On Wednesday morning, our officers responded to 815 East Rose Street for the report of two young adult males found sleeping in a car. The responding officers met with the two individuals who alleged they were friends of the vehicle owner’s son and were there to repair the vehicle. The vehicle owner wanted the two males to leave her property which they did without incident. Later in the day, the two males returned to the residence on East Rose Street and were found pushing the vehicle down the street that they were sleeping in earlier. When they were interviewed, they alleged they were given permission to repair the vehicle and were pushing it down the street to find a better location to work on it. The two male suspects were placed under arrest for suspicion of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle tampering; they were transported to the Steele County Detention Center. Jeremiah M. Roberts, age 26, and Cody J. Altepeter, age 19, were both charged by citation with Tampering with a Motor Vehicle.

As the State Theatre Came Down, our Arrest Statistics Went Up—

During the early morning hours on Thursday, one of our officers spotted a couple of bicyclists carrying duffle bags in Morehouse Park after park closing hours. The officer went to speak with the cyclists when they split up and fled from the officer on their bikes. The officer and other arriving officers attempted to locate the two subjects in the park but were unable to. They did however locate two duffle bags filled with scrapped copper wire. Our officers responded to 525 South Cedar Avenue as they had dealt with an individual earlier in the day who was stealing copper from the old State Theatre demolition site. At the residence, they found an individual inside matching the description of one of the fleeing cyclists; he was also sweating profusely. A few moments later, the officers heard a loud crash at the back door, and another individual was found crawling through a door he had just forced open; he was also sweating profusely, had cuts on his legs and hands and had vegetation stuck in his shoes. He also matched the description of the other fleeing cyclist. A statement was obtained from the second male who admitted that he and his friend were the fleeing cyclists and had stolen scrap wire from the theatre site—the site belongs to the City of Owatonna. Both subjects were arrested and transported to the Steele County Detention Center. Micheal J. Gillis, age 40, and Nathaniel L. Klumb, age 26, were booked and released awaiting formal charges.

Strike Two...You’re Out—

On Wednesday and Thursday we had two separate calls from frantic parents to report their children missing—certainly one of the most terrifying things a parent can ever experience. Luckily, in both instances, the children were quickly located and reunited safely with their families. On Thursday evening’s call, we were able to use our powerful new tool—the community notification system—to send a message out to a specific geographical area in the city with the missing child’s description. Receiving this type of notification is a prime reason for signing up to receive the notifications and encouraging your friends/relatives to do the same. It’s quick, easy and can be done by following the link below:

Car and Motorcycle Operators Take Notice—

This year’s 47 Minnesota motorcyclist deaths to-date have eclipsed the 2011 total of 42, according to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Traffic Safety. With five deaths in the past week, rider deaths continue to surge in September with eight deaths for the month. DPS officials say the early start to the rider season—the first rider death was in March—as well as a record number of riders, coupled with common crash factors, have propelled this year’s increase in fatalities. The highest number of motorcyclist deaths was in 1980 when 121 were killed. What can you do to help prevent these tragedies:

Motorists — Watch for motorcycles, and always look twice before entering a roadway or changing lanes. Due to the smaller size of motorcycles, their speed and distance is more difficult to judge. Give riders room and check blind spots. Pay attention and drive at safe speeds.

Riders — Wear protective gear, pay attention, ride at safe speeds and ride sober. DPS advises riders to take safety training courses to hone skills; more information at www.motorcyclesafety.org.

* Reprinted in part from the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association and the MN Department of Public Safety.