**Child Passenger Safety**

This year marks 30 years since Minnesota first passed its child passenger safety laws in 1982. That year, less than 20 percent of the 11 infants (ages 0 -3) killed in crashes were known to be properly restrained in a child safety seat, and only 22 percent of the 387 injured were restrained. The success of the car seat laws and increased use of child restraints has made a dramatic impact on child safety over the years, according to Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Traffic Safety data:

- In Minnesota since 2007, more than 15,000 children ages 0–7 were properly restrained and involved in traffic crashes, and a majority of those children (86 percent) were not injured and 12 percent sustained only minor injuries.

- In the last decade: of the 32 children ages 0–7 were killed in crashes and only 44 percent were properly restrained.

The week of Sept. 16-22 was Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week and the DPS is emphasizing the importance of correct child safety restraint and booster seat use to keep children safe while riding in a vehicle. In Minnesota, three out of four child restraints are used incorrectly – meaning children are riding in the wrong restraint or it is not properly secured.

*Reprinted in part from the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association*

**From Our Not So Smart Offender Files**

**Case #1**

On Friday September 14th, a male individual walked into the Steele County Detention Center to claim a female party who had been arrested earlier in the evening for DWI. The female arrested earlier was to be released from custody to a sober person, so when her ride arrived, he was asked to submit to a preliminary breath test. Her ride refused and immediately left the jail. Jail staff notified our dispatch center and provided a vehicle description and the license plate number of the male’s vehicle. A few minutes later, the officer that previously arrested the female for drunk driving observed the male driving his vehicle—he also observed the vehicle to have expired registration. The officer stopped the vehicle and observed the driver showing signs of intoxication—bloodshot watery eyes and an odor of alcohol. The driver was asked to perform roadside field sobriety tests which he failed. William F. Caswell, age 22, was arrested for suspicion of DWI and transported back to the Detention Center. He was later released pending formal charges.

**Case #2**

On Saturday, September 15th, one of our officers was at the Kwik Trip store on 46th St. N.W. about to take his break. He had just backed into a parking stall when a vehicle pulled next to his fully marked squad car and parked. The driver exited his vehicle, slamming his car door on his seatbelt strap which prevented his door from closing and stumbled into the store. The officer followed the driver into the store where he observed him speaking to the cashier in a slurred voice and smelling like alcohol. The officer asked the driver to step outside so he could have him perform roadside field sobriety tests, which he failed. Todd M. Simmons, age 35, was arrested and transported to the Steele County Detention Center. He was later released pending formal charges.

**Department News**

Over the past two weeks our Use of Force Unit has been busy conducting our annual Defensive Tactics and Use of Force training course for all of our sworn police officers and community service officers. The Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) mandates that all active peace officers are required to attend Use of Force training on a yearly basis to keep their peace officer license active. In the picture below, Officer Zack Schumaker is practicing a handcuffing technique on fellow Officer Brady Prince while instructor Sergeant Josh Sorensen looks on.