



POLICE DEPARTMENT

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RUSSELL P. JACK

Chief of Police

November 15, 2017

Officer Chelsea Coenen
Officer Ben Stern

CITATION OF VALOR

On June 18, 2017, the Waukesha Police Department Communications Center received a phone call from a female stating that her boyfriend was outside his residence and he was depressed, intoxicated, and in possession of handgun. The caller stated that the suspect was on the phone with his adult daughter telling her he was going to "drink and die." Within minutes of the call, officers arrived on scene and observed the male in his back yard pointing the handgun in the air and then at himself.

As additional resources arrived on scene, officers made verbal contact with the male and repeatedly ordered him to put the firearm down. The subject refused to put the gun down and continued to hold the gun in his hand and pace back and forth in the back yard while threatening suicide.

During this time, the female caller had barricaded herself inside the residence fearing for her safety. At one point the male attempted to go back inside the residence with the gun and attempted to kick down the door to the residence. The female was able to flee out of the front door and was rescued by waiting officers and led to safety.

With the residence empty and the doors locked, officers attempted to negotiate with the male for about an hour in an effort to resolve the situation peacefully. During these conversations, the male repeatedly made suicidal statements and became increasingly hostile toward officers. With the suspect armed, suicidal, and intoxicated, he posed a deadly threat to both the officers and the residents in the neighborhood.

After over an hour on scene, the male suddenly began walking to the front of the house holding the gun. The male continued to walk back and forth along the side of the residence each time coming closer to officer's positions. Officers continuously ordered the male to put the gun down but he refused, yelling for officers to kill him. The male then exited the side gate and advanced toward a group of officers while holding the gun.

The male refused to put the gun down and continued advancing toward a group of officers who were forced to shoot the armed subject to stop the threat to them and the citizens in the neighborhood.



Whereas, Officer Chelsea Coenen, being part of the arrest team, verbally challenged the subject on numerous occasions ordering him to put the gun down. The male refused to drop the gun and continued to advance on her position. Officer Coenen was forced to shoot the male in defense of herself, fellow officers, and the citizens in the neighborhood.

Whereas, Officer Ben Stern, being part of the arrest team, verbally challenged the subject on numerous occasions ordering him to put the gun down. The male refused to drop the gun and continued to advance on his position. Officer Stern was forced to shoot the male in defense of himself, fellow officers, and the citizens in the neighborhood.

The actions of Officer Coenen and Officer Stern were truly commendable during this tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving situation as both officers exemplified the Department's priorities of Safety, Communication, Teamwork and Accountability. Both Officers acted decisively and with great courage and valor in the face of this deadly threat. They are both being awarded the Waukesha Police Department Citation of Valor, the highest honor given to its members. Thank you for serving the community and your fellow officers with Integrity, Honor, and Courage.

Sincerely,



Russell P. Jack
Chief of Police

Cc: Mayor Shawn N. Reilly
City Administrator Kevin Lahner
Deputy Chief Angle
Awards Committee
File

