

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

John M. Harrington, Chief of Police

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CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

367 Grove Street

St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Telephone: 651-291-1111

Facsimile: 651-266-5711

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I would like to submit my K-9 partner Chico for recognition of his successful track and location of three robbery suspects.

On 1-27-07 at 2102 hrs. Officer David Pavlak was called to 1436 case on a robbery of a pizza delivery driver. The victim was beaten by three suspects and robbed of the pizza, cash and his cell phone.

Because his cell phone was taken, the victim had to go to two different locations before he was able to report the crime. This call was made 25 minutes after the robbery had occurred.

I arrived, obtained a description of the suspects and location that they were last seen running. The suspects had fled South between 1426 Case and a building to the East. This area is a large apartment complex, consisting of six apartment buildings, each with their own detached garages. There had not been a snowfall for at least one week and the entire complex was completely trampled over with numerous foot prints. It was 3 degrees out with 15 mph winds and was now at least 30 minutes after the crime had occurred. I brought out K-9 Chico to attempt a track. We went into the courtyard of 1426 Case and initiated a track. Chico began casting around the courtyard, which was completely covered with footprints. As he did so, he got to the middle of the courtyard and began pulling hard to Southeast, with his nose to the ground. I played out his lead and he continued tracking strongly to the parking lot, confirming he was actively tracking. I saw that K-9 Chico had distinguished two sets of footprints and began tracking around the building and into the parking lot where they disappeared. Chico continued

tracking across the parking lot to the side of another building, which was also trampled by numerous prints. K-9 Chico continued around the building to the rear of 1428 Case. The track turned North behind 1428 Case and continued up a hill. Chico continued around this building, then North behind 1434 Case and the adjacent garage. At this point, there were no other prints and I could see that Chico was tracking the two sets he had located at the start of the track. The track continued North around the garage, where one of the suspects had fallen, leaving a distinct impression where the pizza carrier had fallen on the snow. K-9 Chico continued tracking to the rear of the 1436 building, where it ended at a ground level window. K-9 Chico lifted his head and jumped on the side of the building below the window. It appeared that the suspects had climbed into this window after fleeing the robbery. My cover officer ran to the front of the building, located the apartment in the building as we awaited back-up. As we waited, the rear window that K-9 Chico had led us to began to open. The suspects became aware of our presence and closed the window. Entry was made and the three suspects were arrested.

In the apartment the pizza carrier, pizza box, cash and the suspect's shoes were recovered. I retraced the track and we were able to match the footprints to two of the suspect's shoes along the track. The impression of the pizza carrier was also an exact match to the one recovered in the suspects apartment. The third set of footprints were also located and matched to the third suspect's shoes. That suspect had run to the front of the apartment and let his accomplices in the rear window.

K-9 Chico located a track that was at least 30 minutes old, in a severely cold and windy environment. This track would not have been distinguishable by the officers and was only visible after K-9 Chico had led us around several buildings to where we could see the suspects had climbed through a rear window. The deployment of Chico also revealed impression evidence which was matched to the suspects and the victim's property. This track led to the three suspect's convictions and further investigation of their involvement in other similar robberies in the area.