Robbery Suspects Arrested & Charged--

On Monday, March 5th at approximately 8:23 p.m., Owatonna officers were dispatched to the area of Applebee’s restaurant to meet with a male party who had just been robbed. Investigating officers learned the suspect was walking along side of the road on Park Drive N.W. when a van pulled alongside him and two Somali men exited. The two suspects approached him; one grabbed him by the shoulders and the other indicated he had a gun and demanded all of his property. The victim handed over his cell phone, wallet, cigarettes, two cans of Mt. Dew and $13 dollars in cash. The suspects returned to the van and fled the scene. As the suspects fled the scene, the victim flagged down a passerby. The victim and passerby followed the van and located it in the area of the Woodbridge Apartments. Officers then located the van leaving the apartment complex and conducted a high-risk stop with the vehicle. The vehicle was occupied with one individual who was taken into custody for questioning. On March 6th, Owatonna detectives received information that identified the individuals who committed the robbery, a 16-year old juvenile male and 20-year old adult male. Detectives interviewed the 16-year old juvenile who admitted his involvement in the robbery. He also indicated the driver of the van did not have any involvement in the robbery. The second suspect, the 20-year old male, was arrested at his residence and transported to the Steele County Detention Center where he refused to speak with detectives. Ali M. Abdullahi, age 20, was formally charged in District Court with 2° Degree Aggravated Robbery. The 16-year old juvenile was also charged in District Court with 2° Degree Aggravated Robbery.

Cops In The Community--

On Monday, March 5th, Owatonna Captains Jeff Mundale and Eric Rethelmeyer were invited guests at the Noon Rotary Club of Owatonna’s regular weekly meeting at the Owatonna County Club. Captains Mundale and Rethelmeyer were invited as guest speakers to talk about what is new at the police department. Captain Mundale spoke to the group about projects that he is coordinating, including the Police Chaplain Program, the Police Reserve Program and a Citizen’s Academy Program. Captain Rethelmeyer spoke about the Law Enforcement Center re-purposing projects, including the Detective Bureau, Property & Evidence Intake/Storage Room and the Patrol Division workplace. A special thanks goes out to Rotary Club for the invitation and opportunity.

Alcohol Retailers Compliance--

Earlier this week, Detectives Mark Edel and Terrence Flynn completed alcohol compliance checks on local off-sale and on-sale liquor establishments. Compliance checks are completed randomly throughout the year as a tool to identify establishments that sell alcohol to underage youth. The purpose of the checks are twofold—to enforce state statutes and local ordinances and to identify, warn, and educate establishments that serve or sell alcohol to underage youth. During this wave of checks, with the use of two underage operatives, forty-one establishments were checked and all were found to be in compliance. At the conclusion of the checks, a letter was sent to each of the businesses to congratulate them on their diligence and professionalism when asking for making certain their customers are of legal age to purchase alcohol. The Owatonna Police Department has been conducting alcohol compliance checks since 1999. This is another example of the department’s ongoing cooperative efforts with the Steele County Safe & Drug Free Coalition.

Deer Management Hunt--

The department will be placing officers in Kaplan’s Woods and the North Straight River Park this afternoon beginning at 3:00 p.m. until sunset in an attempt to manage the remaining deer in the quota set by the Minnesota DNR. Signs will be posted at the entrances to the parks to notify citizens and restrict access. A safety officer has also been assigned to patrol the hunt area.