Off-duty Officer Makes Forgery Arrest—

On Monday afternoon, Owatonna officers were dispatched to the Hy-Vee branch of the Home Town Credit Union for the report of a male individual attempting to pass a forged check. Our on-duty officers were out of position in the northeast part of town; however, one of our officers who was on his way to work was listening to his radio and near the store and offered to assist. The off-duty officer arrived at the store and was directed to the suspect in the credit union. The officer detained the male suspect in an office as he conducted his investigation. While the officer was conducting the investigation, he learned the suspect had an outstanding arrest warrant out for his arrest. As the officer continued with the investigation, a patron in the store attempted to get the officers attention—as the officer went to speak with the patron, the detained suspect seized the opportunity by opening the office door and running from the store. The officer took chase and apprehended the suspect after a short foot pursuit in the parking lot. Investigation into the forgery revealed the suspect was attempting to pass a stolen check that had been “washed”. Washing is a technique where payee and dollar amount information is removed from the stolen check and forged information is added in its place. William C. Perry, age 21, was arrested and held at the Steele County Detention Center. He was formally charged with Offering a Forged Check—a felony and Fleeing a Police Officer on Foot.

Stolen Vehicle Recovery—

Early this morning, an Owatonna sergeant was on patrol in the parking lot of Kwik Trip on Mineral Springs Rd. He ran a routine registration check on an unoccupied, unattended vehicle that appeared to be filling with gasoline. The registration check indicated that the vehicle was stolen out of the City of Minneapolis. Other Owatonna officers converged on Kwik Trip as they heard the radio traffic of the stolen vehicle. As officers were in the parking lot, a lone black male exited the store and began quickly walking out of the parking lot. Our officers approached him and the male suspect fled on foot. After a short foot pursuit, the suspect was apprehended and brought to the Steele County Detention Center. The suspect refused to cooperate with the investigation; however, surveillance video and a witness account place the suspect with the vehicle. Irving W. Madison, age 23, was formally charged with Motor Vehicle Theft, Receiving Stolen Property, Fleeing a Police Officer on Foot and Driving after Suspension.

Tips to Putting the Brrrrrakes on Winter Driving—

As Minnesotans drive into the depths of winter and another cold snap next week, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding motorists about important driving skills for winter road conditions and the important survival items to store in a vehicle in the case motorists become stranded during cold weather. According to the DPS Office of Traffic Safety, during 2010-2012, there were a total of 68,686 crashes during the winter season (Dec-Feb), accounting for 32 percent of the state’s total crashes. In 2012, crashes on snow/icy road surfaces accounted for nearly 10,605 crashes resulting in 28 deaths and 3,081 injuries.

Winter Driving Tips—

- Drive at safe speeds according to road conditions, and allow plenty of travel time.
- Increase safe stopping distance between vehicles.
- Use extra precaution around snowplows — keep at least five car-lengths behind plows.
- Parents of teen drivers should make sure new motorists experience snow and ice driving in a safe environment, such as an empty parking lot.

* Reprinted in part from the MN Chief of Police Association