



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
December 2020 Report

Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
December 7, 2020

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





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Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendations

A big thank you to **Corporal Erin Blessing** and SPD. On Halloween, our son saw her across the street and went berserk. Cpl. Blessing came to his drive by birthday this summer. She gave him a gift bag and money, which was so above and beyond. She made a big impact on him. She even got his thank you card. Tragically, he lost his baby sister since then. He has taken this very hard, as we all have. For this one night, he smiled. Cpl. Blessing was his soft landing spot, as he said. "She's my favorite & I'm her favorite too," he told us later. He has ADHD and Asperger's, and he is emotionally very young. Cpl. Blessing went to her trunk & had a special treat for him. It was the first thing he ate when he got home. He was happy the cookie didn't go into quarantine! So please extend my thanks to her. She's an angel. Let her know that she gave him such joy, for the short time. Please let all your officers know how much they can mean to a child, or even an adult. Cpl. Blessing made his day, again! Thanks for making him smile & feeling happy. Through the darkness, there's always light. Cpl. Blessing was his light. God Bless you all and be safe.

[Officers Nathanael Gobble, Garth Craigen, Yeshua Matthew, Benjamin Manning, Daniel Rhine, Kolton McKittrick, Lee Barker, Corey Miller, Jacquelyn Valencia, Matt Stewart, Jaelene Leeson, Cpl. Ben Maplethorpe and Sgt. Sean Wheeler]

Recently, the Spokane police responded to a call from me, when, after I filed for a divorce my (soon to be) ex-husband came over to my house, broke down the door and violently assaulted my stepdad. I have spent every day since then praying for all of them. I have never needed help so badly in my life, and I was so incredibly grateful for their presence. And every single one of them were extremely professional, compassionate, and helpful. I would love a chance to thank them in person, but I'm not sure that's possible? If there is an opportunity to come by and thank them, I would love to. But if not, I will send a thank you note (if someone could let me know where to send it).

[Officers Ben Fuson and Connor Tangeman]

With all the talk of police officers not handling mental health issued very well, I want you to know, after a young man being incoherent and delirious last night because of his grandma's death and he being displaced to my house, (just a friend of my grandson); and me trying every tactic to get him to the hospital and couldn't accomplish it, your police officers came in and in a very short time accomplished that task. In my opinion, it is probably less than one percent of police that aren't doing their job, but thanks to the other 99 percent and your officers last night.





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Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through October 31, 2020 Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 376**

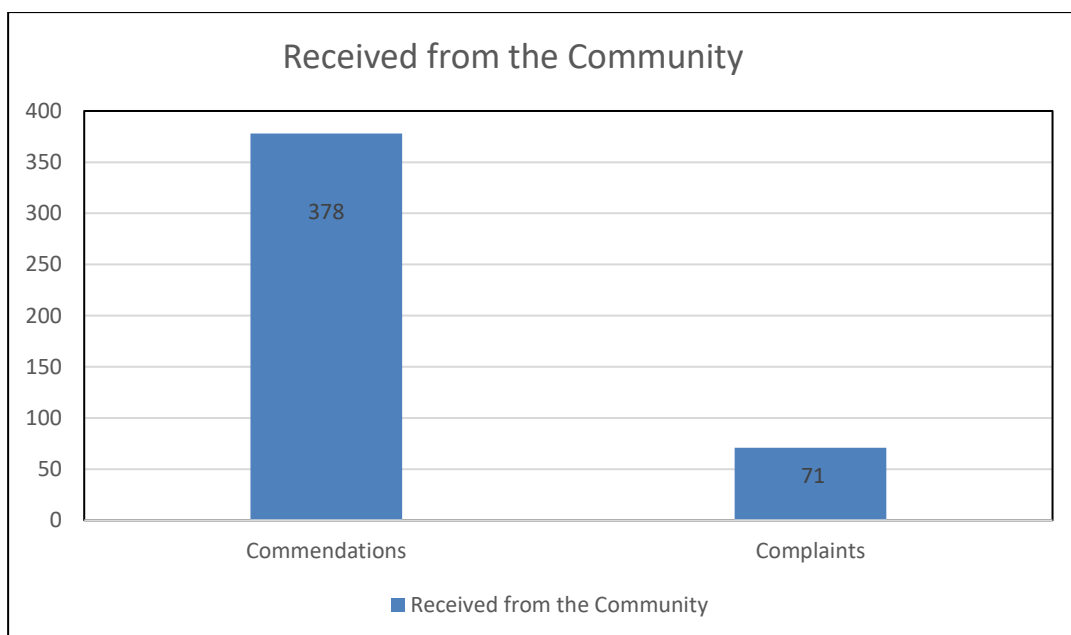
Complaints Received: **Total: 79 (71 from community)**

Closed Out as Inquiries: 10 (As of October 31, 2020)

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 Complaints—January 1 through October 31, 2020

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 43
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 36
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 8
Generated by the Community	Total: 71





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Use of Force Update

2020 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-October 31, 2020, there were 52 non-deadly use of force incidents- 6 K9 contacts and 46 other (e.g., TASER, Level I lateral neck restraint).

2020 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1-October 31, 2020, there were three deadly force incidents.

Incident 2020-20136616 (Prosecutor Review)

Incident 2020-20136616 took place on August 7, 2020 in the area of Courtland/Crestline. The criminal investigation is by the Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) team is complete and the case is with the Prosecutor.

Incident 2020-20160038 (Under Investigation)

Incident 2020-20160038 took place on September 11, 2020 in the 6300 block of East Broadway. The criminal investigation is being conducted by the Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR).

Incident 2020-20168741 (Under Investigation)

Incident 2020-20168741 took place on September 24, 2020 in the 9000 block of Highway 2. The criminal investigation is being conducted by the Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR).

2019 Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents Update (through October 31, 2020)

These incidents took place in 2019 but are still pending the Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols.

Incident 2019-20004372 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

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 completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.

Incident 2019-20124831 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

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





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deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.

Incident 2019-20201879 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

Incident 2019-20201879 occurred on October 23, 2019, in the 3400 block of East Garnet. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.

Items of Interest

Spokane Police Chaplaincy Program

The unexpected death of a loved one is a traumatic experience for families and friends. Police Officers responding to such calls also experience their own emotions and challenges. It's critical in the immediate hours around a death and for the eventual healing process, to have someone come alongside families and police to offer emotional, spiritual, and physical guidance and support.

That's where Spokane Police Chaplains come in. They assist police officers responding to murders, suicides, and accidental deaths by meeting with family members and others at the scene who may be in shock and/or dealing with grief, anger, and heartache.

Last year (2019) alone, police chaplains responded to 436 calls. While chaplains comfort, encourage, and help debrief those in need, police attend to the crime or accident details. Chaplains stay with family members after the scene is cleared and discuss burial and cremation options before connecting families with funeral homes. And they make sure our police officers have the emotional support they need as the constant exposure to trauma can take a mental and even physical toll. The SPD Chaplains primary focus is ministering to members of the Police Department.

The Spokane Police Chaplaincy Program is comprised of a full time head chaplain and a host of volunteers. Many of them are retired pastors and ministers. All of them have a heart for service and a guiding faith. If you are interested in becoming a police chaplain, contact Senior Chaplain, Mickey Tuter at mtuter@spokanepolice.org.

Mickey Tuter, SPD Chaplain

Mickey Tuter is a lifelong resident and the Spokane Police Department Senior Chaplain who works with police officers and community members. He started in 2006, as a volunteer chaplain and was hired as a full time chaplain in August of 2017. Mickey has been with SPD for 14 years and continues to give his heart to the job while leading a team of volunteer chaplains. Before becoming a Chaplain, he worked delivering and picking up health equipment to people with medical needs at their homes. Seeing grieving families,





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felt called to offer support to others during difficult times. Often he would stay and talk, offer prayer, and just be a shoulder to cry on. During this time Mickey was also a youth minister when he met an SPD officer who suggested he become a Chaplain.

After training, Mickey volunteered with the police chaplaincy on a regular basis for more than ten years before accepting funded leadership positions.



“There are hard days when you experience the suffering, mental anguish and heartbreak of others,” says Chaplain Tuter. However, he says even with the emotional challenge, his job is very rewarding. On one of Mickey’s first calls, he had to comfort parents who had lost an infant. The call showed Mickey that sometimes through the grieving process people need someone to take their frustration out on, even when being offered a guiding hand.

When not out on a call, the Chaplains sit in at officer roll call and often ride along on patrol to build relationships with the officers. Chaplains bring food and water to officers when they are serving on calls for long periods of time. Community Chaplains offer emotional support through tough and often tragic times, sometimes all those in difficult situations need is the presence of somebody else.



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To learn more or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer chaplain, visit the Spokane Police Chaplaincy Program page at <https://my.spokanecity.org/police/citizen/chaplaincy/>.

Behavioral Health Unit Update

WASPC Co-Deployed Team Data, October 2020:

- 204 grant contacts over the month of October (62 shifts)
- Average time on call: 38.5 minutes
- Time spent on BHU calls 15, 315 minutes (255 hours) on calls that patrol did not have to respond to
- 73% of contacts had an outcome other than jail or hospital.
- 1.4 % were arrested
- 18.4 % were emergently detained
- 0.3% use of force beyond handcuffing used
- 8.2% diverted from an arrestable offense and diverted from the hospital
- 34% of contacts resulted in a referral
- 498 total calls relieved from patrol

Recently, the BHU unit did an interview with KSPS-Public television regarding a “Health Matters” topic. The crew also rode along with a co deployed team to capture their impact in the community. A copy of the recording has not yet been obtained, but we will share it when it becomes available.

Success Story: Mobile Crisis had been attempting to reach out to an elderly male (88 years old) who had generated multiple calls for service and neighbors were concerned for his well-being. He lived alone, and had no next of kin. However the male was said to be armed and had access to multiple firearms. Clinicians and DCRS did not feel safe contacting him. BHU coordinated efforts with neighbors to contact the elderly male when it was safe. The male recently had fired 9 rounds from a .38 revolver into his door, and neighboring bedroom walls, claiming individuals were locking him in his room. The male was suffering from dementia and needed assistance to live independently.

The BHU has continued to work with the male offering him services, referring him to mobile crisis and answering questions for him on a weekly basis. The firearm was placed onto property for safekeeping. Elder Services is also working with him. The male appears to be suffering from dementia and his memory is failing. He often has delusions that someone is in his house. To prevent him from becoming a danger to the public and himself, the BHU completed an Extreme Risk Protection Order to prevent him from having access to his firearm. This will allow for his providers to maintain a safe environment when they respond to assist him. The BHU also has facilitated his appointments with the VA and helped this elderly veteran connect to VA benefits. The male had recently lost his dog. With his dog being his only companion, BHU coordinated efforts to have his dog returned to his residence to assist in his living situation.





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Precinct Highlights

South Precinct

Employee of the Year

South Precinct Neighborhood Resource Officer Kelly Mongan was awarded 2019 Employee of the Year.



Excerpt from Officer Kelly Mongan's nomination letter: Officer Mongan has an even temperament, is well mannered, and a pleasure to work with. He does not hesitate to volunteer for calls that clearly require extra follow up. Officer Mongan is consistently engaging in proactive enforcement activities. He focuses his activities in problem areas of the sector. Officer Mongan also conducts follow up investigative activities, which create depth to his efforts and impact on crime. He also has a willingness to increase his skill set and knowledge even if it is something he has limited or no experience in. He especially looks forward to calls/investigations that may necessitate the writing of a search warrant.

One of his highlights on patrol was capturing a murder suspect. He had been on the scene of a stabbing that had occurred the night before. He was aware the stabbing had become a fatality incident and that there was probable cause to arrest the suspect for first degree Murder. In preparation for patrol the following day, he familiarized himself with the description of the suspect as well as viewing a photo. Later in the shift, he found the suspect and after a short chase, took

him into custody.

During the 4th quarter of 2018, Officer Mongan had the highest level of self-initiated activity on day shift. Officer Mongan wrote a number of search warrants, which have resulted in numerous guns as well as the seizure of a large quantity of drugs.

Precinct Captain Meidl complimented Officer Mongan for his work within the East Central area of the sector. Officer Mongan is known for going above and beyond to provide valuable information, leading to great intelligence, contacts, and arrests.





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North Precinct

Crime Prevention

- Northside Business Focus: The North Precinct is working with patrol teams and the Patrol Anti-Crime Team to prevent burglaries in the NE Francis area. Several businesses have been recently burglarized more than once and officers are conducting patrols around those businesses.
- Shelter Focus: With the goal of improving quality of life for businesses and patrons in the area, officers are focusing on three individuals that have generated multiple calls for service at and around the shelter at 55 W Mission. Officers are enforcing violations for these individuals who have been trespassed from many businesses in the area.
- Mission Park/Witter Pool Focus: Officers are focusing on complaints of large amount of transient traffic, theft, unlawful camping, and drug use. Officers issued multiple trespass warnings and issued a few trespass citations. Three vehicles were towed from the Mission Park parking lot for a variety of issues. Recently, the park and Witter Pool have been fairly clean and clear.

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents Addressing Quality of Life Issues

North Precinct NROs are working with neighborhood residents on dozens of nuisance properties. One nuisance property generated many complaints about noise and malicious harassment. In the last few weeks, officers issued an abatement agreement and a chronic nuisance notification. Neighbors sought and received an anti-harassment protection order to prevent contact with the resident.

In another location, an elderly neighborhood resident had moved in with a relative in other state. With the house abandoned, people were trying to break in. Officers are working with the family, who say they have abandoned the house and want the bank to take it back over. Officers also are working with Code Enforcement and the Civil Enforcement Unit to help the Chronic Nuisance Notice for abandoned property process. This is solely to help the turnover of the house to be quicker so it does not sit vacant through the entire process with the bank. The house is now vacant and officers are looking for any signs of individuals moving into the vacant house.

In another location, neighbors complained about copious foot traffic all hours of the night and vehicles parked in front on the street. The NRO spoke to the owners about all of the vehicles on the street and gave them 24 hours to move them before they would be towed for being expired over 45 days. The vehicles were all removed but activity continued around the house. The NRO issued a chronic nuisance notice. The owners signed an abatement agreement and the NRO is continuing to work with the neighbors of the property.

One residence that was associated with complaints of drug traffic recently caught on fire and is considered inhabitable by the fire department. The NRO is speaking with the son of the property owner, who took over the business after his father's death. The son talked to neighbors after the fire who informed him about all





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the allegations of drug/stolen property. He confirmed he did see a lot of “stuff, tools, and gadgets” inside the house after the fire. He told the tenant he needed to pack up and leave, due to the house being inhabitable. He recently boarded up the house but the tenant continues to return to the property. The son is working with the City and is seeking an eviction.

Downtown Precinct

- The Downtown Precinct has experienced a 63% drop in commercial burglary over the month of October and zero in first two weeks of November.
- The Precinct is adding four more Neighborhood Resource Officers and a sergeant next year. DTP is also planning on adding two additional Behavioral Health Unit officers next year.
- DTP leadership met with Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers on November 10 to discuss the Behavior Health Unit and issues surrounding homelessness.

Outreach Update

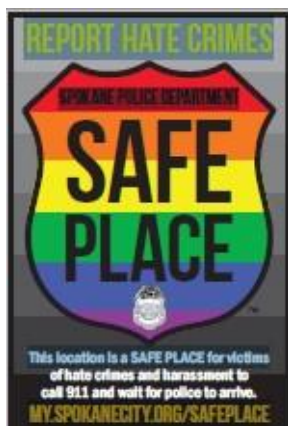
Veteran’s Day Drive-By Celebration:

On November 11, 2020, Spokane Police participated in a drive by celebration at a retirement home to honor our men and women who have served our country.

Safe Place Program Update:

Spokane Police Department began working on implementing Safe Place in the fall of 2020. Captain Tracie Meidl, Sergeant Michael Schneider, and Officer DeRuwe made contact with multiple businesses.

As of October 31, 2020, we have approximately 20 businesses participating with 37 locations.



Safe Place is an agreement between businesses, the police department and the community to report crimes (especially hate crimes) and provide a place for victims to safely wait for police. Business owners request a decal to display near their front door to highlight their commitment to and participation in the initiative. Participating businesses agree to report crimes and are required to train employees, volunteers, and staff on the reporting of crime, especially hate crimes. Businesses agree to allow a victim/complainant to wait inside their location for police arrival.

The Spokane Police Department reviewed and updated our policies - adding changes in the law from 2019 to already established procedures to thoroughly investigate hate crimes. Officers were provided additional training and resources regarding hate crimes and protected groups to augment SPD's existing training.





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At the Spokane Police Department we provide service to all members of our community. We seek to bridge gaps with all communities and look for new ways to serve everyone. Spokane Police Officers are expected to treat all members of the public with dignity and respect. As part of this program we would like anyone reporting a Hate Crime to know that we take your complaint seriously and we will investigate hate crimes as reported.

For additional information, contact Sergeant Michael Schneider, Spokane Safe Place Coordinator, at SPDCommunityOutreach@spokanepolice.org or 509-622-5816.

Outreach Activities at the Martin Luther King Community Center:

- Outreach officers are now attending Community Court at the Center every other Monday.
- Officers regularly assist with the Center's food bank and deliver food to families in need.
- Officer DeRuwe attended a meeting with the Safe Streets Task Force and East Central Community to address the recent shootings in the neighborhood.

Birthday Celebrations:

Officers continued birthday celebrations for youth, and met with educators about scheduling officer visits to schools. Officer Richardson and Sergeant Schneider attended a birthday for a 5 year old, Hudson. Officer Richardson also attended a birthday on 10/10 and two patrol officers attended another birthday on 10/10 at the request of Community Outreach.



The mother let SPD know that the fact that officers stopped by for her little guy's birthday was "an amazing memory and experience for us all."



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Youth Outreach:

- Sergeant Mike Schneider Officer Butler met with the Montessori School and have a date set in November to help out with a philosophy class as they explore things such as what does “equal” mean in reference to all men are created equal, and other subjects relating to U.S. law.
- Officer Butler began working on restorative justice approach to a juvenile arrested at a protest for being disorderly and throwing things at the Police. The current plan is to meet with the juvenile and his mom and to have the juvenile attend a SPD Tactical Team training.
- Officer Butler has been working with a family regarding a runaway in their family. He has offered services and there is a plan to maintain contact for some time to see if we can get a mentoring opportunity.



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The Asian Communities of Spokane made some goodie boxes for Spokane Police Officers with amazing treats from their respective cultures. The boxes were taken to police precincts and quickly consumed. Thank you, Asian Communities of Spokane, for taking the time to recognize Spokane Police Officers!



World Relief Outreach:



Sergeant Schneider was contacted by World Relief after the son of one of their clients was killed in an auto accident. There was a breakdown culturally and in communication through interpreters as to what the family understood. He was able to connect World Relief with the Medical Examiner's office and with the Chaplain's Office.

Community Outreach donated PAL kid's shirts to World Relief. World Relief continues to meet with kids in small groups and there is a need in the community. Sergeant Schneider and Officer DeRuwe helped with a weekly food distribution. They hope this will

build into more interactions within the refugee communities. They also helped answer questions World Relief's communities had about some of our COVID response.





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Salvation Army's Clothe-A-Child:

What a privilege for SPD to be involved with the Salvation Army's Clothe-A-Child campaign with JC Penney! Officers took children who often live in hand-me-down clothes to buy new clothes and shoes, helping them to feel valued and showing them our community wants them to be safe and successful.

