

AROUND TOWN



Chief
Jim Crace

Commanders
Mark Gunderson
Jon Esterbrooks

Sergeants
Griffin Pfeiffer - K9
Jon Pernu - K9

Detective Bureau
Jeff Dwyer
Jake Williams

Officers
Jason Salo
Tim Battaglia
Jon Enright
Erika Johnson - SRO
Olivia Gottschald
Andrew Leibel
Alex Prouse
Rebecca Towner

Clerical
Dana Ross
Samantha Knapp
Ashley Johnson

K-9
Tuuko
Jack



During the week of 12/24/23 to 12/30/23, the Hermantown PD had 106 calls.
The following are selected incidents HPD responded to this week.

Community Engagement

December was a busy month for our officers. The Hermantown Public Safety officers, both Fire and Police, participated in a great holiday event again this year on December 12th, 2023. Officers participated in a 'Shop with a Cop' event, which is sponsored by Bernick's Companies. This event allows Hermantown students that are selected to do some holiday shopping for loved ones while having positive interaction with Police Officers and Firefighters. The joy this event brings to children and the officers during the holiday season is truly priceless.

The Hermantown Public Safety would like to extend a thank you to Bernick's Companies, Fleet Farm and the Hermantown Walmart for their generosity and hospitality and to the Hermantown School District for their assistance in making this event possible. The Hermantown Police Department has participated in the event for approximately 18 years.

In addition to the shopping event, Hermantown officers were treated with a full barbeque dinner and all the sides from Tig's Smok'n Pig BBQ on December 25th. The Hermantown patrol crew was very thankful and reported that the meal was very delicious! It definitely put a smile on their face during the holiday season.

Driving Under the Influence

On December 25th, 2023, at 2318 hours, Hermantown officers observed a car that appeared to be driving at a high rate of speed of 71 mph in a posted 60 mph zone. As the officer approached the vehicle, they observed the driver reaching into the vehicle's back seat. The driver appeared to be spraying a bottle of what appeared to be Febreze all over his chest.

As officers made contact with the driver, the 28-year-old man, who admitted to speeding. Officers noticed that his eyes looked watery and bloodshot and that his speech was slurred. When the man was asked if he had any drinks tonight, he admitted to having one with his dinner. He also asked the officer not to arrest him because he had a lot going on and did not want to go to jail. At this time, the man began to cry and told officers he was scared.

The man agreed to do standard field sobriety testing, but when asked if he would take a preliminary breathalyzer test, he said he was scared and did not want to. The man was placed under arrest for suspicion of DWI. Once back at the Hermantown Police Department, he agreed to give a breath test, where the result was .14 BRAC.

The man was transported to jail and ultimately charged with 4th Degree DWI, Driving After Suspension and Speeding.

AROUND TOWN



Chief
Jim Crace

Commanders
Mark Gunderson
Jon Esterbrooks

Sergeants
Griffin Pfeiffer - K9
Jon Pernu - K9

Detective Bureau
Jeff Dwyer
Jake Williams

Officers
Jason Salo
Tim Battaglia
Jon Enright
Erika Johnson - SRO
Olivia Gottschald
Andrew Leibel
Alex Prouse
Rebecca Towner

Clerical
Dana Ross
Samantha Knapp
Ashley Johnson

K-9
Tuuko
Jack



Shoplifting

On December 27th, 2023, officers received word from dispatch that Menards employees needed to report a shoplifting that had occurred earlier in the day around 1330 hours. Officers spoke with store staff who witnessed a woman select merchandise and then walk out of the garden center exit doors, avoiding the cashier and making no attempt to pay.

Officers were able to learn the identity of the suspect through investigation and went to the 35-year-old woman's home to speak with her. The woman told officers that she paid for one of the items, but did not have a receipt. When asked what form of payment she used, the woman admitted that maybe she forgot to pay, but stated she put other items back down after realizing she didn't need them. The officers then returned some of the recovered stolen merchandise to Menards and requested further review of the video surveillance.

Through this, the woman was found to have stolen more items than she admitted to during the interview. Open packages were found hidden in the store as well for items suspected to have been taken. Ultimately, the woman was issued a citation for Shoplifting and Possession of Stolen Property. The total amount of loss to the store was \$265.68.

Fire

On December 27th, 2023 at 1144 hours, officers were alerted of a light pole that appeared to be on fire near the 4300th block of Haines Road. Responding officers found that there was a fire on top of a power pole, but it was on the Duluth jurisdiction side of Haines Road. Officers waited on scene until the Duluth Fire Department responded.

Fraud

On 12/28/2023, officers spoke with a man regarding fraudulent activity on his bank account. The 63-year-old man stated he had been in contact with a woman from New York regarding a room for rent there that he was interested in. The man said that this woman had asked him to send her \$125 as a security deposit for the room, which he did. The man stated after doing so, the woman cut off communications with him. He understood it would be difficult to get the money back. No further loss at this time.

Pedestrian vs. Vehicle

On December 29th, 2023 at 1016 hours, dispatch advised officers of a call where a pedestrian was pushing out a cart in the Walmart lot and was hit by a vehicle. The report stated that the impact ripped the cart out of the victim's hands and that it knocked her down. The woman explained that she was sore but wasn't in need of medical assistance. The victim did speak to the driver who helped her pick things up but then left.

AROUND TOWN



Chief
Jim Crace

Commanders
Mark Gunderson
Jon Esterbrooks

Sergeants
Griffin Pfeiffer - K9
Jon Pernu - K9

Detective Bureau
Jeff Dwyer
Jake Williams

Officers
Jason Salo
Tim Battaglia
Jon Enright
Erika Johnson - SRO
Olivia Gottschald
Andrew Leibel
Alex Prouse
Rebecca Towner

Clerical
Dana Ross
Samantha Knapp
Ashley Johnson

K-9
Tuuko
Jack



Officers spoke to the victim, a 60-year-old woman, who stated that she exited the store and began walking across the driving lane and noticed that there was a vehicle that was crossing the crosswalk. She continued walking through the crosswalk and stated that it appeared that the vehicle sped up towards her. The vehicle continued and ran directly into the victim's cart, tipping the cart over and dumping the contents across the driving lane.

The victim said that the suspect exited the vehicle as well as a male and helped pick up the groceries. The victim stated she was yelling at the driver, and the driver and the male left the scene shortly after. The victim noticed after she started to calm down that she was experiencing arm and wrist pain and was not given any contact or insurance information for the driver.

Officers observed surveillance footage of the incident at Walmart and was able to contact the suspect through this investigation. The 63-year-old woman stated that the sun was very bright and she did not see the victim enter the crosswalk. She was adamant that she did not hit the woman, just her cart. The suspect vehicle had light cosmetic damage on the right front consistent with striking a shopping cart.