Oops—
Last week we reported on our department’s involvement in the Steele County Safety Camp and recognized our department members for their individual contributions to the event. Unfortunately, we forgot to recognize Detective Joel Hunt who is the Chairperson of the Safety Camp Board and had a significant responsibility for the overall planning of the event. We also left out Community Service Officers Anthony Malepsyz and Zack Schumaker who served as advisors.

Weekly Highlights—
Each week we post our “Weekly Highlights” along the left border of this page to report some of the statistics from the past week. We’ve been asked, “What is an event”? An event is any call for service or officer initiated activity. If an officer responds to a medical call for service, that creates one event. If an officer conducts a traffic stop, that creates one event. If an officer is following up on an Action Request, that creates an event.

Crime Alert—
Within the past few weeks the department has noticed a considerable increase in the numbers of theft from vehicle reports. Most of the reports share a common theme—the victim has left his/her vehicle unlocked overnight and in the morning when they come out to their car they find that someone was in the car and they are missing property—in many cases valuable property. The reports are wide-spread throughout the city so the thieves are not targeting a specific area, so we all need to take precautions from being the next victim. What can you do? Watch for suspicious activity and report it to the police. Take your valuables out of your car, or at the very least conceal them. If you must park in your driveway or street, seek out a well-lighted area and make certain you have locked your vehicle doors. Lastly, before you turn in for the night, take a look to make certain you’ve closed your overhead garage door. Hopefully these tips will help you from becoming the next victim.

Good Save—
On Sunday afternoon, two of our officers were in the area of the Owatonna Hospital responding to a welfare check of a patient who walked away from the hospital. Officers located the patient, who was walking with the assistance of crutches, in an open field to the west of the hospital. Officers soon learned the patient was dealing with mental health issues and after a short struggle, were able to get the individual loaded in an ambulance and brought back to the hospital. During the course of the call, one of the officers lost a body microphone that syncs with our in-car video cameras and was unable to locate it in the long grass. Luckily, our department’s canine, Bullet, is specially trained in evidence recovery and came to the rescue by locating the microphone in the field. Coincidentally, Bullet and his handler, Brandon Fandel, spent last weekend in Eden Prairie, where Bullet renewed his annual United States Police Canine Association Certification in the areas of obedience, article searches, suspect searches, agility and criminal apprehension.

Vulnerable Adult Exploitation—
This week, the Detective Bureau has been working a rather significant vulnerable adult financial exploitation case. The case was initiated on June 11th, with a vulnerable adult reporting the theft of money from his savings and checking accounts by his sister who has power of attorney over the victim’s finances. Investigation revealed that the victim’s sister helped the victim fill out medical assistance paperwork without reporting income from a large financial settlement. The total amount thought to be stolen from the victim and/or fraudulently concealed from medical assistance is at least $250,000. On June 13th, Owatonna detectives arrested Leann M. Lahey, age 57. She was transported and held at the Steele County Detention Center awaiting formal charges. Subsequently, Lahey was charged in District Court with multiple felonies, including: Financial Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult (3 counts), Wrongfully Obtaining Assistance (2 Counts), Theft, and Falsely Declaring in an Application for Public Assistance. This investigation is on-going.