



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
November 2019 Report

Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
November 4, 2019

Public Safety Building • 1100 W. Mallon Avenue • Spokane, Washington 99260-0001





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Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendation Letters

My 17-year-old granddaughter is interested in a career in law enforcement. I requested some time to learn about what it takes to be a police person. **Officer Jennifer Kerns** spent part of her day off explaining to my granddaughter the requirements, what it is like to be a police officer, and what it means to carry a gun. She was honest, answered questions and emphasized the goal of a police officer is to help others. She spent over two hours with a young girl she didn't even know. She represented Spokane and Police Department beautifully. Amazing young woman. I thought you should know.

I wanted to thank you and Spokane Police Department, in particular **Officer Brent Armstrong**, for the opportunity to experience a ride along today. The experience was fantastic and Officer Armstrong couldn't have been nicer. Please pass on my gratitude to Officer Armstrong for an unforgettable learning experience. Thank you to all of you at the Spokane Police Department for all that you do every day to help and protect all for us!

I want to say a big thanks on behalf of my K9 Jack and myself. We attended your Advanced K9 Handler course in September 2018. One of the scenarios we went through involved a quarry in a bite suit with a knife. The quarry was hit with a beanbag from the armored rig and the dog was sent. Last week Jack and I were involved in a call. The suspect stabbed a guy to death and fled. The following night he returned to the scene... looking for suicide by cop. He had his hand in his pocket and would not take it out after several negotiations. Ultimately, I deployed Jack and he produced a knife and stabbed Jack twice while he was on the bite. Multiple beanbag rounds were deployed after I yelled "knife." Jack was a hero and took him down. His vest saved his life and he was not injured. Thanks in large part to the scenarios he was exposed to in Spokane, he performed as he should, and saved not only the suspect's life but I suspect members' lives. If you can share it with the fellas in your K9 unit, I would appreciate it. Your course provides invaluable experience for both the handler and the dog. Thank you to **Spokane K9** for giving us the tools to deal with something like this.

I was involved in a car accident that left me with unanswered questions and concerns. Both **Captain Tom Hendren** and **Officer Rhian Wilkinson** deserve the highest compliment I can give. Both were extremely helpful, knowledgeable, and helped me get the information I needed regarding the accident while treating me with respect and concern for my needs. The level of honesty, integrity, caring, and efficiency has impressed me phenomenally!! These gentlemen deserve recognition for their outstanding efforts and caring for the community!





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Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through September 30, 2019 Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 144**

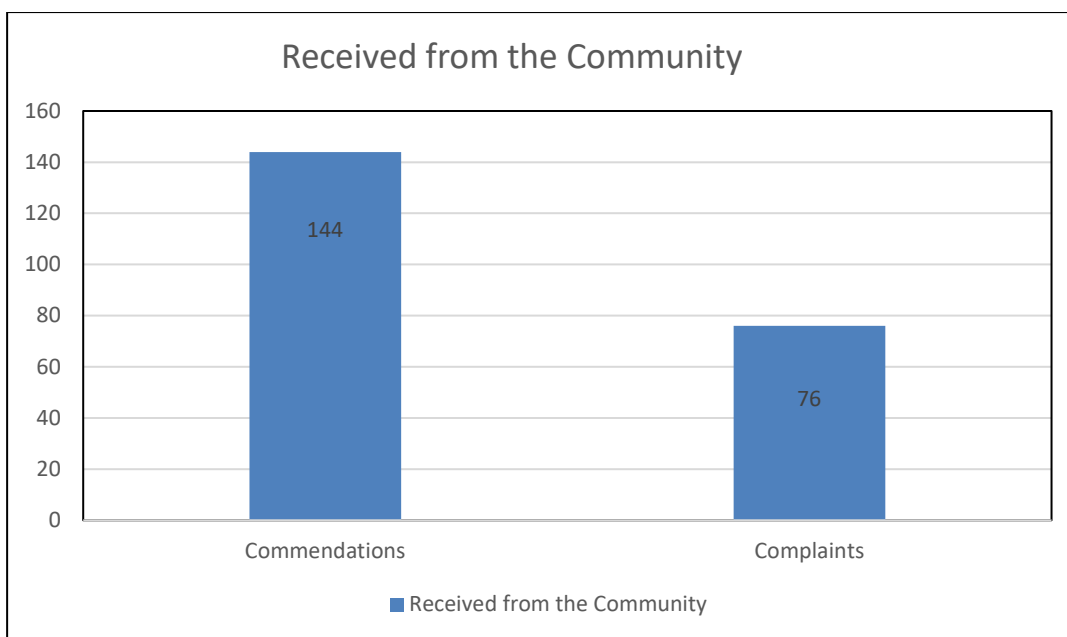
Complaints Received: **Total: 86 (76 from community)**

Closed Out as Inquiries: 28 (As of September 30, 2019)

An inquiry is an initial complaint about employee conduct which, even if true, would not qualify as a personnel complaint and may be handled informally by a department supervisor and shall not be considered complaints.

Source of January 1 through September 30, 2019 Complaints

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 62
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 24
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 10
Generated by the Community	Total: 76





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Use of Force Update

2019 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-September 30, 2019, there were 100 non-deadly use of force incidents, including 23 K9 contacts and 77 other (e.g., TASER, neck restraint).

2019 Deadly Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-September 30, 2019, there were three deadly force incidents.

Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents Update (through September 30, 2019)

2019

Incident 2019-20004372 (Under investigation by SPD Internal Affairs)

Incident 2019-20004372 occurred on January 7, 2019, in the 600 block of West Montgomery. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team's (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs is conducting an administrative investigation.

Incident 2019-20014197 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)

Incident 2019-20014197 occurred on January 23, 2019, in the 3000 block of North Monroe. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team's (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force was justified. The administrative investigation is completed. The final step is a Deadly Force Review Board (DFRB).

Incident 2019-20124831 (Under investigation by SPD Internal Affairs)

Incident 2019-20124831 occurred on July 6, 2019, in the 1400 block of West 9th. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs is conducting an administrative investigation.





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Items of Interest

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

End the Violence: Spokane Unites to Stop Domestic Violence

Spokane County has the highest reported rates of domestic violence in all of Washington. View the End the Violence documentary at www.endtheviolencespokane.org.

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Selects Spokane to Participate in the Firearms Technical Assistance Project

Spokane was one of six sites nationwide selected to participate in the Firearms Technical Assistance Project (FTAP), a project designed to help communities implement policies, protocols, and promising practices to prevent abusers from having access to firearms in domestic violence cases.

Through the FTAP, the NCJFCJ and its partners will work with a team of local stakeholders at each site and provide intensive technical assistance (TA), training, and mentoring to each community over the next two to three years. Training and TA will be tailored to the unique needs of each site, based on an initial assessment of the sites and input from national TA providers and experts on the intersection of domestic violence and firearms. An important focus of this work will involve identifying and working with traditionally underserved and/or marginalized communities to ensure that the strategies for improving the implementation of firearms prohibitions in domestic violence cases reflect the needs and circumstances experienced by such communities.

The NCJFCJ's partners in this project are: AEquitas – The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women; Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence; the Center for Court Innovation; Howard University School of Social Work; the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the National Center on Protection Orders and Full Faith & Credit; the National Center for State Courts; the National Domestic Violence and Firearms Resource Center; the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center; the National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities (Casa de Esperanza); and Ujima, Inc: The National Resource Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community.

The six sites are: Birmingham, Alabama; Brooklyn, New York; Columbus, Ohio; Muscogee Creek Nation in Oklahoma; Spokane, Washington; State of Vermont.

The FTAP is supported by Grant No. 2016-TA-AX-K043 awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, through a cooperative agreement with the NCJFCJ.

The site launch takes place November 12, 2019.





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Precinct Highlights

Downtown Precinct Update

Crime Prevention

- The Downtown Precinct has received several trespass authorization letters from Downtown businesses. The hope with these letters is to improve working conditions for those businesses, allow SPD to enforce trespass issues, and get individuals in contact with service providers.
- Several Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments are in progress throughout Downtown.
- The Downtown Precinct is working a new hot spot in the area of Division-Howard/I-90-Pacific with an emphasis on drugs and property crime issues.

Outreach

The Downtown Precinct hosted a Coffee with a Cop on October 2, 2019 at Starbucks at 921 W. Main. The Domestic Violence Unit also attended the event, along with legal advocates from the YWCA, to highlight National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the End the Violence campaign.



Above left, DV Unit Officer Aaron Ames and Sergeant Jordan Ferguson with YWCA legal advocates. Above right, Downtown Precinct Officer Casey Jones meets with local students.



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North Precinct Update



Staff Recognition

Officer Traci Ponto was selected to receive the YWCA Women of Achievement award for government and public service. She was honored at a banquet on October 11, 2019.

Neighborhood Cleanup

The North Precinct worked in partnership with the Spokane Fire Department to clear a space under the Sunset Bridge. Because of the hypodermic needles and feces, and the lack of airflow in the confined space, officers needed specialized equipment to prevent exposure to disease. Deputy Chief Rex Strickland arranged for special coveralls, boots, and masks for the officers. Officers were extremely grateful for the extra protection. Below, officers at the Sunset Bridge cleanup site.





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Below, North Precinct Neighborhood Resource Officers



South Precinct Update

Outreach



Captain Tracie Meidl served as one of the graduation speakers for the Head Start to the Construction Trades (HCT) class graduation. This class was entirely women. The HCT program goal is to build a stronger, more inclusive culture that encourages business in the construction industry to evolve. The program offers free skilled trades training, with hands-on learning and a streamlined introductory program to foster interest in the construction trades.

At left, Captain Meidl hugs a graduate from the HCT program.



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Outreach Update



Youth Outreach Update

The Police Activities League (PAL) wrapped up this summer, but a new PAL boxing program is starting this fall. The photo above was taken by Heather Stokes, who captured the PAL program in photos. Heather Stokes Photography, www.heatherstokesphotography.com.

The most recent Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) sessions took place in October at Lewis and Clark High School and Shadle Park High School.

Community Outreach Unit Summary

- Coordination of Services at Juvenile Court (9/23)
- Mobility Spokane group tour (9/24)
- Shadle Prevention and Wellness Coalition (9/24)
- Read-a-thon at Lincoln Heights Elementary (9/27)
- Native Project Youth Wellness Night (10/1)
- Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) session at Lewis and Clark High School (10/01-10/9)
- Presentation at Whitworth University about the homeless situation in Spokane (10/3)
- Mobility Spokane (10/4)
- Eastern State Hospital Patient Resource Fair (10/9)

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- Detention School student outreach (10/10)
- YWCA Women of Achievement (10/11)
- School Community Partnership meeting (10/15)
- Excelsior Student Outreach (10/17)
- Eastern State Hospital Patient Outreach (10/18)
- Lunch with PAL student at SAC Middle School (10/18)
- Coordination of Services at Juvenile Court (10/21)
- Evergreen Club meeting (10/23)
- Spokane Tribe Youth Center: Talk with youth about alcohol, drugs and vaping (10/25)
- Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) session at Shadle Park High School (10/22-10/30)
- Partners in Prevention meeting (10/28)
- Youth Leadership Spokane Academy demonstration (10/28)
- Native Project Halloween Party (10/29)
- Trunk or Treat at Martin Luther King Family Outreach Center (10/31)
- Trunk or Treat at True Hope Church (10/30)
- Excelsior Student Outreach (10/31)

Notable News

Officer Traci Ponto selected to receive YWCA Women of Achievement award for government and public service

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/oct/03/officer-traci-ponto-selected-to-receive-ywca-women/>

