Crash Leads to Felony DWI Charges—

During the evening hours on January 6th, our officers were called to a property damage crash that took place near the entrance to Walmart on the west Frontage Rd. When officers arrived, they located one of the vehicles involved in the McDonalds parking lot. The vehicle had moderate damage on the driver’s side that did not allow the driver’s door to be open. An officer observed a male driver still seated in the vehicle, gazing out at the officer but failing to acknowledge her. When the driver did exit out of the passenger door, he displayed signs of intoxication. The officer had the driver perform roadside field sobriety tests which he failed; he was placed under arrest for suspicion of drunk driving. He was transported to the Steele County Detention Center for further DWI testing, which he refused. Lonnie H. Bronstad, age 41, was formally charged with two counts of 1st Degree DWI—felonies and Violating a Restricted Drivers License. Interestingly, when questioned by the officer, Bronston admitted several times he was drunk, but denied driving despite witness accounts to the contrary and having the keys to his vehicle in his pocket. A preliminary breath test in the field showed Bronstad’s breath alcohol content at .241 or three times the legal limit to drive. Luckily, no injuries were reported in this crash.

Polar Plunge—

Plunging temperatures mean it’s Polar Plunge time in Owatonna. It’s not too late to register or donate now for the 2017 Polar Plunge being held at Lake Kohlmier in Owatonna on January 28th. Check in is between 11:00 AM and 1:00 with the plunge to take place at 1:00. The event is offered by law enforcement to help support Special Olympic athletes. Citizens are welcome to attend in groups or individually. For more information, click here. In the picture to the right, our own Officer Andrew Van Osdale is emerging from the icy depths following his plunge in last years event.

Cops in the Community—

Last Saturday, Sergeant Jason Petterson traveled to Hope to give a presentation to a group who were attending a snowmobile safety class. Sergeant Petterson talked about the Owatonna city ordinances pertaining to snowmobiling in the city limits and answered questions from the group. The course was sponsored by the Steele County Trail Association and the Owatonna PD has been partnering with the association for many years with this presentation.

On Thursday evening, Officer Michaela Smith spoke at the Owatonna Senior Center to an AARP driving class. Officer Smith spoke to the group about new traffic laws followed by a question and answer session.