



**SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**CRAIG N. MEIDL**

---

**Strategic Initiatives**  
**October 2019 Report**

**Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing**  
**October 7, 2019**

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





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

#### Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendation Letters

I just wanted to follow up with a call we made to get assistance with a woman who was at The Women's Hearth who was having a mental health crisis. **Officers Jaelene Leeson and Marvin Cunningham** responded to our call and they handled the situation with grace, compassion and kindness. We would like to make sure that they hear how much we appreciated their help.

I just wanted to give you and your team of officers a huge thank you, the three fantastic officers who saved the day for my entire family [**Corporal Jeremy Daniel, Officers Juan Rodriguez and Chris LeQuire.**] My family had just attended the burial of my dear Mom at the cemetery. After the services, we went to IHOP on N. Division to have breakfast and be together for support. After breakfast, we all started walking to our cars when he heard his car alarm. When we all came upon the scene, your three finest were there, with a man in custody who had broken out my brother's back side window and stolen a very valuable bag from the car. I guess what happened is a responsible citizen (wish I could thank them) called in and your team made it there ASAP and caught the guy. My sister-in-law had left her bag in the back seat, which was a mistake, and not like her, but maybe with the stress of the funeral, she had forgotten. It had her IPAD, Laptop, and also all her codes written in a book. It would have been a major loss if your team hadn't made it there. I know there are so many break-ins that just cannot be stopped all over the city.... so I realize this was a miracle. Some of us in the family think our angel Mom had something to do about getting your team members there on time.

I wanted to send an email regarding the **Spokane City K9 Unit** and how impressed I was regarding my recent experience with them. Throughout my combined twelve years of military and civilian law enforcement, I have been fortunate in that I have been able work with and participate alongside numerous agencies throughout the western United States. I can truly say that I have not come across a more welcoming agency with such gracious hosts. I was welcomed without hesitation simply because I was a fellow police officer looking to further my abilities as a K9 handler. Upon my arrival, I was immediately met by Sgt. Spiering and the rest of his K9 staff whose knowledge and teaching abilities were only outmatched by their absolute professionalism. From the second I arrived, I was treated as though I had been there a hundred times before. I cannot express enough how appreciative I am for their time, how well I was treated, and how absolutely impressed I was with your K9 unit overall.

Last night my property was vandalized and my purse was stolen. I called 911 and the police showed up very soon after my call. Two officers [**Officers Tucker Seitz and Reid Carrell**] gave me comfort. They were very professional, thorough and polite. I would like to say thank you to these two officers/to our city police department for being there and doing such a fine job."





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

### Internal Affairs Unit Update

#### January 1 through August 31, 2019 Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received:    **Total: 128**

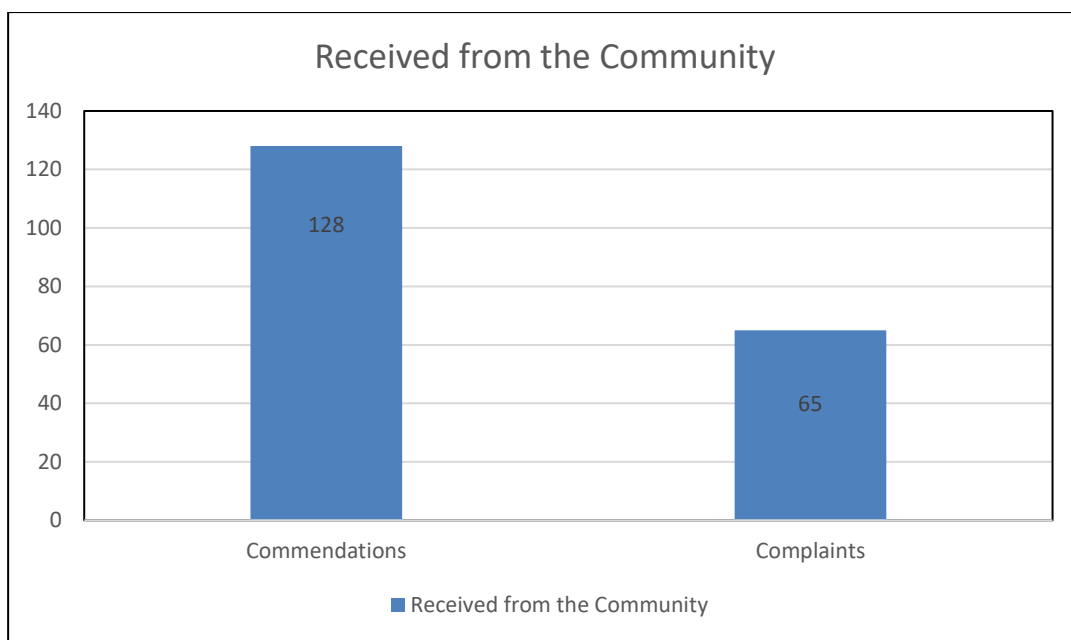
Complaints Received:        **Total: 74 (65 from community)**

**Closed Out as Inquiries: 27 (As of August 31, 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 July 31, 2019 Complaints

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	<b>Total: 55</b>
Received by the Spokane Police Department	<b>Total: 19</b>
Internally Generated by the SPD	<b>Total: 9</b>
Generated by the Community	<b>Total: 65</b>





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

#### Use of Force Update

##### 2019 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-August 31, 2019, there were 107 non-deadly use of force incidents, including 21 K9 contacts and 74 other (e.g., TASER, neck restraint).

##### 2019 Deadly Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-August 31, 2019, there were three deadly force incidents.

#### Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents Update (through August 31, 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 (Under review by the SPD Administrative Review Panel)**

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 Administrative Review Panel is reviewing the investigation.

##### **Incident 2019-20124831 (Under Prosecutor review)**

Incident 2019-20124831 occurred on July 6, 2019, in the 1400 block of West 9<sup>th</sup>. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team (SIRR) is investigating.





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

#### Items of Interest

##### Citizens Academy

The Citizens Academy took place on September 7, 2019. The Academy introduces students to police training (hands-on and virtual), operations and investigative procedures, special police units, etc. The Citizens Academy culminated with a graduation ceremony where students received certificates of completion.

This Citizens Academy was the first one-day Academy of its kind. SPD introduced the one-day option to accommodate community members' busy schedules. The Academy filled up quickly.

##### Spokane Regional Behavioral Health Unit

Spokane County Sheriff's Office received a grant to fund the creation of a regional Behavioral Health Unit. It was a joint application along with SPD and Frontier Behavioral Health. The Spokane Regional Behavioral Health Unit will consist of regionally co-deployed teams of two SPD officers, two SCSO deputies, and four FBH mental health clinicians and a Spokane Police sergeant. This team falls under the patrol command structure.

The BHU will support patrol by prioritizing calls for service involving the mentally ill, thus facilitating the return of law enforcement units to patrol activities and emergency vehicles back into rotation. This unit is different from the Community Diversion Unit as it will handle specific calls for service and have a dedicated clinician paired with officers.

Some of the functions of the BHU will be:

- Responding to calls for service with a behavioral health element
- Documenting and gathering data
- Providing proactive contacts and follow up that is not possible on routine patrol calls
- Maintaining ongoing relationships with hospitals, services, and mental health organizations
- Assisting in developing training material

The agencies were recently notified by the grant funder, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and are working to get the units up and running. Agencies are in the process of selecting officers and clinicians for the unit.

##### COP Talk Program (a collaboration between Eastern State Hospital and SPD)

The COP Talk Program began when Officer Graig Butler spoke with Carrie Christiansen, ESH nurse and SPD Reserve Officer, who relayed that a large majority of the patients at Eastern State Hospital have a history of interactions with law enforcement. Officers Butler and Christiansen wanted to reach out to ESH patients and provide dialogue in a comfortable environment when the individuals were not in crisis.





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

The program's mission is to create trust and legitimacy through an interaction with Spokane police officers with hospital staff and patients. The focus of SPD's interactions would be with patients who are ready for release back into our community. The program helps establish relationships with patients suffering from mental illness with the officers designated by the department to handle calls where citizens are in a mental health crisis. The goal is to have positive outcomes with these patients and perhaps more rapid compliance resulting in less use of force.

Officer Butler began going out to ESH in plain clothes, just talking with patients and developing rapport. Many patients and staff members actually thought he was a recreation therapist. After time, he began to introduce himself as a police officer and wore SPD's most informal uniform, minus the gun belt. He later started wearing the standard SPD patrol uniform and sat in on some classes. Once patients and staff were comfortable, he started a formal class on how to interact with police officers, available resources, and information on mandatory arrests, police response to suicidal calls, detaining someone versus arresting someone, etc. Officer Butler collaborates with patients who had prior use of force incidents with officers and they are now helping him teach the class.

ESH and SPD are working on a video about the program. The video should be ready for release later this fall.

#### Suicide Prevention

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention came to the Public Safety Building on September 23 to show their support and raise awareness about officer suicide. In 2018, there were 167 officer suicides, and this year there have been 155, which is a 30% increase so far. For more information about AFSP, ways to help, and warning signs and risk factors, please visit: <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-washington/>







# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

#### Precinct Highlights

##### **Downtown Precinct Update**

##### Crime Prevention

- The Downtown Precinct has received several trespass authorization letters from Downtown businesses. The hope with these letters to improve working conditions for those businesses, allow SPD to enforce trespass issues, and get subjects in contact with service providers.
- Several Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments are in progress.
- 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 Precinct hosted a Coffee with a Cop on September 11, 2019 at Starbucks at 1507 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.



##### **North Precinct Update**

##### Outreach

- The North Precinct was very involved in “Shop with a Cop” at Target with the Salvation Army, on August 21.



# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

- Precinct staff participated in the Back to School Backpack Give Away at Northeast Community Center on August 26.
- Staff provided an “Enhancing the Survival Mindset” (ESM) Road Show presentation at Engie Insight at Rock Point. Approximately 50 students received training on situational awareness and personal safety.
- “Coffee with a Cop” on August 29 involved a special invite to our deaf and hard of hearing community. Thank you to Nexus Interpreting Services to assist with conversations.



Above, at Coffee with a Cop

#### Staff Recognition

Neighborhood Resource Officer Dale Wells received City of Spokane Employee of the Quarter for his contributions with the POD Team and Unlawful Camping.

#### **South Precinct Update**

##### Crime Prevention

Lt. Overhoff reports “The South Precinct has been focusing efforts at 177 S. Division which is the epicenter of multiple criminal incidents and habitual criminal activity. This is week #3 for focusing our patrol efforts and undercover police specials. Our focus has been a one-block radius in all directions. There have been many arrests and enforcement when officers have self-initiated or have responded to calls for service at this location. This problem will continue to grow unless we can get daily steady enforcement. The 7-11 is surrounded by several housing projects that are a contributor to most issues in this area. With two more large housing projects under construction just a stone’s throw away from the current five were already dealing with, the outlook is dim that it will ever improve without consistent enforcement.”

NRO Jake Willard is working several problem addresses in-between his bi-weekly POD assignment. One of the addresses has had a recent chronic nuisance notice issued. One residence is now up for sale. This

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







# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

residence has been the focus for SP for over two years with numerous court appearances, legal filings, citations issued, and countless meetings and resolutions. It appears to be finally over.

NRO Seth Berrow has been working hard with two residences. Drug dealing and trafficking in stolen property are the two major crimes happening at these residences. The Patrol Anti-Crime Team (PACT) team is also focusing on both of these locations as well. Captain Meidl has assigned both residences to the COPS Neighborhood patrol watch list.

NRO Berrow is also working on an abatement project. The homeowner has refused to contact or communicate with Berrow even after the Nuisance Notice was issued so the only option left will be Civil Enforcement. There are still multiple complaints coming in weekly from this address including illegal dumping on other people's property.

Lt. Overhoff reports that NROs Willard and Wells are doing a fantastic job with the illegal camping POD assignment.



#### Captain Tracie Meidl recognized as a Woman of the Year

The Spokesman Review highlighted Captain Meidl's accomplishments in their article: Women of the Year: Meidl found her calling in policing. The full article is available at this link:

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/sep/19/women-of-the-year-meidl-found-her-calling-in-polic/>

#### Outreach Update

#### 2019 Police Activities League (PAL) Program Survey Results

##### Positive Perception of Police

After participating in the program, youth indicated a positive perception of Spokane Police.

When asked, *"What is your opinion of Spokane Police officers?"*

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





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

### CRAIG N. MEIDL

82% responded "Very good," a 36% increase from the pre-season survey.

15% responded "Good."

3% responded "Neutral- neither good nor bad."

No respondents selected "Bad" or "Very bad."

#### PAL Builds Trust

Survey results show that the program is effective in building trust in law enforcement. After the program,

- 99% of respondents agreed to the question, *"Did the PAL program make you feel more comfortable with police officers?"*
- 99% of respondents also agreed to the question, *"Did the PAL program make you trust police officers more?"*
- 90% of participants agreed that they would feel comfortable asking a police officer for help.

#### Program Success

97% of participants answered that they enjoyed the PAL program.

#### Interest in Law Enforcement

After the PAL season, youth were asked, *"Would you be interested in becoming a police officer?"*

36% responded "Definitely," a 53% increase from the pre-season survey.

Youth of color showed a 62% increase in the response to "Definitely" interested in becoming an officer.

#### Impact of Substance Use Education

Education had a significant impact this year. After discussing substance use with officers, youth were more likely to understand the health risks of using marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco.

Marijuana: 89% of participants reported that youth marijuana use had a bad effect on health, as opposed to only 56% the year before. 1% reported it had a good effect. 1% reported a neutral effect, and 8% reported "I don't know."

Alcohol: 100% of participants reported that alcohol had a bad effect on health, as opposed to 75% last year.

Vaping: 93% of participants reported that youth vaping had a bad effect on health while 7% reported a neutral effect. 58% of youth reported it was bad the year before.





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

### Demographics

Average Age: 9.4

Gender: 48% male; 52% female

Race/Ethnicity:

Respondents who identified as a race other than White (including two or more races): 47%

White respondents: 53%

### About PAL

PAL began in 2013 to help build trusting relationships between at-risk youth and local law enforcement. Each summer, SPD offers the program for six weeks in three low-income/high-crime neighborhoods. The PAL program offers fun, structured activities for youth, with opportunities to make friends and memories at their local parks: Liberty Park, A.M. Cannon Park, and Harmon Park. PAL engages youth with positive academic and athletic programs, such as flag football, basketball, running, soccer, swimming, and baseball. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) enrichment activities and lunch are provided at every session.

PAL is a collaborative program of Spokane Police Department, Spokane Police Foundation, Spokane Parks Department, Spokane Public Schools, and many other organizations working together to supply a myriad of resources in a central location. PAL brings youth under the supervision and mentorship of officers and community leaders, and encourages responsible use of our City of Spokane parks. The Spokane PAL program takes a holistic approach to crime prevention, focusing on reducing drug and gang involvement, as well as making positive decisions, through programming and mentorship. Throughout the season, youth participants focus on five core values: honesty, integrity, leadership, sportsmanship and respect. Interactions with patrol officers, detectives, and school resource officers develops healthy trusting relationships for youth who often have a negative, skeptical view of the police in their neighborhood. Spokane Police Department dedicates officers who are passionate about sports to lead the different activities and leadership training sessions.

Due to the demand for supervised recreation and mentoring for low-income youth, the PAL program has grown tremendously. The PAL program began in 2013 with 53 youth at Liberty Park, and later expanded to serve three different Spokane neighborhoods. In 2018, the PAL program served approximately 400 youth and their families. We added new partners in 2019: The Zone Project and the YMCA. A record number of youth participated this year- 749 total.

This year, we created a special PAL session for students and their families at the Salish School of Spokane at Shadle Park, on June 14. The Salish School operates year-round, so students are still in school during the





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

## CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

standard PAL summer session. The Salish School PAL event includes soccer, flag football, track, and activities centered on the core values.

Photographer Heather Stokes documented the PAL season. Her photos are available at this link: <https://www.heatherstokesphotography.com/Events/Spokane-Police-Activities-League-2019>

### Youth Outreach Update

Now that school is back in session, Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) sessions are scheduled throughout the community. This fall, the PAL Boxing program will begin, likely in November.

### Community Outreach Unit Summary

- Youth to Youth Substance Use Prevention Program, Martin Luther King Center, throughout August, with partners Spokane Regional Health District and Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council.
- YPI at Crosswalk Shelter (8/12-8/16)
- Safety Talk for 3-5 year old children (8/13)
- Pizza with a Policeman at Passages (8/14)
- Eastern State Hospital patient outreach (8/16)
- Unity in the Community (8/17)
- Shop with a Cop (8/21)
- Gathering at the Falls Pow Wow (8/23-8/24)
- Martin Luther King Family Outreach Center Backpack Distribution (8/24)
- SAC School student outreach (8/30)
- Eastern State Hospital Patient Outreach (9/16)
- HFA Inland Empire Golf Classic (9/19)
- Touch-a-Truck at Spokane Community College (9/21)



Throughout early September, the Community Outreach Unit is at the Spokane County Interstate Fair, interacting with thousands of people.





# **SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION**

## **CHIEF OF POLICE**

### **CRAIG N. MEIDL**

---

#### **Notable News**

**Spokane Police Department class of '94 reflects on 25 years of serving the city**

[https://www.khq.com/news/spokane-police-department-class-of-reflects-on-years-of-serving/article\\_b3fd9988-cf71-11e9-9605-47633afc166b.html](https://www.khq.com/news/spokane-police-department-class-of-reflects-on-years-of-serving/article_b3fd9988-cf71-11e9-9605-47633afc166b.html)

**Spokane Law Enforcement receive mental health grant**

<https://www.kxly.com/news/spokane-law-enforcement-receive-mental-health-grant/1119863459>

