N.W. and N.E. Owatonna Area Hit with Rash of Thefts—

This past weekend our officers were busy fielding reports of thefts from and damage to vehicles in the areas adjacent to the west and east of the 1700 to 2300 blocks of North Cedar Avenue. Items taken from the vehicles included: a purse, a wallet, sunglasses, a GPS unit, C.D.s, prescription medication, coins and other items. Investigating officers later received information from a citizen that he had a gathering of friends and property was brought into his home that was believed to be stolen. Included in that recovered property were numerous pieces of mail believed to be stolen from mail boxes and not reported stolen. On November 14th, a detective sergeant with the department interviewed two male juvenile suspects believed to be involved in these thefts and the damage to property. During the course of the interview, both suspects admitted to being at a party and drinking alcohol on November 12th. The juveniles indicated they became intoxicated and decided to “jack” cars that were parked in the area of the party that had been left unlocked; they also admitted to taking mail from mailboxes and damaging other vehicle to gain entry. Formal charges have been requested against the juveniles, ages 17 and 17 respectively, for Theft, Damage to Property, Motor Vehicle Tampering and Minor Consumption of Alcohol. In addition formal charges have also been requested against an adult, age 20, for violating the City of Owatonna Social Host Ordinance and Contributing to the Delinquency of Minors. In all 14 victims have been identified the majority of the stolen property has been recovered.

Stolen Vehicle Leads to Arrests—

On Thursday, November 10th, an Owatonna officer was patrolling Lake Kohlmeier near the boat landing when he observed two vehicle, a Chevrolet Trailblazer and Dodge Neon, backed in behind the covered picnic area. As the officer entered the area, he observed a male party look at him and then backed away from the open door of the Neon. The officer investigated further and observed the male subject was accompanied by a female who was wearing latex type gloves. The officer ran the license plates from both of the vehicle and learned that the Dodge Neon was reported stolen out of the City of Waterville; the male and female were subsequently placed under arrest. A search of the Trailblazer revealed that property stolen from the Neon had been placed in the Trailblazer. The search of the Trailblazer also uncovered methamphetamines, a plastic baggie containing prescription medication and drug paraphernalia. Mark W. Matthews, age 35 and Tristan J. Pestorius, age 27, were transported to the Steele County Detention Center. Matthews was formally charged in District Court with Possession of Stolen Property; Pestorius was formally charged with 2nd Degree Possession of a Controlled Substance (Methamphetamine), 5th Degree Possession of a Controlled Substance (Oxycodone) and Possession of Stolen Property. The Trailblazer, a 2006 model registered to Pestorius was seized with intent to forfeit for use in a controlled substance crime.

Eddie the Eagle—

The Owatonna Police Department and Michael Tobin of the 20 Rifle and Pistol Club of Steele County has introduced a nationally known safety program in the local schools called the Eddie Eagle GunSafe® Program. This safety program was pioneered in 1988 by the National Rifle Association (NRA) and developed in conjunction with school teachers, child psychologist and law enforcement professionals. The purpose of the program is to promote gun accident prevention for children Kindergarten through 3rd grade by teaching a simple safety message so they know what to do should they come upon an unsecured firearm: STOP! Don’t Touch. Leave the Area. Tell an Adult. Since its inception, the program has reached more than 24 million school children. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, among the children in the Eddie Eagle age group, the annual number of firearm related accidents has declined more than 80 percent. Mr. Tobin is credited for his efforts reaching out to Owatonna Police Department, gaining the support from local school administrators, and locating grant dollars to purchase instructional materials. On November, 4th Sergeant Kniefel and Michael Tobin presented the Eddie Eagle safety lesson to St. Mary’s 1st grade class.