2013 Crash Facts—

After a jump in 2012, Minnesota traffic fatalities dropped to 387 last year, the second lowest total in a decade. While fewer people died on Minnesota roads, the total number of crashes increased by 12 percent to 77,707 in 2013. The data is reported in Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts 2013 and published by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS/OTS). Crash Facts is an annual summary of traffic crashes derived from law enforcement reports and describes how, why and where crashes occurred and who was involved.

Contributing factors

Driver inattention/distraction, failure to yield right-of-way and illegal/unsafe speed continue to be the top contributors to all crashes. Alcohol was the top contributing factor in traffic fatalities last year with 117 people losing their lives, down from 131 in 2012. Drinking and driving remains the leading cause of traffic deaths, responsible for one of every three traffic fatalities over the past decade.

To view the entire Crash Facts publication, click on link to the right.

You Can Run, But You Can’t Hide—

As it seems these past few weeks, our officers are finding it more common for suspects to try and flee on foot when our officers arrive—early Monday morning the same scenario played out again. Officers were summoned to the Super 8 Motel for a domestic disturbance. When the officers arrived on scene, they found a male and female arguing in the parking lot. As they approached, the male turned and ran and the chase was on. The pursuit led to a fenced area near Perkins where the suspect tried to scale the fence to no avail. Fenced-in, the suspect tried hiding between a couple of storage containers, but was soon located and placed under arrest. No crime took place between the male and female, but the suspect was found in violation of his probation. Terry Fink II, age 42, was transported to the Steele County Jail and charged with Disorderly Conduct and Fleeing a Police Officer on Foot.

Kash’s New Handler—

Our canine partner Kash has a new home—Officer John Pettersson has been selected as Kash’s new handler. Many of you may be familiar with John as he and his former canine partner Kilo served the community together many years ago. John and Kash are familiarizing themselves to each other, but won’t be patrolling the street together until they obtain some United State Police Canine Association (USPCA) certifications. The photo below is of a young John Pettersson and his former partner Kilo.

Cops in the Community—

On Thursday, July 3rd, a pair of Owatonna community service officers paid a visit to Kid’s Corner. Community Service Officers Josh Steinberg and Tommy Adams were at Kid’s Corner to talk to the kids about summer safety tips and to give a squad car tour. In the picture below, CSOs Steinberg and Adams are posing with the kids in front of the department’s animal control vehicle.

Department News—

Congratulations to Officers Sean Cooper and Matt Oeltjenbruns. Both officers have been selected to join the department’s field training unit. Ofc. Cooper is currently assigned to the Patrol Division and serves as one of our department’s gang intelligence officers. Ofc. Oeltjenbruns is also assigned to the Patrol Division and serves the department as a use of force instructor and is on the South Central Drug Investigation Unit Tactical Team. Both officers will be attending a week-long field training officer course in August.