Driver Arrested after Crash—

On May 13th at 3:43 PM, Owatonna officers were called to the scene of a head-on motor vehicle crash involving a dump truck and a vehicle on 26th Street to the east of County Road 45. Arriving officers tended to the occupants of both vehicles and luckily learned that the occupants of the vehicle suffered only minor injuries. The driver of the dump truck was uninjured. During the course of their investigation, officers learned that following the crash, a witness observed the driver of the vehicle throwing something away in a nearby trash receptacle. Inside the trash can, officers located two cans of 3M dust remover; dust remover is known to be used as an inhalant that can impair motor vehicle operation. During a later interview, the driver of the vehicle admitted that the passenger was inhaling the dust cleaner; however, denied that he was. The driver also admitted to throwing the dust cleaner away so neither he nor the passenger would get into trouble. The driver, a 21-year old male, was later arrested for suspicion of driving while impaired and transported to the Owatonna Hospital for a blood draw. The driver was later released and formal charges are pending the results of the blood test. Witnesses to the crash indicate the vehicle was traveling eastbound on 26th Street when it abruptly turned to the right in the middle of the block and crossing in front of the oncoming dump truck.

Department News—

In the April 19th edition of Just the Facts, we reported on the implementation of a traffic unit and the appointment of Office Joe Swenson to the unit. Since the appointment, we are sorry to report that Officer Swenson will be leaving the Owatonna Police Department to join the Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office as a deputy. To replace Joe as our traffic officer, Officer Christian Berg will be appointed to the role. The focus of our traffic officer will be on traffic enforcement and education by overseeing the local Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) campaign and to work directly with the Steele County Safe and Drug Free Coalition in an effort to reduce impairment/distraction related traffic incidents. We wish Joe the best of luck in Olmsted County in his new deputy position and we congratulate Christian on his new assignment.

Off-Duty Observation Leads to Two Arrests—

On Tuesday evening, an Owatonna officer on his way to work passed by a residence at 219 Chambers Avenue and observed a female party that was known to have outstanding warrants standing near a recreational fire. The officer reported for duty and he along with several other officers returned in an attempt to surveil the residence and apprehend the female fugitive. When they arrived back at the location, the female was not immediately observed; however, officers did see a male and a female outside. While the residence was under surveillance, an officer observed the male individual assault the female subject by jerking on a necklace and then slapping her across the face and causing her to fall to the ground. Officers moved in to intervene and as they did so, the female fugitive exited an apartment; she was placed under arrest. Officers also placed the male individual under arrest for assault and in doing so, he became combative. Officers placed the male on the ground to gain better control of him and as they did so, the male kicked his legs up and struck a sergeant on the face and threatened to assault the officers. Later as the male was being transported to the jail, he attempted to head-butt an officer and made additional threats, indicating that he knew people on the outside (of jail) and the officer was going to get killed in the line of duty. Officers arrested Kia Lee, age 22, for three outstanding felony warrants out of Ramsey County. Officers also arrested Frank L. Tubbs, age 35. Tubbs was later charged in District Court with Terroristic Threats—a felony, 4th Degree Assault of a Police Office—a gross misdemeanor, Domestic Assault and Obstructing the Legal Process—both misdemeanors. In addition, a third individual, a 27-year old female, was charged by citation with Obstructing the Legal Process when she interfered in the arrest of Tubbs.