Owatonna Leadership Academy Visits the OPD—

On Tuesday morning, the 2016-2017 Owatonna Community Leadership Academy visited the Owatonna Police Department Detective Bureau as part of their Criminal Justice Day. The morning started off with Chief Keith Hiller presenting to the group a department overview. South Central Drug Investigation (SCDIU) Commander Andy Drenth spoke about current drug developments being seen in the SCDIU enforcement area and highlighted recent SCDIU investigations. Captain Eric Rethemeier followed with a presentation that focused on the department’s Patrol Division. Our SWAT and Use of Force coordinators, Sergeants Jason Matejcek & Josh Sorensen gave an overview of topics surrounding the police, SWAT and the authorized used of force and the equipment we use. As part of their presentation, three exercises took place, including—flash bag demonstrations and shoot/don’t shoot situations simulations. The day finished with our canine handler, John Petterson and his partner Kash giving a demonstration of their special skills.

Distracted Driving Awareness—

April is Distracted Driving Awareness month. Deputies, police officers and troopers from more than 300 agencies, including the Owatonna PD and Steele County Sheriff’s Office, participate in the extra distracted driving enforcement campaign coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety-Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS). They use overtime funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to keep Minnesotans safe from the dangers of distraction. TZD focuses on the 4 E’s to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, Education, Enforcement, Emergency Medical & Trauma Services and Engineering. Between 2011-2015, 86,000 crashes in Minnesota were caused by distracted driving and in 2015, distracted driving contributed to 7,666 accidents and 74 deaths. Extra state-wide distracted driving enforcement takes place between April 10 – 23. On Wednesday, April 12th, Captain Eric Retheimeier appeared on the Owatonna Today Show to talk more about distracted driving awareness—you can view the episode here.

Attempt to Disarm Officer Averted—

On Tuesday afternoon, Owatonna officers were called to 222 Riverside for the report of a disturbance in an upstairs apartment. Upon arrival, the apartment was quiet, but officers observed blood on the door. After a few minutes of knocking, a male party answered the door and he was detained. Officers checked the apartment and found a female hiding in a closet. The female had obvious injuries to her hand and forehead. Officers also found many items in the apartment had been destroyed. Both parties denied an assault took place; however, they were arrested for violating court orders. The female was transported to the hospital for her injuries. After being released from the hospital, she became combative and began striking her head on the inside of the squad car. The officer tried to stop her from hurting herself; however, she kicked the officer in the chest. As the officers removed her from the back seat of the car, she grabbed onto the officer’s firearm with both hands. The officer was able to remove the female from his weapon as other offices arrived to assist. Andrew Bogenschutz, age 35, was arrested for Contempt of Court. Dena Lundell, age 46, was charged with Attempting to Disarm a Peace Officer, 4th Degree Assault of a Peace Officer, Contempt of Court and 4th Degree Damage to Property.