Recognition Ceremony—

The Owatonna Police Department occupied a significant portion of Tuesday night’s City Council Agenda as we took the opportunity to formally award citizens and officers with meritorious service awards and swear in our newest police officers. Owatonna citizen Linda Schroeder received an award for her role in preventing a drowning at Lake Kolmier and 9-year-old Angela Zaccaria for calling and directing first responders after her mother had received some severe burns in their home. Police Officers Brandon Fandel, Brady Fox, Matt Oeltjenbruns, Brady Prince and Sergeant Tracy DuChene all received an award for their role in de-arming a suicidal male at Lake Kohlmeir in June. Officer Laddie Bata received an award for his efforts in investigating and making an arrest in a sexual solicitation case that occurred in August. Detective Andrew Drenth received two awards—the first for an arrest related to a drive-by shooting that took place at the Medford McDonald’s in January and the second for coordinating a 9-month long drug investigation case that led to the arrests of 32 individuals for drug related offenses. Lastly, Officers Zack Schumaker, Adam Hennen, Brianne Lesnau, Ben Johnson and Chris Kowalzek, all beginning their police officer careers with the Owatonna Police Department in 2012-2013, took the Oath of Office before Honorable District Court Judge Joseph Bueltel after which they were officially pinned with their badge by a chosen significant other. In the two pictures below and to the left, Linda Schroeder and Angela Zaccaria are receiving their awards from Chief Keith Hiller and Captain Jeff Mundale. In the pictures to the right, our new officers are receiving the Oath of Office before Judge Bueltel and are being pinned with their badges.

Forged Check Lands One in Jail—

On January 7th, Owatonna officers were called to Wells Fargo Bank for a female subject who was attempting to cash a forged check. The arriving officers found the female suspect standing at a teller station inside of the bank; she was detained as they continued with their investigation. The investigation revealed that the female suspect was attempting to cash a $2500 check on a personal account from an Owatonna resident. A teller compared the check being presented for cashing with other checks written on the account and observed differences in handwriting. The bank contacted the account holder who indicated he did not write the check nor authorize it to be written to the suspect. The officers also learned that a few days earlier, the same suspect had also deposited a $1500 check drawn on this same account into her personal account—the $1500 deposited was withdrawn over the course of the weekend, and only a small amount remained. Officers arrested Kelsey K. Ball, age 21, who declined to cooperate in this investigation. She was transported to the Steele County Detention Center and later formally charged with three counts of Check Forgery—all felonies.

Preventing Postal Theft—

Within the past month, a few cases of postal theft have been reported to the Owatonna Police Department. To prevent mail theft, we suggest—

» Do not leave outgoing mail in an unlocked box
» Promptly pick-up incoming mail once it has been delivered to your box
» Promptly report non-receipt of credit cards, check blanks and other valuable mail to the senders
» If you’re on vacation, notify the USPS or have a trusted friend or neighbor pick up your mail
» Consider mailing checks and other valuable pieces of mail directly at a post office or in a blue USPS collection box
» Immediately notify the USPS and mailers of change of your address
» Be observant of activities on your street, especially near residential mailboxes and collections sites—immediately report suspicious persons or activity by calling 911 while the suspects are still present.

TAX SEASON DOs & DON’Ts

When using the United States Mail to send in your returns, always drop them in a secured mailbox/drop or at the Post Office. You have personal information on these forms that someone could use to claim your identity such as:

» Social Security Numbers
» Routing numbers for your bank accounts
» Income information that someone could use to open credit accounts without your knowledge (ID theft)
» Home Address

When using the Internet—

» Use all precautions you normally use for opening charge accounts with online businesses
» Turn off our computers when not in use
» When surfing the internet, hackers can get into your computer and gather personal information
» Check on firewalls and home computer security measures for your personal computer
» There is software that encrypts or scrambles the purchase information

Recognize these:

• Busiest Day of Week: Friday—133 events
• Busiest Hour of Day: 2:00 PM—88 events
• Total # of Events: 797
• Average Events/Day: 113.86
• Average Events/Hour: 4.74
• Average Traffic Stops: .88 per hour
• DWIs for the week: 0

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