Officer Presence Brings Woman to Safety— On Monday morning at 09:17 a.m., officers were dispatched to a 911 hang-up call at 725 East Vine Street. Upon walking up to the area, the officer heard a woman screaming. The officer then heard an engine revving then observed a vehicle accelerate away causing gravel and dust to fly in the air. The officer observed a woman lying across the hood of this car. As the woman was holding on, the driver caused the rear-end to skid sideways — nearly hitting a parked vehicle. During these intense moments, the woman nearly rolled off the hood. The officer was shouting at the driver and was able to get him to stop and allow the woman to get off the hood. The driver left the car and ignored the officers directions. The officer gave chase and a struggle ensued as the driver was headed for his residence. The suspect grabbed the officer around the waist. The officer was able to defeat the attack and bring the suspect into custody. The suspect, identified as Jonathan Cornelius Smith, age 31, was formally charged with obstructing legal process—a gross misdemeanor and fleeing a peace officer on foot—a misdemeanor.

Wrong Way Driver Leads to a Pair of Arrests— On Tuesday night, an officer stopped a vehicle for traveling the wrong way on a one-way alley. The driver was identified as Terry Allen Lester. His passenger was Stephanie Ann Thompson—the owner of the car. Through the officer’s investigation, he found that Thompson allowed Lester to drive and she did not have auto insurance on the vehicle. Further, she had an active Order For Protection (OFP) on Lester which prohibits Lester from having contact with Thompson. The vehicle was towed and a vehicle inventory search led to a glass pipe in the glove compartment, containing a white residue. Thompson confessed to the meth pipe, in addition to a scale in her purse and a meth pipe in her bra. All objects seized field tested presumptive positive for meth. Lester was aware the OFP was in place and was subsequently arrested. Both parties were brought to jail and formal complaints were issued against Lester for violating an OFP—a gross misdemeanor based on a prior conviction. Thompson was charged with a 5th Degree Controlled Substance—a gross misdemeanor and Possession of a Small Amount of Marijuana—a misdemeanor.

Officer of The Year—Detective Joel Hunt was formally recognized on Thursday evening as the 2017 recipient of the Owatonna Police Officer of the Year at the VFW Club sponsored by the Moonlighters Exchange Club. Detective Hunt was surrounded by many law enforcement partners, retired and active-duty, and many family and community members. OPD gives thanks to the Exchange Club’s mission to honor and show appreciation for the men and women who serve our community and country in law enforcement and the armed forces.