Bat Wielding Suspect Arrested—

On July 5th, Owatonna officers were called to the area of Central Park for the report of a fight. Responding officers located a 32-year-old male who alleged to be the victim of an assault. The victim reported he was confronted by a suspect in the park who was threatening him with a pink colored bat; the suspect was swinging the bat like he was a batter warming up and the victim felt the suspect was going to hit him. The victim also alleged the suspect told him he was “dead” and “going down”. The victim started to confront the suspect; however, the suspect fled the area on foot. An independent witness also reported observing the witness swinging the bat and having an 8” bladed knife in his possession. The suspect later dropped the knife when the witness reported that she had called the police; the knife was later turned over to the police. Shortly thereafter, a patrol officer spotted the suspect on North Cedar Avenue wearing a blue backpack that had a pink baseball bat sticking out of it. Officers arrested Andrew J. Kramer, age 24 and transported him to the Steele County Jail. Kramer was later formally charged in District Court with 2nd Degree Assault and Terroristic Threats—felonies.

2012 Crash Facts—

The state’s 395 deaths in 2012 marks a 40% decrease from 10 years ago; 2003—655; 2004—567; 2005—559; 2006—494; 2007—510; 2008—455; 2009—421; 2010—411; 2011—368. The Department of Public Safety says proactive campaigns anchored in the state’s cornerstone traffic safety initiative, Toward Zero Deaths, have helped reduce deaths significantly over the past decade—increased enforcement coupled with educational efforts and media campaigns; MnDOT road engineering enhancements; and improved emergency medical and trauma response. Officials also attribute progress to safer vehicles and important legislation. Most importantly, they cite improving driver behavior—seat belt use is at a record high of 94 percent and a continuing drop in DWI arrests and drunk driving deaths signals people are making safer choices.

Department News—

On Thursday afternoon, a group of 5th grade girl scouts paid a visit to the animal control shelter. Community Service Officer Tony Malepsy gave the group a tour of the facility and also accepted a donation of dog food, cat food and animal toys.

The main construction of our new garage has been completed. City crews will now be focusing on electrical and plumbing work before HVAC installation and the floor will be poured. The new garage will provide us with five additional standard garage stalls as well as two oversized stalls. Besides being available as garage stalls, the oversized stalls will be used for secured vehicle evidence processing and can be used as an oversized location for in-service training needs, such as use of force training or defensive tactics training. Within the building, there is a room that will be used as a secure location for long-term, oversized evidence storage.

Cops in the Community—

On Tuesday evening, Sergeant Andy DeVinn paid a visit to Senior Place where he gave a presentation to a group of seniors as part of an AARP Driver Safety Class. The local AARP driving instructors invite police department representative(s) to give a presentation on driving topics, or to discuss state and local traffic laws, traffic safety concerns and trends in the southeast Minnesota region, and offers an opportunity for questions and answers from their local police department.