



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Chad Enright Chief Deputy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 01-28-2024

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Traffic pursuit and arrest

Dodge County Sheriff's Office deputies arrested a 21 year old Deforest man, Payton Lopez, following a 10 mile-long pursuit involving extremely dangerous and reckless speeds overnight.

Shortly before 2 am on Sunday, January 28, 2024, a deputy observed a car traveling in excess of 80 mph on State Highway's 16/60 in the town of Elba, a few miles east of Columbus. The speed limit there was 55 mph and the deputy attempted to stop the car. The car immediately accelerated to speeds in excess of 130 mph, and continued eastbound. The pursuing deputy briefly lost sight of the car and stopped pursuing, however a deputy responding to assist, almost immediately found the car and was able to stop it on State Highway 60 in the town of Clyman.

The driver, Payton Lopez, was arrested, and is being held in the Dodge County Jail until charges are reviewed by the Dodge County District Attorney's Office for fleeing a traffic officer (felony) and THC possession. A 19 year old female passenger was released from the scene without charges.

Fleeing from a law enforcement officer who is trying to conduct a traffic stop, poses an unusually high risk of serious injury or death not only to the occupants of that vehicle, but also to the general public, and to the deputies involved in the pursuit. Individuals who are found guilty of felony fleeing could potentially be confined in a state prison for a year or more, lose their driving privileges, and be fined.

All persons arrested for crimes are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt

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