City Council Ceremony—

At the beginning of last week’s city council meeting, the department formally presented our newly hired and awarded officers to the Council. Taking the oath as newly hired officers were Jesse Ackerson, John Petterson, Andrew Van Osdale and Melissa Michael; all four of these officers were hired in 2013. Following the reading of the oath, as is tradition, the officers had a significant other pin them with their police officer badge. Seven police officers, including: Sgt. Tracy DuChene, Officers Sean Cooper, Andrew Seifert, Christian Berg, Anthony Heaser, Adam Hennen and Jesse Ackerson were all awarded with Class “D” Commendations. A Class “D” Commendation is awarded to officers for outstanding performance on a single event or for situations that demonstrate the application of a member’s job skill under difficult circumstances. Lastly, Owatonna citizens Kathryn and JP Kreutter were awarded Citizen Commendations for their efforts in apprehending a residential burglar which led to the clearance of several other unsolved burglaries. He photos below show the officers being sworn in by Judge Bueltel (right), the officers receiving their commendations (middle) and the Kreutters displaying their commendations.

Reserve Officers—

Since March 19, 2013 when the Volunteer Police Reserve Unit began, the total membership of 19 reserve members have donated a total of 982 hours. Wow, what an excellent service and contribution to our community and police department! Of those hours, 268 total hours have been dedicated to training and preparing the reserve officers for field duties. The remaining 714 hours has been committed to field activities, such as, traffic control at parades and community run/walk events, overnight security at the OHS, security at Four Seasons Center events, security at street dances and other special use permits, Steele County Kids Safety Camp, park patrols, emergency call backs to secure fire and crime scenes, assistance at the Senior Expo and Senior Games, prisoner and transport details, and our latest event to date was Night To Unite. The photo top the right is of the reserve unit helping at the Color Dash in May.

Owatonna Officer Awarded—

On Thursday afternoon at the fair, a long standing tradition in the Owatonna Police Department continued as Officers Kyle Parr, Andrew Van Osdale, Melissa Michael and Community Service Officer Tony Malepsy were contestants in the watermelon seed spitting contest. Though the competition was fierce, years of training and preparation with former officers paid off as Kyle Parr won the event when he heaved a watermelon seed a mighty 24 feet. When interviewed after the contest, Kyle lauded the training efforts of retired officer Paul Schneider and Willie Goodsell for getting to where he is today. Kyle, we’re proud of you!!