



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
May 2021 Report

Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
May 3, 2021

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



Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendations

Chief Meidl, I am writing to express the gratitude of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Drug Evaluation Classification (DEC) program for the outstanding leadership provided by **Officer Mike Thomas** during the Pasco, WA DRE [Drug Recognition Expert] school held January 21-February 5, 2021. Officer Thomas served as the assistant course manager for the school, and I had the pleasure of witnessing his dedication and outstanding leadership during the school. Those traits combined with his years of DRE instructor experience and program knowledge ensured that all 16 Washington police officers successfully completed the training, attaining some of the highest academic scores ever recorded. The successful completion of Washington DRE training is a credit to the dedication and professionalism of Officer Thomas.

[Officers Michael Baughn, Jordan Clare, Austin Neale, Caleb Martin, and Christopher Benesch]

I wanted to pass along my thanks and kudos for your officers tonight. I was at my neighbor's house and when I was heading home we discovered a woman in his truck in his garage (we guess to get warm). We attempted to get her out, offered her a ride, etc. and she wouldn't talk to us so we called you guys. Your officers arrived and handled the situation perfectly. They were kind, but firm to solve the problem. They used only the slightest physical touch to get her out of the truck and treated her with care and respect. I'm sure they are right now getting her more help.

[Officers Xenon Berkeley, Greg Thompson, and Chad Reyes]

I want to thank the responding officers that came to house. These Officers saved my life. The call came in as my kids were scared. They thought I was trying to rip my lights out of the chandelier. I was too weak to tell you I wasn't trying to do that. I was so cold, I was trying to warm my hands up. I don't know why but I remember being so scared of the officers. I want to apologize if I said or did anything wrong. The hospital said I was gravely sick. I have fluid on my brain. I won't go into detail but I was very sick. Thank you to the officers for being patient with me. Thank you for not hurting me. Thank you for not arresting me. Thank you for everything. You both saved my life. I almost died. Again I just want to Thank You for helping me. Much love to the Spokane Police Department.

I've had some difficulties with some neighbors of mine and I just wanted to leave a good review for one of your officers. I can't tell you enough how helpful she has been! Concerned, caring, patient and understanding. She made herself available for me to ask her questions. Has gone out of her way to help me with this situation I am in. I'm not sure if I am messaging the right place but somebody needs to know how great she is! Her name is **Officer Deanna Storch #841**. I truly am blown away by her.



Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through March 31, 2021 Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 47**

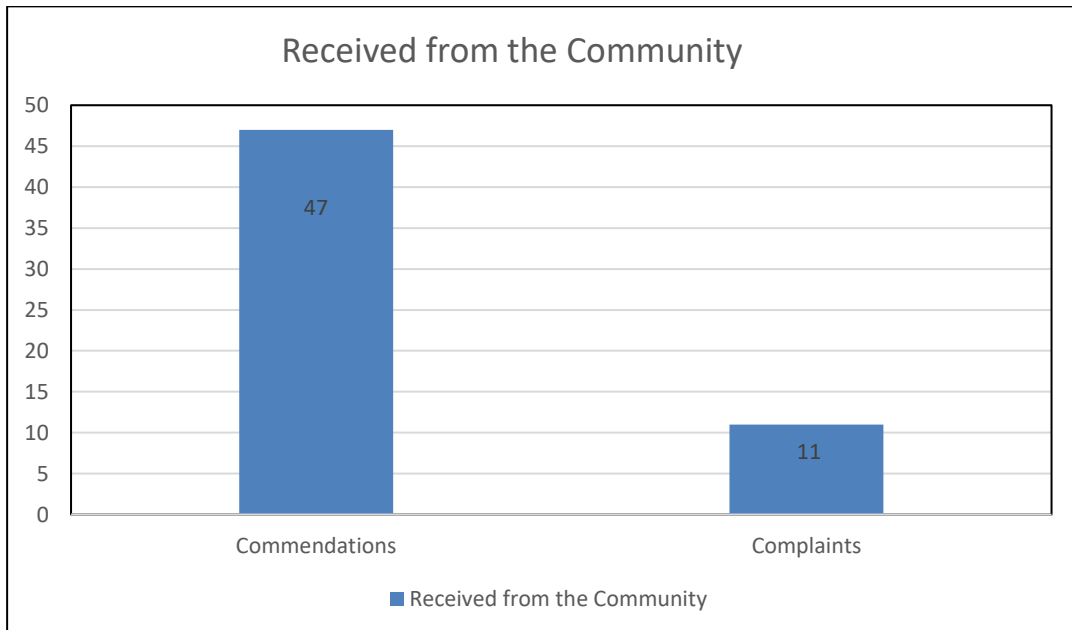
Complaints Received: **Total: 15 (11 from community)**

Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of March 31, 2021)

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 March 31, 2021

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 1
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 14
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 4
Generated by the Community	Total: 11



Use of Force Update

2021 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-March 31, 2021, there were 13 non-deadly use of force incidents- 1 K9 contact and 12 other (e.g., TASER, Level I Lateral Neck Restraint).

2021 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1-March 31, 2021, there was one deadly force incident.

Incident 2021-20002320 (Under Investigation)

Incident 2021-20002320 took place on January 5, 2021 in the area of 5100 N Ash. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

2020 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

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

Incident 2020-20136616 (Under SPD Internal Investigation)

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. The Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force justified. SPD will commence an administrative investigation.

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 December 31, 2020)

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

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 Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) team 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 2019-20201879 (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 Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) team 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

Behavioral Health Unit

The Spokane Regional Behavioral Health Unit's work is detailed in the article below.

'Light years ahead': Spokane police address dizzying number of mental health crises with unique team

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/mar/29/lightyears-ahead-spokane-police-address-dizzying-n/>

Lifesaving Training

At Spring In-Service, officers receive First Aid/CPR/Blood borne Pathogen training, designed to help them save lives in the field. See article below,

Spokane Police Equipped to Save Lives

[Spokane Police Equipped to Save Lives - City of Spokane, Washington \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanejournal.com/news/spokane-police-equipped-to-save-lives)

Spokane police are often the first to arrive on the scene of a life-threatening emergency. That's why the department regularly trains up its officers with basic medical skills so they can help people when every second counts.

"It's the nature of our business. We are out there and available and typically have very quick response times, especially to a traumatic incident," said Officer Paul Buchmann of the Spokane Police Department.

Police are prepared to offer a lot more than just a speedy response. The officer's uniforms are now loaded down with simple, life-saving equipment borrowed from the battlefield.

"So we really do try to apply that. We're obviously not in a war zone but we do come across gunshot wounds, stab wounds, very traumatic injuries where the same techniques work," Buchmann explained.

During recent in-service training, Buchmann showed his class of officers how to slow bleeding and prevent patients with chest wounds from suffering a collapsed lung.

"Behind the tourniquet, probably the biggest next thing we typically use is the chest seal. This one comes with two, so you obviously have entry and exit wound capabilities to treat," Buchmann said as he held up the adhesive seals.

Some officers are also packing around AED's in their patrol cars to help patients experiencing cardiac arrest.

During 2020, officers administered Narcan to 140 people who appeared to be overdosing on opioids like heroin. Narcan is a medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose.



Together, the training and equipment are intended to make it easier for police to keep people alive until paramedics can take over.

“The officers are eager to use this stuff. They have the equipment, they have the training now, and they can easily apply it. It’s not advanced skills, but it has a huge impact on the patient’s outcome,” emphasized Buchmann who is an EMT and SWAT Team Member.

Buchmann feels not only are police saving lives, but with quick intervention, boosting the chances of a person’s complete recovery.

Additionally, see this article:

Spokane Police Officers Sharpen Their Medical Triage Skills

<https://www.spokanepublicradio.org/post/spokane-police-officers-sharpen-their-medical-triage-skills#stream/0>

Precinct Highlights

North Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents Addressing Quality of Life Issues

- During the month of March, a NRO had 14 vehicles towed. The vehicles were associated with 154 calls for service.
- A NRO has been working with a business on a beauty strip on the northwest end of their property, which tends to be a magnet for long-term structures/occupancy/garbage. The business signed a Trespass Authorization Form. The cleanup crew assisted the NRO with cleaning up the debris. The NRO made contact with a homeless individual at the site who wanted help with housing, and referred her to SNAP’s Homeless Program.
- A neighbor contacted an NRO about a chronic trespassing issue. The suspects, who had been previously trespassed from the residence, drove onto her driveway several times, as they returned home while backing a trailer. They came within inches of striking her house and her friend’s vehicle. The NRO viewed the videos and developed probable cause to charge the suspect with second degree Trespassing.
- One situation involved a neighbor harassing and threatening her neighbors. The NRO helped the victim obtain an anti-harassment protection order. As the perpetrator had mental health issues, the NRO referred the situation to the Behavioral Health Unit. The person received mental health services.

Crime Prevention Missions

Street racing on Division and reckless driving/trespassing in closed parking lots such as the old Shopko has been an ongoing summer problem. In response, SPD will be conducting several enforcement specials to curb this problem before summer hits.



Downtown Precinct



Precinct Featured

Downtown Precinct Neighborhood Resource Officer Richie Plunkett is highlighted in a Spokesman-Review article:

Early this month, a Spokane police officer with a master's degree in mental health counseling waited as a suicidal man told officers to throw him off of a bridge or shoot him.

In an unrelated matter, police arrived at around 3:30 a.m. March 4 at an apartment complex on State Street that serves otherwise homeless people. They realized a man at the scene was in crisis, according to a Spokane Police Department news release.

When Neighborhood Resource Officer Richie Plunkett arrived to help the suicidal man, he'd already learned some of the tenant's history from mental health professionals in the department's Behavioral Health Unit. The man had just been released from Eastern State Hospital, Plunkett said.

Plunkett, a former social worker and 6-foot-6 former college football player, said he introduces himself to people in crisis by his first name to set the tone. He asked the man repeatedly if he'd prefer to be taken to a hospital or to connect with Frontier Behavioral Health. The man paced, huffing, before charging at and punching Plunkett, body cam footage shows.

Plunkett decided not to pursue charges. Assaulting an officer, he pointed out, is a class C felony in the state of Washington.

"I don't need to make this guy's life any harder, based on what I knew going in there," Plunkett said.

The full article is here: 'Light years ahead': Spokane police address dizzying number of mental health crises with unique team

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/mar/29/lightyears-ahead-spokane-police-address-dizzying-n/>

South Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents Addressing Quality of Life Issues

- The South Precinct's three NROs received 137 referrals for neighborhood issues during the month of March.
- Neighborhood Resource Officers have been working on a residence that now has an abatement agreement and has been declared a nuisance property. Neighbors have complained of stolen cars, drug trafficking, and other stolen property. The suspect has been evicted for continual nuisance.
- One NRO is working on a property that has been the location of several shootings and two homicides over the past 18 months. The residence has been a "hot spot" for surveillance and police resources.



- NROs are also focusing on a very active criminal house with over \$4200.00 in criminal citations issued for chronic nuisance.

Crime Prevention Missions



The South Precinct completed a mission centered on the Browne’s Addition area, focusing on Part 1 crimes. There was also a Hot Spot related focus just below in People’s Park area (transient camps) which was the direct cause of our spike in criminal offenses. The area had recently experienced 102 calls for service, 22 officer-initiated contacts, and nine suspects arrested for Part 1 crimes. The new mission will be the medical district in and around Providence addressing transient camps and Part 1 crimes.

Above, NRO Kelly Mongan

Outreach Update



Police Activities League (PAL) Boxing Season Begins

The Police Activities League (PAL) Boxing program is back in full swing! In late March, officers met with eight Lewis and Clark High School students at the downtown location of the Spokane Youth For Christ (YFC). YFC has for years created a safe place for kids to go after school.

Their goal has been to provide youth with opportunities for productive outlets and to be a place meaningful relationships are developed. In partnership with YFC and the Spokane Boxing club, these students were able to break bread, enjoy fellowship with officers, and then get some instruction on the finer points of boxing.

During the second week of its Spring session, 12 boxers showed up to take part in their weekly workout. The youth played some games ahead of time with officers and coaches over at the downtown Youth For Christ.

The kids were given a homework assignment this week. Officers told the youth participants to return on the next week with one goal for the year that they have for themselves. The officers are excited to be mentors that will help these young people to achieve their goals. With the support of our officers, their chances of meeting and exceeding their goals goes up as they write them down and place them in a location for them to see each day.



The Spokane Police Foundation funds food and equipment for the PAL Boxing program.

More photos of the PAL Boxing program:



Spokane police, local artists give back to at-risk youth in Spokane

<https://www.kxly.com/spokane-police-local-artists-give-back-to-at-risk-youth-in-spokane/>

Spokane artist Melanie Campbell teamed up with SPD Community Outreach to create “corn hole” (beanbag) boards for the Police Activities League (PAL).

Notable News

‘Paws on Patrol’: Community policing nonprofit teaches dog walkers to spot crimes

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/mar/22/paws-on-patrol-community-policing-nonprofit-teache/>

Spokane Police receive more grant money to combat rape kit backlog

<https://www.krem.com/article/news/crime/spokane-police-receive-more-grant-money-to-combat-rape-kit-backlog/293-d1c607db-c34b-4cfc-8bb4-663dcc7a0915>

Spokane Police arrest man for reportedly assaulting stranger with knife near downtown Rite Aid

<https://www.kxly.com/spokane-police-arrest-man-for-reportedly-assaulting-stranger-with-knife-near-downtown-rite-aid/>

