

To: WLECHA Awards Committee

Summary:

I would like to nominate Marathon County Sheriff's Office Deputy Brandon Stroik and his K9 partner, Csibi, for Meritorious K9 Track with Apprehension. Deputy Stroik conducted a self-initiated traffic stop where driver failed to stop and a pursuit began which reached speeds in excess of 120 MPH. The pursuit ended in a traffic crash where the driver fled on foot. Deputy Stroik and K9 Csibi led a successful 1.5 mile track during cold, 20 degree weather. The track went over numerous different terrains and surfaces and later concluded with the apprehension of the suspect, who was ultimately charged with: Possession of Methamphetamine with Intent to Deliver (434.27 grams), Department of Corrections Warrant, Felony Fleeing, Felony Obstructing, and Misdemeanor Obstructing.

On November 18th, 2018, at 7:30pm, Deputy Brandon Stroik, was traveling westbound on STH 29, near the Village of Hatley. Directly in front of him was a vehicle and he conducted a DOT check of the license plates where he learned the registered owner has a suspended driver license. Deputy Stroik conducted a traffic enforcement stop with the vehicle on STH 29 at Bass Lake Rd. The driver pulled to the side of the road and stopped. Deputy Stroik made contact with the driver/lone occupant and requested he identify himself with a Wisconsin Driver's License. The driver searched various compartments in the vehicle, but was not able to produce his license. He subsequently verbally identified himself; however during the process, provided a date of birth that did not match his age. Deputy Stroik noted the driver was avoiding eye contact with him and was visibly shaking; indicating he was extremely nervous. Based on the driver's actions, Deputy Stroik requested the driver exit the vehicle. The driver opened the door, and then quickly closed it, rapidly accelerating west on STH 29. Deputy Stroik returned to his squad car and gave pursuit. He reached speeds of 120 miles per hour, and the suspect's car was pulling away from him; indicating it was traveling at a higher rate of speed than he was. The suspected exited at CTH Q and as Deputy Stroik came to the end of the exit ramp, the suspect was nowhere in sight. Deputy Stroik continued a short distance and observed the suspect vehicle crashed on the other side of the ramp.

Deputy Stroik deployed K9 Csibi and cleared the vehicle with him, finding that the driver fled on foot. While searching the immediate area, Deputy Stroik observed footprints indicating the driver had in fact fled on foot to the northwest. Deputy Stroik radioed other responding units to set up a perimeter toward the northwest portion of the intersection of Highway Q and Highway 29. Deputy Stroik retrieved K9 Csibi's tracking equipment and began to track the driver with another Deputy who arrived at the scene. K9 Csibi tracked in a northwest direction through a waist high grass field, through an active construction zone, over numerous different terrain including frozen gravel, frozen dirt, snow, and concrete. K9 Csibi tracked through the active construction zone; checking numerous vehicles and dumpsters in the area, then continued west through a wooded area.

As Deputy Stroik and K9 Csibi came out to an open field, they continued tracking over several trails. One specific trail, which led into another set of woods, appeared to have been heavily used by recent hunters in the area as there were numerous fresh footprints on this trail. After entering the woods

approximately 100 yards later, K9 Csibi made a sharp turn from north to west into another set of dense woods. K9 Csibi continued to track through these dense woods and approximately 50 yards after leaving the trail with the fresh hunter's footprints on it, Deputy Stroik observed the driver of the vehicle seated on the ground behind a large oak tree. Deputy Stroik now provided verbal commands to the suspect while K9 Csibi was at his side, providing an added force option in case the suspect where to attack Deputies. Immediately after observing the suspect, Deputy Stroik observed a one-gallon size plastic, zip top bag with a white crystal-like substance inside consistent with methamphetamine located next to the suspect. Other Deputies were able to take the suspect into custody without incident.

The white crystal-like substance inside the bag later tested positive for methamphetamine and had a final weight of 434.27 grams.

I ask that Deputy Stroik and K9 Csibi be nominated for Meritorious K9 Track with Apprehension based upon the totality of complexed circumstances involved in this incident. Deputy Stroik's dedication to traffic enforcement and his keen ability to notice that the suspect was providing false information. When the pursuit was initiated, Deputy Stroik was calm and provided clear and concise information to his Communication Center and other Deputies. After he located the suspect vehicle, he was able to set up a perimeter, clear the vehicle with K9 Csibi, then transition K9 Csibi to tracking mode and locatethe suspect, all done safely.

Respectfully submitted,

Deputy Daniel Wachowiak

Portage County Sheriff's Office