

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 10, 2023

Trooper Rhonemus Receives NDHP Distinguished Service Medal

NARRATIVE: Trooper Miles Rhonemus received the NDHP Distinguished Service Medal for heroism demonstrated during an active shooter incident that occurred in July 2022 in Fargo.

On July 19, 2022, Trooper Miles Rhonemus was patrolling in the Fargo area. At approximately 4:50 pm, a suspect was traveling at approximately 100 mph southbound, and passing traffic on the inside shoulder of the six-lane roadway on I-29 in Fargo. The driver swerved from the inside shoulder to the inside lane and ran into a motorcycle, throwing the motorcyclist onto the roadway, severely injuring the motorcyclist.

Trooper Rhonemus began to search for the suspect vehicle along and adjacent to I-29 when he heard radio traffic that a male subject was firing rounds from a handgun in the south Fargo area, not far from his current location. Additional radio traffic identified that the male was firing rounds from the balcony at a blue pickup truck in the parking lot at the apartment complex. A short time later, dispatch advised the male had exited the apartment building and was walking toward Essentia Hospital, near the apartment complex.

While responding to the active shooter incident, Trooper Rhonemus heard additional radio traffic that the male suspect had entered a blue Chevrolet Silverado with front end damage and had left the apartment complex. Rhonemus surmised that the suspect from the hit and run incident on I-29 and the active shooter were likely the same person.

Trooper Rhonemus was able to intercept the Chevrolet in a densely populated area of south Fargo along a major thoroughfare through town after it was involved in a crash at an intersection. The Chevrolet did not stop after striking another vehicle and began to travel westbound on 32nd Avenue South. Rhonemus activated his emergency lights, crossed the median boulevard, and began to catch up to the Chevrolet, which came to a stop along 32nd Avenue. Trooper Rhonemus radioed in his high risk stop and conducted a felony stop on the Chevrolet. Trooper Rhonemus was providing the suspect with loud verbal commands and a Fargo PD Officer arrived on scene to assist. Both officers observed the suspect waving a

handgun around inside the cab of the Chevrolet. After a few short and tense moments, the suspect fled via the Chevrolet.

Trooper Rhonemus and the Fargo PD Officer reentered their vehicles and began a pursuit of the suspect who entered northbound I-29 at a high rate of speed. Visibility was reduced due to the heavy rain, heavy traffic, and traffic road spray.

The suspect began to pass motorists northbound I-29 on the outside shoulder at a high rate of speed and was involved in three additional crashes, the final one causing the Chevrolet to lose control, leave the roadway, and become disabled. It was evening rush hour and traffic was heavy in this area. Trooper Rhonemus stopped his patrol vehicle and observed the suspect digging around inside the Chevrolet which was approximately 50-60 yards away. Trooper Rhonemus drew his sidearm and began to advance toward the Chevrolet, even though there was no cover or concealment available. Trooper Rhonemus knew he needed to advance on the suspect to prevent further violence from occurring.

Trooper Rhonemus was providing the suspect with loud verbal commands to comply and was aware of the traffic stopped around him. Trooper Rhonemus knew the suspect had been in possession of a weapon at the apartment complex and had been firing that weapon. Within a few short seconds, the suspect exited the Chevrolet with a handgun and began to fire rounds. Trooper Rhonemus immediately returned fire and struck the suspect with two of the four rounds fired. The suspect fell to the ground. Trooper Rhonemus approached the suspect, handcuffed him and upon recognition that the suspect was bleeding, he began to treat him. Fargo PD Officers arrived on scene and took over the medical care and custody of the suspect.

The suspect survived the shooting and was charged with multiple counts of felony reckless endangerment ; one count of felony fleeing; one count of felony leaving the scene of an injury crash; one count of felony aggravated assault and one count of felony attempted murder.

Trooper Rhonemus acted heroically, and calmly responded to a highly volatile chain of events. Because he was monitoring multiple dispatch radio channels, his situational awareness led him to recognize the incidents were related. Without the actions Trooper Rhonemus took that day, the suspect may have been able to evade law enforcement and harm additional parties. Without direction, Trooper Rhonemus took it upon himself to respond to these incidents in an appropriate manner and he went toward the danger to keep innocent parties from being harmed. After addressing the threat, he transitioned to provide medical care to the suspect.

Due to Trooper Rhonemus' actions, the suspect in this incident was stopped from harming others and taken into custody. Trooper Rhonemus displayed extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty during this incident and therefore is the recipient of the NDHP Distinguished Service Medal.



Colonel Brandon Solberg (left) presents Trooper Miles Rhonemus (right) with the NDHP Distinguished Service Medal and plaque.

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