Busiest Day of Week: Friday — 96 events
Busiest Hour of Day: 6:00 PM — 36 events
Total # of Events: 502
Average Events/Day: 71.71
Average Events/Hour: 2.99
Average Traffic Stops: .85 per hour
DWIs for the week: 2

On Thursday we said farewell to CSO Brandon Sell who accepted a full-time position with the Department of Corrections—Oak Park Heights facility. Brandon came to the OPD as a part-time CSO in October 2015 where he worked with animal control and as a parking control officer. He moved to help staff at the Owatonna High School for a few months before returning back to his original duties. Ultimately, Brandon has a desire to return back to the OPD as a police officer. We would like thank him for his service to the citizens of Owatonna!

April Distracted Driving Updates—On Wednesday, April 13th, Officer Berg attended the Owatonna Today Show to discuss the importance of distracted driving.

Owatonna Police Department Highlights—On April 13th, an OPD officer worked extra traffic enforcement funded by a federal grant specifically to target distracted drivers. In a few short hours, the officer caught and cited 4 distracted drivers who were all using a wireless communications device. One driver was traveling at highway speeds on the interstate holding his cell phone in both hands to access the internet to check on traffic conditions in the metro area. The next driver was stopped at Oak and Main Street looking at a flip phone holding it with both hands but when the light turned green, she didn’t go. The law does not allow drivers to read, compose or send messages even when stopped in traffic. The third stop was at the same intersection when the officer saw a driver texting. On the officer’s last traffic stop, he observed an 18 year old female driver bouncing in the car, videotaping herself with a cell phone. Based on the officers continued observations, he believed the driver was “snap chatting”. This distracted driver failed to see the police vehicle and flashing lights behind her at first but finally heard the audible siren. The driver admitted to “snap chatting” friends. Owatonna Police Department has zero tolerance for distracted drivers such as these.

High Speed Chase—Just before noon on Tuesday, April 12th, an OPD officer tried to stop a car near 7th Ave. & 22nd St. NE for a cracked windshield and driving after suspension. The vehicle traveled north through Linnhaven Pl. then back out to 7th Ave. disregarding every stop sign along the way. While traveling southbound on 7th Ave., the suspect blew the stop sign at 20th St. NE at 80 MPH. At this point, the officer discontinued his pursuit due to the potential dangers imposed to innocent bystanders. Just down the road, the officer came upon car parts in the roadway and fresh damage to a boulevard tree. Residents in the area pointed east where the officer found the car disabled on Bigelow Ave. between 14th St. NE and Mineral Springs Rd., but unoccupied. A Rice Co. Sheriff’s K9 arrived to assist with a track of the suspect, but the suspect was not located. The case remains under investigation.

Domestic Violence—Officers were called to the 200 block of 18th St. SW for a domestic violence situation on Thursday evening. An Investigation lead to the arrest of Tyjuan Williams for domestic assault by strangulation—a felony. The victim also reported an earlier incident that detectives are following up on that could result in an additional felony domestic violence charge after he purportedly shattered the same victim’s ear drum.

Daycare Visit—On Wednesday, April 13th around the noon hour, Owatonna Police Officer Brady Vaith along with Community Service Officer Kyle Martin paid a visit to all the kids who attend Jackie’s Daycare Friends. The officers discussed various safety topics and awarded everyone a Junior Officer badge. The kids had a great time getting familiar with what an officer does each day and especially enjoyed touring an OPD squad car.

Click here to watch the segment.
https://youtu.be/0qOQhUzouFQ

Photograph courtesy of daycare provider.