Just the Facts

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Weekly Highlights

Friday, Aug. 14 to Thursday, Aug. 20

- Busiest Day of Week: Friday—101 events
- Busiest Hour of Day: 7:00 PM—43 events
- Total # of Events: 599
- Average Events/Day: 85.57
- Average Events/Hour: 3.57
- Average Traffic Stops: .93 per hour
- DWIs for the week: 2

Cops in the Community—

At the Steele County Free Fair on Thursday afternoon, Sergeant Tracy DuChene and Community Service Officer Travis Johnson represented the Owatonna Police Department in the annual Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest against our law enforcement partners at the Steele County Sheriff’s Office. Tracy and Travis represented us well with spits of 33’ and 31’ respectively, but they fell just short of bringing home the victory. Way to be good sports!!

On August 11th, Officer Adam Dupic met with a group of employees from Federated Insurance’s Risk Management Academy to speak about distracted and impaired driving.

DWI Suspect Charged with Fleeing—

Last Saturday night, an Owatonna officer observed a vehicle being operated by a male individual known to have a revoked driver’s license. The officer attempted to stop the vehicle near the Riverside Ave intersection with Glendale; however, the driver failed to stop. The officer continued to follow the vehicle with his siren activated until it pulled into a driveway. The driver attempted to exit the vehicle and was placed under arrest for fleeing in a motor vehicle. The driver later submitted a breath test which indicated his breath alcohol to be .13—the legal limit to drive in Minnesota is .08. During an interview with the driver, he admitted to the officer that he saw the squad car with it’s lights on and heard the siren, but he didn’t stop because he didn’t want his car to be towed. Dean D. Drager, age 29, was formally charged with Fleeing in a Motor Vehicle, 3rd Degree DWI and Driving after Revocation.

The OPD Welcomes Statewide Paralegals—

On Friday, the Owatonna Police Department and the Steele County Sheriff’s Office played host to the 3rd District Public Defender’s Office for the Statewide Paralegal Quarterly Training—the objective of the training was for the group to learn and understand law enforcement in a Greater Minnesota community. The Owatonna Police Department had various officers serve as presenters, including Chief Keith Hiller, Captain Eric ReThemeier, Sergeant Jason Petterson, Detectives Joel Hunt and Sean Cooper and Officer John Petterson. Individually, the officers spoke about their respective areas of expertise, including a department overview, policing philosophy, domestic abuse investigations, our canine program, the South Central Drug Investigation Unit, the South Central Tactical Unit (SWAT) and gang intelligence. In addition, the group toured the Rice/Steele 911 Communications Center and the Steele County Detention Center. On Thursday, the day before the training, a number of the group members rode along with officers from the department.

Domestic Leads to Felony Charge—

On August 15th during the noontime hours, Owatonna officers were called to a domestic at a residence in the 400 block of Kelly St.—dispatched officers were advised that a male suspect was threatening a female at the residence. On arrival, officers found the female victim standing behind a tree and the suspect walking from the residence and yelling. Officers learned that the couple had allegedly been arguing for the past few days. The couple was supposed to go to Valley Fair; however, the male had been drinking and the victim didn’t want to go. The suspect allegedly struck the victim on the forehead with an open hand and pushed her back. The suspect then sat a beer bottle next to the victim and threatened to kill her and stated several times that he was going to kill her. Jeffrey A. Sipes was arrested and jailed. He was later formally charged with Terroristic Threats—a felony and two counts of misdemeanor Domestic Assault.

Turning up the Heat on Drunk Drivers—

As the end of summer approaches, more than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state, including the OPD, will be turning up the heat on drunk drivers starting today and running through Labor Day. According to the MN Department of Public Safety, Labor Day is the second deadliest major holiday with 24 fatalities over the last five years on Minnesota roads.

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