The Next Stage of Life—

On January 31st we will say goodbye to Sergeant Robbe Kniefel and his 23+ years of service to citizens and the community of Owatonna as Rob will be entering into retirement. Rob began with the department as a patrol officer in 1997, coming to us from the Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office. Rob was assigned to investigations in 2001 and was promoted to detective corporal in 2003. In 2004, Rob was named the Investigator of the Year by the Minnesota Sex Crime Investigator Association. In 2008, Rob was promoted to the rank of patrol sergeant and has remained in that capacity since. Rob was previously a field training officer, field training coordinator and most recently, the reserve officer unit coordinator. In his tenure, Rob has received two formal commendations and numerous notes of appreciation and thanks. Congratulations to Rob and his family for their service and commitment to law enforcement for the State of Minnesota and the citizens of Owatonna. If you see Rob out and about during this next week, please join us in congratulating him for a job well done! We wish him the best in his next stage of life!

Gone in the Blink of an Eye—

Very early on Monday morning, our officers were called to Kwik Trip on S. Oak Avenue for the report of a stolen SUV. The victim was reporting she quickly stopped in at Kwik Trip for a pizza and pop. She left her SUV running in the parking lot, taking her key fob with her while she was in the store. When she returned to her SUV, it was gone. As part of the investigation, a witness reported seeing a person of interest leaving the store prior to the theft and noticed he was wearing handcuffs on one arm—this was the same person the victim said hello to as she was entering the store. The following morning, our officers were called to Linn Drive for a vehicle reported off the roadway. The responding officers located the vehicle stuck in a snowbank and recognized it as the stolen SUV—they also found the vehicle still occupied by a sleeping male who was wearing a set of plastic, costume handcuffs on his right wrist. The occupant was placed under arrest and jailed. Christopher Ramirez, age 23 of Waseca, has been charged with Receiving Stolen Property—a felony. Why was Ramirez wearing handcuffs?—we’ll never know as he refused to speak with our officers. This is another reminder to not leave your vehicle running and unattended—not even for a second!

Wear the Badge—

The Minnesota Chief of Police Association recently released another officer profile in their Wear the Badge Series. In this episode, the association features Officer Bob Petrasek of the Waterville Police Department. Officer Petrasek, a school resource officer in the Waterville schools, talks about how his relationship with an SRO while he was a student was such a positive impact and how he jumped at the opportunity to pay it forward when offered the same opportunity. To view the episode, click the Wear the Badge logo to the left.

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