

To: WLECHA Awards Committee

The Madison Area K9 Training Group is writing this letter with the intent to nominate Officer Eric Disch with his K9 partner Bowie for K9 handler of the year. We could think of no one more deserving of this award as Officer Disch exemplifies excellence in not only his work but also in his desire to train and learn. Officer Disch's and his K9 partners relentless pursuit of criminal interdiction in the streets of the Madison Area has tangibly made the community safer with the arrests of dozens of violent offenders. This is coupled with Officer's Disch to better himself and his fellow K9 teams in training and knowledge to ensure every K9 team is successful on the street. Failure is not an option for Officer Disch and he takes a personal stake in making sure every K9 team he assists will perform when needed on the street. Below we will list just a few of the many examples of Officer Disch's and K9 Bowie's successes on the street. We will also highlight how Officer Disch continues to learn and train to better himself and every team he assists.

As for Officer Disch relentless pursuit to constantly train, he doesn't just stop at mandatory minimum 16 hours. Officer Disch is constantly seeking knowledge and sharing what he learns with everyone. He constantly enlightens our training group with things we would not even think about. This allows us to keep constantly moving forward and ensures that there are no holes in our training. There are not many pictures on the street our dogs have not seen and learned to dominate in thanks to the constant challenges presented by Officer Disch. If there is a video or a scenario experienced by a K9 team in this country, Officer Disch will break it down into a training progression and ensure every K9 will be successful in that environment. This constant push for excellence has created a training culture that makes us all want to be better.

Examples of trainings that Officer Disch has just attended in the past year: K9 Blueline Conference, Waukesha County Training, Spikes K9 Decoy School, and K9's United. Officer Disch will also be participating in the ATK9 training this upcoming September 2022. While Officer Disch is the one attending these trainings he always comes back inspired to help better his unit as a whole. Whether this means building a new obstacle for the training center, sharing a new training method, or convincing the whole team to go through decoy training Officer Disch goes above and beyond.

On top of the endless training hours with his unit or traveling to learn and become better, Officer Eric Disch has also showed his dedication to his K9 unit by stepping up and contacting K9's of Valor to help raise funds for seven K9's on the Madison Police Department K9 Unit. Officer Erick Dish worked with K9's of Valor directly to start a donation campaign online and within 36 hours the Madison Police Department K9 Unit was able to vest all seven K9's on their unit, all because Officer Eric Disch was determined to make it safer for our K9's on deployment.

Not only does K9 Officer Disch and K9 Bowie excel in training but they prove it out on the streets daily, as you will see below just a few of their many successful deployments this past year. On June 5th 2022, Officer Disch observed a car with illegally tinted

windows and an unreadable license plate. After attempting to perform a traffic stop, the vehicle made multiple dangerous evasive maneuver's eluding Officer Disch. Thankfully a short time later the vehicle was spotted stopped in the roadway after being involved in a minor crash. PO Disch arrived on scene and approached the vehicle resulting in the driver fleeing on foot. The suspect was given several commands to stop, however, they were ignored. Officer Disch ended up in a foot pursuit and utilized his door popper to release K9 Bowie from the vehicle. Bowie promptly located Officer Disch running and gained target lock on the fleeing suspect who was about to jump a 6-foot wood fence. Once the suspect was more than halfway over the fence, K9 Bowie jumped and apprehended the suspect in his calf. Bowie maintained his bite allowing Officer Disch the necessary time needed to grab the suspect, pull him back over the fence, and place him into custody on his own. Without Bowie it is unlikely that Officer Disch would have been able to apprehend the suspect on his own and the approximately 23.3 grams of fentanyl, 13.4 grams cocaine, and 7.6 grams marijuana found inside the stolen auto.

Another example of Officer Disch and Bowie's teamwork happened on June 30th 2022 when the team was called to assist patrol with a physical confrontation resulting from a road rage incident. The occupants of a stolen auto physically assaulted the occupants in the victim vehicle. Additionally, one of the suspects from the stolen auto fired shots at the victim's vehicle before fleeing. The suspects fled in the stolen auto for a short time before crashing into another victim's vehicle which resulted in a rollover accident. A perimeter was set and K9 Bowie tracked .4 miles in 90-degree heat to a wooded tree line/soy bean field. Two suspects were seen fleeing into the woods and Officer Disch gave verbal K9 warnings that were once again ignored. K9 Bowie apprehended one of the suspects who had a loaded firearm inside a satchel bag while back up officers chased down the second suspect and eventually apprehended him with over 500 grams of fentanyl. A third suspect was later apprehended close to the first two suspects with another loaded firearm inside his backpack.

The last example of exemplary teamwork comes from an incident that occurred on April 1st 2022 when Officer Disch and Bowie tracked down a juvenile after an armed car-jacking and vehicle pursuit. The suspects ditched the vehicle and one of the suspects was apprehended by perimeter units while the second suspect was tracked towards a shed that was connected to a detached garage at a private residence. After Bowie showed heavy interest in the shed a backup officers began to search the shed and found the second juvenile hiding in the corner.

As you have read above, Officer Eric Disch and K9 Bowie have showed how passionate they are when it comes to the K9 world. Officer Disch will go out on a limb to make his unit and other K9 handlers in the area better at their job and safer while doing it. If it's not the endless training or the dedication to continue to improve and make himself and others better it's his success in the streets that makes him a top candidate for the handler of the year award.

Thank you for your consideration.

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