Police Officer of the Year—The Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna has announced they have selected Detective Joel Hunt as their 2017 Police Officer of the Year. Joel has worked at OPD since 2003, serving as a Community Service Officer, Patrol Officer, School Resource Officer and currently as General Detective where he found a passion and has specialized skills in computer forensics. He was previously the Predatory Offender Registration Coordinator and continues to serve as the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Investigator. He has served as a Field Training Officer (FTO), Evidence Technician, Explorer Advisor, and SWAT Team-Assistant Team Leader. Joel is involved with Steele County Kid’s Safety Camp, served on the Owatonna Human Rights Commission, is Vice President of the Owatonna Eagles Club and serves on the public input team of the grass roots movement Owatonna Forward. Joel and his wife Holly have been married for a year and their first child was born yesterday, May 4th. Joel will formally be recognized as this year’s recipient at a banquet hosted by the Exchange Club at the VFW Club on Thursday, May 11, 2017. The recognition banquet is open to the public; tickets are $15 and are available the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce, Kottke Jewelers, and the Law Enforcement Center.

Crash Leads to DWI — Early Sunday morning at 03:30, officers were called to a vehicle crash on Hoffman Drive near the entrance to Walmart. A vehicle crashed into an electrical pole as a result of a drunk driver. When officers arrived, the power pole was snapped and leaning toward the vehicle. The power pole was supporting many power lines and some were on the ground. Officers were able to meet with the driver away from the vehicle and called OPU to make the scene safe. The driver uttered “I am too drunk to drive”. The driver, identified as Timothy Kong, was showing many signs of impairment and had either refused sobriety tests or had difficulty performing them. Kong did not have a Minnesota driver's license and his Maine DL was suspended. Kong was arrested for DWI and brought to jail for the Minnesota Implied Consent Advisory. Kong consented to a breath test that yielded an alcohol concentration of .25, which is 3 times the per se limit. Thankfully, no one was injured and our first responding officers and linemen from OPU were able to restore the scene to safety. Kong, 24 of Owatonna, was charged with 3rd Degree DWI.

Swearing In Ceremony—
On Tuesday, May 2nd, the following new officers were sworn in at the City of Owatonna Council Meeting.

Emily Ammentorp
Alan Callahan
Abby Dreher
Casey Martin
Dylan Orloff
Derrick Quinlan
Michaela Smith
Valerie Satre
Alex Vogel (absent)

Also recognized was Jason Matejcek who was promoted to Sergeant as well as John Petterson and Travis Ardolf who were given class D commendations for outstanding service. A special tribute was given to John Kristofferson — a former Sergeant who worked for the Owatonna PD from 1953 to 1979.

New Officer
Valerie Satre

On May 2nd, the OPD gained another Officer—Valerie Satre. She earned her Bachelor’s degree from Pillsbury College as well as an Associate’s degree in Law Enforcement from Rasmussen College. Val worked as a Records Supervisor at the Robbinsdale PD for 13 years. Her hobbies include attending sporting events, hiking, downhill skiing, gardening, riding motorcycle and spending time with her family and friends. Valerie in currently assigned to a 16 week field training program at OPD. Welcome Val!