Cops in the Community—
This past week Detectives Matt Oeltjenbruns, Brady Vaith, Christian Berg and Evidence Technician Kim Dub have been partnering with the Owatonna Middle School and their forensic science classes. up mock crime scenes and giving instruction to the students on investigating and processing a crime scene—this is the second year we’ve been helping out with the Middle School students enrolled in this class. The students really enjoy this partnership and thought the exercise was cool!

Department News—
Officers Matt Borash and Nathan Heeren have been in the field training and evaluation process since late September. The field training program is an intensive process where newly hired officers travel through four-phases or approximately 600 hours of instruction and observation to demonstrate they have knowledge, skills and abilities to work as a solo police officer. This week marks the last week of their 16-week field training journey as they move into solo patrol duties—congratulations to both of these officers! Officers Borash and Heeren moving into solo patrol opens up other opportunities within our organization; specifically, Officer Ben Johnson will be trading in his navy blue uniform for a suit & tie and assigned to the Detective Bureau as a general detective beginning January 18th. Detective Johnson has been with the department since December of 2012. Ben has been a member of the Use of Force Unit as a firearms instructor and armor and is also a field training officer. Congratulations Ben!

Residential Burglary Caught—
Early morning on the 12th, our officers responded to 433 Dart Avenue for a residential burglary. The homeowner reported he came home from work and found his home broken into and change missing. Shortly thereafter, an officer observed a male appear from behind some homes a few houses down just before receiving another call of a male trying to enter another home in the same block. The male was stopped and he had evidence on him to support he broke into the first home, including shoe prints that matched shoe prints on the kicked in door. Enke Fernandez, age 27 of Owatonna was arrested. In an interview, he admitted breaking into the 433 Dart address. Fernandez has been charged with Attempted 1st Degree Burglary, 2nd Degree Burglary, 4th Degree Damage to Property and Theft.

Porch Pirate Nabbed—
On January 10th, our officers responded to a home in the 200 block of E. McKinley for a community member reporting mail theft. The victim reported he had received a notification that a purchase he made had been delivered—he checked, but the package was not there. The victim had a surveillance camera on the front of his home which showed a person stealing his package out of the mailbox. Another respondent looked at the video and identified the suspect as Rickie. The investigating officer knew Rickie from prior contacts and interviewed Rickie—during the interview, Rickie admitted to taking the package and that an unknown person he had never met before told him he could take anything he wanted from his mailbox....Ricardo Buentello, age 30 of Owatonna was arrested and jailed. Buentello has been charged with Mail Theft—a felony.