022.

On March 13, 2023, Deputy Birkholz was requested to assist Wisconsin State Patrol for a free air sniff on a vehicle they had stopped at the location of Interstate 41 northbound and Johnson Street in the Township of Fond du Lac in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin. Deputy Birkholz was advised by the Trooper that the traffic stop was conducted for a window tint violation. Deputy Birkholz deployed K9 Rip on the vehicle for a free air sniff, when K9 Rip immediately jumped on the trunk of the vehicle showing interest and continued on with the search. K9 Rip again showed interest at the trunk of the vehicle and had a change in behavior by pulling Deputy Birkholz towards the open driver side window. With the positive alert due to Rip's indicators, he was rewarded with his ball.

At this time when K9 Rip was returned to the squad car, the driver and a second occupant from the vehicle became increasingly uncooperative. The driver of the vehicle began to show signs of nervous behavior by not standing still, putting his hands in and out of his pockets, and rotating his shoulders. During the search of the vehicle, a clear plastic baggie with a white powder substance was located in the center console cup holder. At this time, the male operator and the male passenger were placed under arrest and a search of the driver of the vehicle revealed another clear plastic baggie with a white powder substance, which was later tested, and a positive result for Fentanyl.

A search of the trunk of this vehicle yielded a large brick which was wrapped in cellophane and also appeared to be heat sealed and covered in grease and wrapped in aluminum foil. This substance was later tested and weighed. The substance tested positive for Cocaine and weighed 1200g (KILO). 3g of Fentanyl was located on the driver's person upon arrest.

Due to the assistance provided by Deputy Birkholz and his K9 partner Rip, without a positive alert on the vehicle, this amount of illegal narcotics may not have been located. Civilians transporting these narcotics, will do all they can to try to mask the odor, such as

this incident with heat shrinking the package, putting oil on the package, and wrapping it in aluminum foil. These are career criminals and good job to Deputy Birkholz and K9 Rip for alerting and taking these drugs off our streets in only their third month as a team.

For these reasons I would like to nominate Deputy Nathan Birkholz and K9 Rip for Meritorious K9 Narcotics Find.

Sergeant Ryan Zitlow

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Zitlow', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Office Canine Coordinator