Night to Unite Recap—

Another successful Night to Unite is in the books and we’d like to thank all of our community members who participated in this great event. On Tuesday night, the Owatonna Police Department sent out 14 two-person teams to visit the 38 neighborhood events that were occurring city-wide and attended by an estimated 1500 community members—this was a 22% increase in the number of neighborhood events held last year! This year our officers were bolstered by our school district community service officers, reserve officers, police chaplains, City Administrator Kris Busse and Council Member Les Abraham. Night to Unite offers our department the opportunity for our officers to develop and strengthen relationships with our community stakeholders—you! It also offers us the opportunity to evaluate how we’re doing in the eyes of the community and where we can make improvements in our level of service to the community.

For the fourth consecutive year, this year’s event also allowed our community the opportunity to support the Children’s Remedial Fund by donating school supplies/funds that will go to disadvantaged residents living in Steele County. These photos highlight some of this year’s event. As a bonus, we also accepted a food donation made that will be delivered to the Steele County Food Shelf.

Careful What You Ask For—

On July 25th, our officers were searching Owatonna for a car reported stolen. Information was received that the car was in Manthey Park and the suspect nearby. Once in the park, the vehicle was located, along with the named suspect walking away from it. Our officers detained the suspect and upon searching him, found marijuana and drug paraphernalia in his pocket. They also searched his back pack and uncovered a white powder and crystals which tested presumptive positive for methamphetamines. The suspect was then brought to the law enforcement center to further investigate the vehicle theft. Fakrudin A. Fakrudin, age 27, was arrested and formally charged with 5th Degree Possession of a Controlled Substance. You might wonder what happened with the stolen car investigation. The owner, a 22-year old male, ended up recanting his story and not wanting to pursue charges—he was charged by citation with falsely reporting a crime.

Traffic Stop Leads to Gun Charges—

On July 30th, an Owatonna officer spotted a vehicle entering the northbound construction zone on I-35 at too high a speed. The officer stopped the car and learned the driver had a suspended license. While speaking with the driver, he shared that there was a marijuana pipe and offered to retrieve it for the officers—he gave consent to search the vehicle. Besides the pipe, a small amount of marijuana was uncovered along with a cased .40 pistol and a cased shotgun. Unfortunately for the driver, he is a convicted felon and not eligible to possess firearms. Milton E. Gustafson, age 40, was arrested and formally charged with Certain Persons Not to Possess Firearms—a felony. He also faces a misdemeanor charge for the marijuana found in the vehicle.