Deception is the Name of the Game—

This past week we came across a couple of interesting cases where offenders tried pulling the wool over our officer’s eyes. The first case occurred when we arrested a female for shoplifting—she was arrested on April 10th for allegedly stealing $642 worth of Walmart property and booked as Bertha Jackson. A few days later, the real Bertha Jackson called to report the person arrested for shoplifting was her sister and her real name was Sherice Jackson. An officer went looking for Sherice and found her at her residence where she was arrested again. Jackson, age 27, faces additional charges of Providing a False Name to a Police Officer and Perjury. The perjury charges stems from providing a false statement (her alleged name) when applying for a public defender.

The second case came about when an adult male was stopped for speeding. The driver alleged he didn’t have his driver’s license with him, but identified himself as Tony Cowans and provided his date of birth. The officer checked the driver’s record for the person stopped and found the driver license picture on file didn’t match who was stopped. The officer called the real Tony Cowans who was obviously not at the stop site and learned the real Tony Cowans had been receiving citations from some using his name. When the driver realized the gig was up, he gave his real name and told the officer his driver’s license was cancelled. Jon D. Brown, age 41, was arrested and formally charged with Providing a False Name to a Police Officer, Driving after Cancellation and Speeding.

Fraud Prevention—

On Monday morning, Detective Corporal Tom Munns and Captain Eric Rethemeier made an appearance on the Owatonna Today Show. With fraud and identity theft so prevalent in today’s society, the pair spoke on the types of fraud cases we’re seeing and tips to prevent our community members from being victimized. To view the episode, please click here. The Owatonna Police Department also offers a publication that outlines ways for citizens to protect their identity. A link to the publication can be found by clicking on the photo to the right.

SCDIU Takes on Human Sex Trafficking—

On March 20th and April 7th, 2015, the South Central Drug Investigation Unit (SCDIU) initiated and conducted a two-day undercover operation focusing on human trafficking and related sex crimes. These operations were conducted in Owatonna on March 20th and in Albert Lea on April 7th at cooperating area hotel(s). The operation on April 7th was conducted in partnership with the Rochester Police Department’s Street Crimes Unit. This partnered operation also served as a training session designed to instruct law enforcement officers on investigative techniques to combat human trafficking and related sex crimes in occurring in their jurisdictions. The training also focused on current trends, victimization and legal updates associated with human trafficking and sex crimes. As a result of the two operations, 18 individuals were arrested, booked and released—10 of the arrests were made during the operation in Owatonna. All individuals are facing formal complaint charges for Solicitation of Prostitution.