Just the Facts

Diversion Failed, Fugitive and Three Others Face Felonies—

Late Monday morning, Owatonna officers attempted to arrest a male fugitive believed to be residing at 147 West Pearl Street. Officers made contact with the suspect through the door, but he refused to open the door. Shortly thereafter, a bomb threat was called in for Federated Insurance. Some of our officers diverted to Federated to respond to the threat, but others remained at the Pearl Street residence thinking the threat was called in as a ruse to divert our resources—our hunch was correct as an officer was able to contact an accomplice of the fugitive by telephone and learned that the fugitive asked the bomb threat to be called in to get the officers to respond to Federated and allow him the opportunity to escape. An officer, feigning to be a friend to the accomplice, was able to lure the accomplice to Owatonna where she and two other accomplices were arrested in the Cash Wise parking lot. A search warrant was obtained for the Pearl Street address and the fugitive was taken into custody. Fugitive Joshua D. Watkins, age 27, was arrested for outstanding warrants and later charged with Aiding and Abetting Terroristic Threats—the bomb threat. Emily A. Nelson, age 29, was arrested and formally charged with Terroristic Threats. William J. Wieseler, age 26, and Miguel A. Carreon Balderas, age 20, were also arrested and formally charged with Aiding and Abetting Terroristic Threats.

Lights on During Inclement Weather—

On Thursday during the early evening hours, an Owatonna officer stopped a car for operating in the rain without headlights. While the officer was speaking with the driver, he observed signs that led him to believe there may be illegal substances in the vehicle. The driver allowed the officer to search the vehicle which led to the discovery of several illegal items—including brass knuckles, marijuana pipes, 2.1 grams of suspected marijuana and 23 grams of suspected methamphetamines. The driver, Robert W. Larson, age 32, was placed under arrest and later formally charged with 2nd Degree Possession of a Controlled Substance, Possession of Brass Knuckles, Possession of Marijuana in a Motor Vehicle and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Larson’s vehicle, a 1993 Pontiac Grand Am, was seized and is being held for forfeiture proceedings. As a reminder—illuminated headlamps and tail lamps are required on every vehicle at any time when it is raining, snowing, sleeting or hailing and at any other time when visibility is impaired by weather, smoke, fog or other conditions or there is not sufficient light to render clearly discernible persons and vehicles on the highway at a distance of 500 feet ahead.