



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives

July 2022 Report



Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing

July 11, 2022



Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendations
(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)

There was an officer, **Anthony Inman**, who responded to a mental health concern from my adult son. I just wanted to register my thanks and appreciation of how this officer and the officers with him handled it with great dignity. I know you guys get a lot of complaints and I thought you needed to hear this. I want to register my appreciation of how this officer and the young officers with him handled it.

I took the "Enhancing the Survival Mindset" class on Saturday. **Lieutenant Jake Jensen** and the SPD team of instructors did an outstanding job. I wanted to express my appreciation and continued support for this type of citizen education.

Through all of my interactions with **[Detective] Dusty [Howe]**, his commitment to the children, adolescents and vulnerable victims we serve at the Children's Advocacy Center has been admirable. His heart for the work we do is very evident, and I am confident that when I see his name assigned to as case, the family and children in particular, will not just get a piece of what Dusty has to offer as a detective, but they will get ALL that he has to offer. There is a saying in the world of Children's Advocacy Centers that states, "Start by Believing" and this is something that I have seen Dusty do time and again with all the cases he has referred to our center. No matter what the final outcome of a case may be, all a child wants is for someone to listen to their disclosure and to have the slightest belief in their statement, and then do something about it...and this is what I have seen Dusty do time and time again. Whether a direct victim, a witness or a non-offending caregiver, Dusty always treats them with trauma informed kindness, respect and humility.

I was pleased, surprised, and appreciative of **Officer Timothy B. Schwering**, North Precinct, response to my need. His response was timely, efficient, courteous, respectful, immediate, and unexpectedly effective. On I called the police department to report a damaged, abandoned vehicle parked in-front of my house. The vehicle had been parked well over a month. I had called previously to report the abandoned vehicle and the car blocked my ability to carry groceries (anything) into my house. At 73, I experience several co-mobilities. To reduce the pain of walking and the aggravation of health-related issues, I must have access to the most convenient and easy path to my home. I was referred and transferred to Officer Timothy Schwering. Within an hour, he returned my call and I spoke directly with him and repeated the information I left in my phone message. He stated that he would "swing-by" my property later the same day. Again, within an hour, the Officer was at my home. My neighbor and I spoke with Officer Schwering and provided any information we had regarding the damaged abandoned vehicle. I believe that the Officer stated he had messaged the vehicle owner. In addition, Officer Schwering also called for the car to be towed and waited for tow truck arrival. Officer Schwering followed-up with me to let know the car was being towed. I was surprised, amazed, and deeply grateful. I could not thank your police officer enough.



Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through May 31, 2022, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 103**

Complaints Received: **Total: 33 (27 from community)**

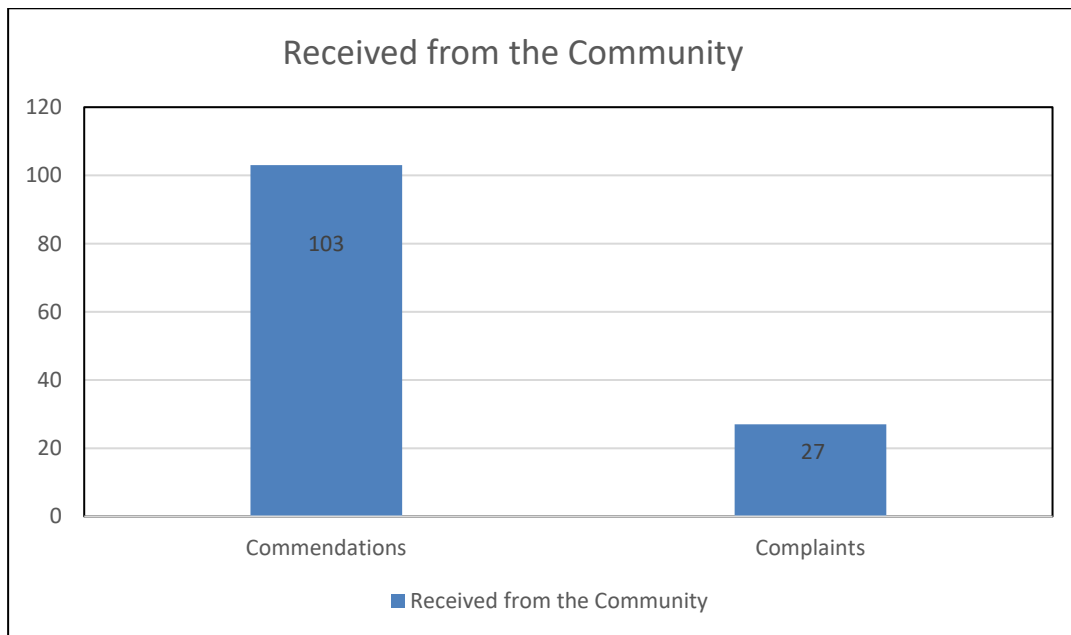
Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of May 31, 2022)

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 May 31, 2022

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 10
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 23
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 6
Generated by the Community	Total: 27

The department consistently receives more commendations from the community than complaints.



Use of Force Update

2022 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1- May 31, 2022, there were 33 non-deadly use of force incidents, including 10 K9 contacts and 23 other types of force (e.g., TASER). Four incidents involved both a K9 and other force.

2022 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- May 31, 2022, there was one deadly force incident.

Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

2021 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- December 31, 2021, there were two deadly force incidents. One is still open.

Incident 2021-20059960 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)

Incident 2021-20059960 took place on April 17, 2021, in the area of 500 S. Cannon. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) conducted the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force justified. SPD conducted an administrative investigation and found the incident to be within policy. A Deadly Force Review Board will be convened for a secondary review.

Items of Interest

Hiring and Recruiting Update



New Lateral Officers Join SPD: Officers Tuan Nguyen from Liberty Lake PD and Jacob Jones from Missoula PD are the Spokane Police Department's newest lateral officers, sworn in on June 13th. They are pictured here with Mayor Woodward and Chief Meidl.

New Officers Graduate from BLEA: The following officers in Class 834 graduated on June 8, 2022.

Alexander Braatz, Mackenzie German Johnson, Garrett Harris, Devon Hill, Shane Holtshausen, Ricky LaBelle, Will Mitchell, Sally Richards, Nathan Thompson, Bryson Trautman

Hiring Grant Update:

Throughout the months of March, April, and May 2022, the grant given to the Spokane Police Department by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission was used in a variety of ways. Recruiters traveled to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Phoenix. A trip was also planned to Atlanta, Georgia, but the trip was cancelled last minute due to a change in the dates of the Diversity Career Fair. The groups of recruiters attended multiple events in each city, such as career fairs, events at local colleges, and self-sponsored police academies to promote the Spokane Police Department to potential recruits across the country. Recruiters also attended events across Washington to promote the department to people within the area.

Timeline:

February 28th-March 4th – Orange County
March 23rd-25th – Joint Base Lewis McChord Career Fair
April 7th – Central Washington University Career Fair
April 4th-8th – San Francisco
April 18th-22nd – Chicago
April 23rd – Public Safety test in Spokane, Washington
May 15th-21st – Phoenix



With the remainder of the grant, the recruiting team plans to increase recruitment media on a variety of platforms, as well as continuing to attend local community events to engage with the community and recruit to Spokane locals. Multiple recruiting videos were created and put out across social media. These videos highlighted diversity and opportunities within the department, while also mentioning the great quality of life Spokane has to offer. Two videos have been released on our Facebook and Vimeo pages. They are the primary videos being utilized with our recruitment publicity campaign with KHQ designed to help us reach diverse

candidates throughout the state. Recruiters also updated flyers to be handed out during local recruiting events.

The following link is for a 30 second recruitment video:

<https://www.facebook.com/SpokanePD/videos/1167826413979806>

Compared to previous years' data, in 2022 there has been an increase in overall applicants to the department, an increase in female applicants, an increase in African American and Hispanic males, and an increase in female applicants representing two or more races.



Volunteers at Skyfest

Reserve Officer Boblet, Volunteer Services Clerk Sue, VSU TAC Officer Jordan Schott, Cadet Sara Lateef, Reserve Officer Matt Allen, Reserve Officer Ed Richardson



Pedaling for Pennies and Bike Safety at All Saints Catholic School

This is the 8th year of Pedaling for Pennies, an event that the school puts on to raise money for the Bite2Go program for the 2nd Harvest Food Bank. SPD has been involved since the beginning and provides a bike safety class to the kids the week before the event. This year, officers from SPD's Traffic Unit – Bill Workman, Chris Lewis and Shaidon Storch – drove the route as an opening ceremony. Captain Dave Richards and Lieutenant Shawn Kendall provided bike safety education.

The kids raised \$1257.25 after the event for this year. Since 2014, the pre-schoolers have raised over \$10,000 in funds for the Bite2Go program for the 2nd Harvest Food Bank.



Employee of the Quarter, Kristi Herron



Kristi Herron has been employed with the Spokane Police Department since October of 2002. She came into the Evidence Unit in February of 2015 and has been a valued asset ever since. In addition to her regular work duties, she has taken on the role of lead trainer for new officers, reserve officers, CO-OP's and deputies on BEAST, as well as training new Evidence employees. She also became a Certified Firearms Specialist and certified in IBIS/NIBIN Acquisitions when the Evidence Unit took on this responsibility. She constantly looks for opportunities to make our job more efficient and never hesitates to offer suggestions. Kristi continues to go above and beyond as an employee assisting officers, detectives, Evidence and Records staff to make everyone's life easier.

Kristi continues to be a trusted asset with firearm background checks. Her years of experience at the Records Gun Desk has allowed our unit to streamline these processes for firearm releases and her wealth of knowledge involving gun laws/prohibitions is second to none. Kristi takes pride in her work and the overall success of SPD. She worked over 100 additional hours performing background checks and CPL data entry for the Records Unit in the first quarter to help keep them within the 10-day window, as well as an additional 11 weeks of work in 2021.

Lifesaving Awards

Three SPD patrol officers awarded for life-saving efforts. Assistant Chief Lundgren presented the life-saving award to **Officers Justin Druitt, Jared Meyer, and Corey Miller** for their actions which saved a gunshot victim in December 2021. The trio were the first units on-scene to a shooting call where it was reported one person had been struck by gunfire. The officers located a female suffering from a gunshot wound to the leg which caused massive hemorrhaging. Officer Meyer, Miller, and Druitt were able to slow the bleeding by working together and promptly providing medical aid, which included applying multiple tourniquets. The victim was transported to a local trauma center where the attending physician conclusively stated that had it not been for the officers' actions the victim would not have survived.



Medal of Valor – Detective Juan Rodriguez



The Medal of Valor is awarded to employees for extraordinary acts of bravery or heroism while displaying extreme courage by placing oneself in immediate peril. Detective Rodriguez was presented the award for his involvement in the pursuit of a carjacking suspect. Detective Rodriguez chased after the suspect. The suspect shot Detective Rodriguez in the leg with his .45 caliber firearm. Detective Rodriguez continued to chase the suspect, even after being shot. He decided to remain engaged in the dangerous situation until he could neutralize the threat to others. Detective Rodriguez returned fire at the suspect, ending the threat to fellow officers arriving on scene and civilians in the area.

SPD Traffic School: Safe Traffic Operations Program (STOP)

STOP is a voluntary class offered by the Spokane Police Department. It is designed to improve driver awareness and understanding of traffic laws and to promote safe driving skills. For more information, see the website: <https://my.spokanecity.org/police/patrol/traffic/traffic-school/>

SPD consistently receives positive feedback from participants of the class. Here are two comments from the most recent class, taught by Traffic Officers Shaidon Storch and Dave Kaurin.

"I had a good time and enjoyed taking this class as it opened my eyes to many things and I plan on leaving here being a better and safer driver. Thanks guys! P.S. I will not be back"

"I loved how a room full of people who got tickets were laughing and engaging with these officers. It felt good that there was not anyone angry with them since police are the bad guys in today's society. So thank you for building the relationship first."

Collaboration and Crime Prevention: Property Crime

The following story involves several SPD units working together: patrol, SPEAR (Property Crimes), Violent Crimes Task Force, Special Investigations Unit, SWAT, Hostage Negotiation Team, and other detectives.

SPD Breaks Up Stolen Property Ring: Alert neighbor thwarts catalytic converter theft, leads to seizure of more than \$100k in stolen property and breaks up stolen property trafficking ring

On 5-17-2022 around 4:30 AM - a man, who was leaving his apartment in Northwest Spokane for work, noticed two pairs of legs poking out from underneath his neighbor's car. He reported hearing sawing sounds and it appeared to him the men under the car were cutting off his neighbor's catalytic converter. He also noticed an unoccupied pickup truck parked nearby and running. The citizen notified police.

Patrol officers responded and located the pickup truck. As officers began their investigation, a subject approached them. The subject (identified as suspect Tyler G. Larsen, 26) said the truck belonged to his friend (identified as suspect Vitaliy A. Budimir, 35), who he summoned to get the truck back. While waiting for Budimir, the officers looked further at the vehicle, and in plain view, they saw what appeared to be stolen tools, purses, and an exhaust muffler. Budimir arrived and told officers that his truck had been stolen earlier that morning all the way across the city.

Further investigation by patrol determined that Budimir, along with another unknown male attempted to cut and steal the catalytic converter off a vehicle causing more than \$1,000 in damage to that vehicle. Budimir was arrested and booked for Malicious Mischief 2nd and Attempted Theft 2nd. Larsen was booked for making a false statement to a public servant. Budimir was released on his own recognizance the next day and Larsen was booked and immediately released on his own recognizance.

During a search of the pickup, more stolen catalytic converters, stolen tools, stolen ID cards, stolen access devices (credit/debit cards), and tools used to remove a catalytic converter were recovered. Information from the investigation and from items in the truck also revealed an address where more stolen items may be located. On 5-25-2022, the investigating patrol officers, neighborhood resource officers, SPEAR (Stolen Property Enforcement and Recovery) detectives, and a crime analyst executed a search warrant on the home in the 1300 block of East Garland.

When police identified themselves, a subject (identified as suspect Joshua E. Semenchuk, 22) jumped a fence in the backyard and began to run away but was apprehended and booked for an unrelated felony theft of a motor vehicle warrant.

During the search of the home, an extensive amount of stolen property - valued at approximately \$20,000 and including six other catalytic converters - was recovered. The detectives and crime analyst were able to immediately search stolen property reports and compare them to the items inside the home to expedite the process of returning items to owners. One of the items recovered was an electric bicycle valued at over \$1,500. The victim of the bike theft was able to respond to the home and get their bicycle back that same day.

Several coin-operated toy machines stolen from a local grocery store were also recovered -valued at approximately \$3,000. A follow-up investigation by SPEAR identified suspect Jerry Parsons, 30. Parsons was arrested the next morning by the Violent Crimes Task Force for an outstanding Commercial Burglary warrant and Eluding a Police Vehicle. Parsons was linked to Budimir via property recovered during the preceding searches. Additional charges related to the theft of coin machines and usage of a victim's credit cards are possible.

The investigation also revealed there may be more stolen property located inside a storage unit in North Spokane. Patrol officers responded to the storage center to investigate and obtained a search warrant for two separate units. Both were nearly full of stolen property. Each unit contained a cache of new-in-box power tools, clothing with the tags still on, generators, and electrical equipment. Detectives and the crime analyst were again able to quickly start their search of the property to locate victims of the thefts.



An entire set of firefighter bunker gear (helmet, boots, coat, pants, mask) and wildland firefighter gear was located and linked to a vehicle prowling report. The victim was contacted and recovered his stolen equipment - valued at approximately \$9000- that day. A box of tools, a plumbing camera, and a speaker were linked to another vehicle prowling incident and that victim also retrieved his items - valued at approximately \$4200- the same day.

Additionally, inside one unit a number of guns including an illegal sawed-off shotgun were recovered. Probable cause was established to arrest the renters of both storage units (Ryan P. Smith, 30 and Wilma R. Haight, 29) for 1st Degree Possession of Stolen Property, Possession of an Unlawful Firearm, and 1st Degree Trafficking Stolen Property.

Smith and Haight were known to use a pickup truck to transport stolen items. On 5-26-2022, an alert detective with the Special Investigations Unit noticed the truck at a hotel in the 9500 block of North Division. Because of Smith's local history and the risk of firearms being involved, members of SWAT, the Violent Crime Task Force, the Hostage Negotiation Team, and other detectives responded to the hotel to assist in the apprehension. Hostage Negotiators were able to contact the suspects over the phone, who exited a hotel room and were taken into custody without incident.

A search warrant executed on the room resulted in the seizure of approximately \$1,000 cash, \$3,000 in money orders, approximately 43 cash gift cards of various values, fentanyl "Mexi" pills, and the pickup truck. Smith and Haight were booked into the Spokane County Jail for 1st Degree Possession of Stolen Property, Possession of an Unlawful Firearm, and 1st Degree Trafficking of Stolen Property. Haight also had a confirmed misdemeanor warrant for 3rd Degree Theft. A search of the pickup truck yielded another large amount of potentially stolen property.

Overall, an estimate of over \$100k in stolen property was recovered, which stopped an organized, structured stolen property trafficking ring. 7 associated suspects were arrested in the on-going investigation and 3 firearms, including the sawed-off shotgun and a reported stolen handgun, were seized along with much of the property.

The Spokane Police Department would like to thank the alert citizens for their help in this case. This case involved the collaboration of several divisions within SPD and could not have been completed without the teamwork. SPD would also like to remind the public to document all serial numbers/receipts for any valuable items so in the event they are recovered they can be traced back to the rightful owner. Adding a personalized/distinguishable mark to your property is also a great way to make it easily identifiable.

Precinct Highlights

North Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents and Businesses

- Neighborhood Resource Officer Tim Schwering has resolved 14 nuisance properties this year. He has also towed 88 vehicles from January-May 2022.



- NRO Todd Brownlee reports that Mission Park continues to be vastly improved for May, with frequent Prowl Checks and coordination with Whitter Pool. Results have been a continued decline in calls for service.

This time period also saw the park host the Logan Neighborhood Celebration, which went very well and was well attended. COPS had a tent at the event, to include Logan COPS. NRO Brownlee used the opportunity to re-connect with Riverview Retirement Community Administration and other neighborhood leaders. NRO Brownlee kept a close eye on cars of attendees. No cars were prowled during the event.

Downtown Precinct

Crime Prevention Missions

During May and June 2022, the Downtown Precinct has been focusing on Pacific-2nd/Division-Spokane, which is experiencing high rates of vehicle prowling and Part 1 crimes, especially near some apartment complexes and businesses. Officers tackled several issues related to fentanyl. Officers made an arrest of a repeat offender was trafficking fentanyl pills outside a housing structure and recovered stolen property from a suspect stealing to support his fentanyl habit. Several individuals who were overdosing in this area were revived with Narcan.

Officers have also been regularly patrolling the parking lots near Lewis and Clark High School.

Precinct Outreach

- Downtown Community Court triage meeting
- Hot spotters meeting
- Downtown security group meeting
- Business Improvement District Board meeting
- Washington State Public Safety Review Panel meeting
- Riverside Neighborhood Council meeting



Above, Coffee with a Cop at the Starbucks Coffee on 3rd and Walnut. A Coffee with a Cop event took place on June 16, 2022 at the Starbucks on Main.

South Precinct

The South Precinct received 178 new referrals on problem addresses during May 2022.

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents and Businesses

- The South Precinct has been focusing on the area of Cannon to Monroe and 4th to 9th Avenues.
- 26 Cannon Hill Prowl Checks were conducted by seven different patrol units. Most checks reported no criminal activity.



Outreach Update

Recent Outreach Activities

Neighborhood Block Party
Spokane Juvenile Court Coordination of Services
PAL Boxing
Refugee Connections
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Northeast Community Center Coalition
Shadle Prevention & Wellness Coalition
Roundtable Self-Care Fair
Garland Street Fair
Hillyard Street Fair
Stevens Elementary Cultural Night
Mount Spokane High School Teddy Bear Toss
East Valley High School Career Day
Cub Scouts at Westview Elementary
STEP Secondary Transition Education Program Graduation



The Community Outreach Unit had a booth at Riverfront Park for Asian Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Heritage Day. This event was also at the same time of the Junior Lilac parade and lots of people stopped by to say hi.

Training for Refugees

SPD Community Outreach joined together with World Relief Spokane to welcome refugees and other immigrants to Spokane. Officers spent time teaching them about public safety, resources within the

community, Washington State laws and Spokane City Municipal codes, as well as general knowledge of living in Spokane.



Below is a card that is provided to World Relief, Refugee Connections and other providers who work with refugees in our community. If officers have an interaction with individuals who have these cards, the card can be presented to assist with obtaining the proper translation services.

Refugee Emergency Language Card

Name _____

Language(s)
Spoken _____

English Contact:
Name _____

Phone _____



Cy Meidl
Spokane Police
Chief Meidl

Roundtable Self-Care Fair

Northeast Family Youth System Partner Round Table (FYSPRT) coordinated with Passages Family Support to host the Second annual Self-Care Fair. Passages provides outpatient mental health care and support services to individuals, youth, and children throughout Spokane County. SPD Community Outreach attended the Fair as one of the resources available to participants. It was a great opportunity to make additional connections with mental health resources throughout Spokane County and the surrounding region.

PAL Boxing

PAL Boxing meets every Tuesday at the Spokane Boxing Club (115 S. Jefferson) from 3:00-4:30 pm. We welcome youth between the ages of 12-17. We'd love to have them down to get a workout in with our officers! Please reach out to spdccommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org for more information.

On June 17, two of the PAL Boxers participated in a boxing match.



Several SPD employees and volunteers attended STEP graduation.

