



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

**Strategic Initiatives**  
**May 2023 Report**



**Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing**  
**May 1, 2023**



**Excerpts of Commendations**  
**(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)**

Thank you, Officer **[Detective Graig] Butler**. I appreciate your talent and expertise, and all the good you offer this community. My students benefit so much from your presence and their conversations extend beyond just today. Thanks for engaging in all the questions, using examples, being hopeful, and connecting history in English content. Thanks for encouraging them to be critical thinkers and inspiring them to be future detectives. Thanks for making a difference and being a mentor for young people at Montessori school.

Dear officers, I passed by my dear rental property. I wanted to make sure the squatters were out after my property manager sent them to jail. I have been trying to evict these illegal strangers out for months! I called the police because curtains were up, lights on, and back door unlocked. You came so fast and got rid of the woman who hid from us. They cut my water line and flooded my basement! Your dear officer gripped the spigot and finally shut off my water. I had tried several times unsuccessfully! Thank you! **[Officers Baughn, Barker, Braten, Vilchiz, Olson, and Corporal Widhalm]**

I wanted to let you know how impressed I was with the instructors at the Academy. Every one of the instructors that I recognized are 30+ year officers (and I'm sure the ones I didn't recognize were as well), yet every one of them were high energy, excited and happy to be there, on top of being extremely knowledgeable. I know a lot of officers with significantly less time of service that don't have a quarter of the energy and passion of those guys. I have no question that the instruction that our officers are receiving is top notch. We have always received officers that were very well-prepared from the Spokane Academy, but it struck me again today and I figured I'd be remiss if I didn't say something. Thank you very much for all you do for our officers. **[Basic Law Enforcement Academy staff Sergeant Dave Adams, Officer Corey Lyons, Officer Kim Razey.]**

My daughter and I were stopped in traffic heading North on Maple when a driver attempted to race across Maple, T-boned our CRV, backed up almost hitting a trailer, then raced of West on Gardner and turned South on Ash. Thank you to Brandy at Crime Check who helped take the initial report help me figure out what to do next. Thank you to Spokane Police **Officer Ian Quist** who came by the accident to take the incident report, listened to our story, and explained how to file the report. Though I'm sure they both hear similar stories at least weekly, they both treated us with kindness, patience, and empathy.

**Captain [Tom] Hendren** came to our HOA Safety meeting tonight and gave a great presentation. He is high energy, knowledgeable and conveys a passion for Spokane.



**January 1 through March 31, 2023, Commendations and Complaints**

Commendations Received:   **Total: 44**

Complaints Received:       **Total: 27 (23 from community)**

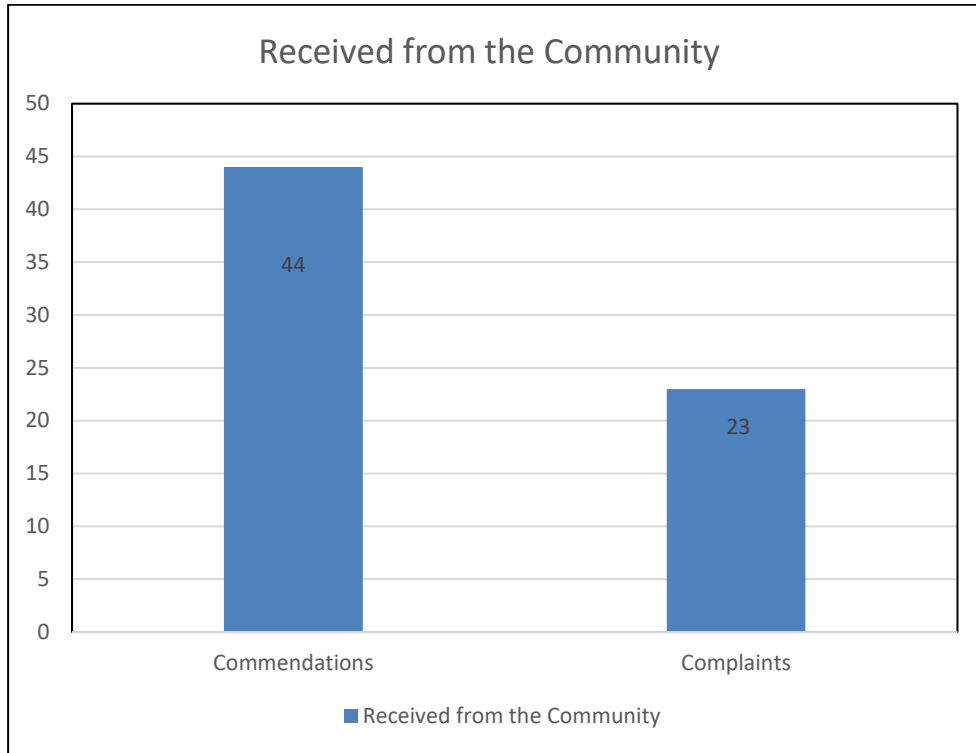
**Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of March 31, 2023)**

*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, 2023**

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	<b>Total: 13</b>
Received by the Spokane Police Department	<b>Total: 14</b>
Internally Generated by the SPD	<b>Total: 4</b>
Generated by the Community	<b>Total: 23</b>

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



## Use of Force Update

### Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

#### **2023**

From January 1- March 31, 2023, there were no deadly force incidents.

#### **2022**

From January 1- December 31, 2022, there were five deadly force incidents.

#### **Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Administrative Investigation)**

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) completed the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor's Office completed their review and found the shooting to be justified. The case is with Internal Affairs for the administrative investigation.

#### **Incident 2022-20134271 (Pending Criminal Investigation)**

2022-20134271 took place on August 3, 2022, in the area of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Sheridan. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

#### **Incident 2022-20156670 (Pending Criminal Investigation)**

2022-20156670 took place on September 4, 2022, in the area of 2900 E. Wabash Avenue. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

#### **Incident 2022-20184192 (Pending Criminal Investigation)**

2022-20184192 took place on October 16, 2022, in the area of 100 S Cedar. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

#### **Incident 2022-20214924 (Pending Prosecutor Review)**

2022-20214924 took place on December 4, 2022, in the area of Morton and Illinois. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) completed the criminal investigation. The case is with the Prosecutor's Office.

## Hiring and Recruiting

Here is Spokane Police Department's 2022 Commissioned Officer Recruiting and Hiring Report. It provides details on our hiring numbers, demographics, and recruiting efforts.

<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/police/officer/2022-recruiting-and-hiring-report.pdf>

The prior year's report is posted on this page.

<https://my.spokanecity.org/police/officer/>



## January-March 2023 Recruiting Progress

Many of the expenses associated with recruiting over the last year and a half have been covered by a Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission grant. The grant ends in June.



SPD displayed five recruiting billboards locally in the first quarter of 2023. The recruiting billboard image features a Latina officer.

Between January and March 2023, SPD attended 14 events with the purpose of recruiting. Seven of the events were local events in Spokane County, including community events. The events resulted in contacts with hundreds of potential candidates, reaching underserved communities. The number of underrepresented community candidates passing the Public Safety Test and sending their scores to Spokane has increased 30%, increasing from 44 in January-March 2021 to 63 in January-March 2023.

During the first quarter of 2023, SPD hired 9 officers, with 3 (33%) from underrepresented communities (Female, Hispanic).

### Spokane Regional Air Support Unit – All-Women Law Enforcement Flight Crew



#### First All-Women Spokane Regional Air Support Unit Crew Takes Historic Flight Over Spokane County

In honor of Women's History Month (March) and International Women's Day (March 8), the Spokane Regional Air Support Unit is proud to announce the flight of the first All-Women Law Enforcement Flight Crew in Washington, and possibly the country, to our knowledge.

Civilian Pilot: Megan Fine

Tactical Flight Officer (TFO): Makalia McKitrick, Spokane Police Officer (pictured outside the aircraft)

Tactical Flight Officer (TFO): Krystal Bitzer, Spokane Valley Police Department Deputy

On March 11, 2023, Spokane Regional Air Support Unit's (SRASU) Air-2 took flight on a regularly scheduled patrol flight, but this evening, they made history as the first three-person All-Women flight crew. The mission was piloted by Civilian Pilot Megan Fine, accompanied by TFO Makalia McKitrick and TFO Krystal Bitzer.

During the flight, they assisted patrol units on the ground with calls of a missing child, a carjacking, an assault, and others, while keeping watch over our community to keep them safe from high in the air.

We congratulate and thank Civilian Pilot Fine, TFO McKittrick, and TFO Bitzer for their dedication and professionalism and for representing Spokane County on this historic flight. Pictures were provided by Erik Smith of Erik Smith Photography, who was kind enough to volunteer to take pictures to commemorate the occasion.

The Spokane Regional Air Support Unit is comprised of Volunteer Pilots, Tactical Flight Officers (TFOs) from local law enforcement agencies, and Helicopter Rescue Medics (HRMs), certified EMTs with Spokane Valley Fire Department. TFOs: Deputies and Officers from the Spokane County Sheriff’s Office, Spokane Valley Police Department, Spokane Police Department, and the Liberty Lake Police Department.

Air 1 and Air 2: Two OH-58’s equipped with Forward-Looking Infra-Red (FLIR), which allows aircrews to detect heat on the ground. FLIR can be used to locate both missing people and hiding fugitives. Air-1 and Air-2 are also equipped with a 30 million candle power searchlight, a GPS moving map system, and the flight crews are equipped with night vision goggles. In addition, Air-1 is fitted with a downlink that transmits live video from the helicopter to the Mobile Command Vehicle. The microwave downlink allows police and fire staff to see real-time video from the helicopter and make timely decisions based on what they see. Rescue 3: A Bell UH-1H Super Huey is equipped with a long line and hoist system for short-haul rescue missions. The long line and hoist system allows our Tactical Flight Medics and Tactical Flight Officers to be lowered from Rescue 3 to retrieve a citizen that is either injured or lost in remote areas. The primary mission for Rescue 3 is search and rescue.

## Training

### SPD In-Service



During March and April 2023, SPD held Spring In-Service training. In-Service is ten hours of mandated training, held three times a year.

Patrol officer In-Service includes training on Domestic Violence, legal updates, defensive tactics, use of force policy, firearms, and a session with the Chief. A portion of training focused on tactical team training (first response capabilities to critical incidents, scene protection, public order policing, event management, protests). The tactical team training is pictured at left.

SPD also held an Investigations In-Service with training on search warrants, legal updates, officer-involved shootings, interviewing, digital evidence, and a session with the Chief.

The mid-year In-Service will focus on active shooter response and Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE). Active bystandership is about preventing harm – to the community, to officers, and to the profession.



## Reserve Academy

Interested in helping your community and working alongside Spokane Police Officers? Consider being a Spokane Police Reserve Officer. Your opportunity is now! SPD is accepting applications for the next Reserve Academy which starts June 5, 2023.

The program is comprised of men and women who either aspire to be full-time police officers or want to serve in a part-time volunteer police capacity. Community members who volunteer their time as reserve officers fulfill many of the roles handled by full-time, sworn police officers. Reserve Officer Boblet, featured in the video link below, is a current airline pilot and former fighter jet pilot, now serving the citizens of Spokane as a reserve officer.

Don't miss out on the next the Spokane Police Department Reserve Academy coming up soon. If you are interested in becoming a Reserve Officer, please contact the Volunteer Services Unit at 509.363.8283. Please see more information here:



<https://my.spokanecity.org/news/stories/2023/04/06/spd-reserve-academy-starts-june-5/>

## Noteworthy Arrests

### Downtown Spokane Armed Robbery Suspect Located

On March 18, 2023, an armed robbery which occurred in the 1500 block of W 3rd Ave. SPD Major Crimes Unit (MCU) detectives asked for the public's assistance in the investigation of the robbery and gave a description of the suspect vehicle. Hours later, the suspect was located out of state.

### Spokane Man With 14 Prior Domestic Violence Convictions Arrested for 20 Additional Domestic Violence No-Contact Order Violations

On March 21, 2023, Spokane police officers responded to the 6600 block of N Cedar St. A female called in advising Alexander Kalendar (36) was knocking on her door demanding entry. The female is protected from Alexander in a Washington State Superior Court Domestic Violence No-Contact Order. Kalendar had left in a vehicle prior to officers' arrival.

Responding officers contacted the female victim who showed them hundreds of text messages and phone calls Kalendar had been leaving on her phone from various numbers since he was released from custody earlier this year. Over the course of the last couple months, Kalendar has become increasingly demanding of the female and begun to show up at her residence exhibiting odd behavior.

Kalendar is an 8-time convicted felon, with 7 prior convictions for felony Domestic Violence Order of Protection Violation (DVOPV) and one for criminal mischief with a deadly weapon. He has 2 additional convictions for misdemeanor DVOPV and 4 prior convictions for Assault 4th Degree. Kalendar has 2 prior

convictions for Resisting Arrest (a misdemeanor). Aside from the Resisting Arrest charges, all of Kalendar's convictions are crimes of domestic violence.

Officers developed probable cause to charge Kalendar with additional 20 counts of felony DVOPV due to his ongoing attempts to contact the female victim. Deputies with the Spokane County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) located Kalendar in a vehicle just outside of the city and assisted with taking him into custody. Thanks to SCSO's assistance, Kalendar was booked into the Spokane County Jail within 3 hours of the initial 911 call.

SPD takes crimes of domestic violence extremely seriously and works diligently to hold offenders accountable, while providing victims with resources to overcome the effects of domestic violence. Victims can often be manipulated into not reporting instances of domestic violence to law enforcement as part of abusers' control. It is important to be aware of the signs of domestic violence and to report it. The YWCA provides resources for victims of domestic violence. Their 24/7 helpline is 509-326-2255 and their regular business line is 509-326-1190.

## Sector Updates

### Charlie Sector Community Outreach – Roll Call with a Cop

South Precinct Captain Matt Cowles held an outreach event in the East Central Neighborhood, in partnership with Fresh Soul, Spokane Eastside Reunion Association (SERA), and Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Coalition. The "Roll Call with a Cop" event allowed East Central residents and businesses to meet officers assigned to their sector and enjoy delicious food from Fresh Soul, with the cost donated by GSSAC. The event took place on April 21, 2023 with Mid-Shift roll call.

### David Sector Crime Prevention Mission

Downtown officers have been focused on a group of suspects, mostly juveniles, that has been involved in many assaults and robberies Downtown including in the areas of the Library and Bank of America at 601 W. Riverside. Officers have been using enforcement and high visibility patrols in the areas where the group frequents. Officers follow up with Juvenile Probation on any arrestees. The goals are to reduce criminal activities, especially assaults and robberies.

During the mission, Downtown officers canvassed areas using foot, bike, and vehicle patrols. They made a dozen arrests for these crimes. As a result of the increased focus, there was a reduction in assaults. During the first two weeks of February, there were 18 assaults and three robberies attributed to group members. The second two weeks, there were 22 assaults and six robberies. During the first two weeks of March, assaults were down to 11 and robberies were at four.

Officers also focused on an area known for vehicle prowling, along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, either one block north or south between Howard and Madison. Officers saw a reduction in incidents. The last two weeks of February, there were 42 reported prowling incidents. The first two weeks of March, there were 18.

### David Sector Noteworthy Arrest

On March 22, Officer Jacob Siegel responded for a suspicious female/welfare check at the 7-11. The female was reportedly smoking drugs from a pipe and blowing the smoke into the face of her 16-month-old child. Officer Siegel contacted the woman and completed an emergency placement authorization on the child.





He then petitioned for a search warrant to search the woman. In the search, officers discovered a glass pipe with a bulbous end and a white crystal that later field tested positive for methamphetamines. The woman was arrested for Endangerment of a child with a controlled substance and given her first drug treatment referral.

### SPD Chaplaincy Update



Chaplains are known for responding for DOA and critical incident calls; Chaplains responded to 661 calls for service in 2022, donating 8643 hours. Chaplains support SPD employees and their families in many other ways.

One way they like to help is by checking in with officers when they are working in inclement weather, such as a standoff in the snow. Officers on a SWAT detail appreciated the coffee that the chaplains brought to keep them warm and alert.

The Chaplains brought donated water and healthy snacks to the International Police Mountain Bike Association class on March 20th – 24th. SPD hosted the five-day course that teaches basic police mountain bike skills and basic crowd control tactics. This is a required course for officers who utilize police bikes at SPD.



The Chaplains visited SPD employees in the Records Unit, along with Isaac the comfort dog and his handler, Bill. The Chaplains love being able to brighten the days for hardworking SPD staff at the Public Safety Building. At left, the Chaplain visit at Records.



At right, Chaplains receive NARCAN training.



At left, a photo of SPD's Chaplain of the Month, Maria Arguinzoni.

Maria has been volunteering with the Chaplaincy for 2.5 years, and she has served at SPD for 30 years as a civilian employee.

At right, five of the female Chaplains take a picture for International Women's Day.



**Officer Employee of the Year: Officer Greg Thompson**



The nomination from Captain Cowles read:

I have worked with Officer Thompson for a number of years. He is impressively consistent and has an unfaltering dedication to our department and his team. More than anything, Ofc. Thompson is an unstoppable force of positivity.

Ofc. Thompson is assigned to the Downtown Precinct. In addition to those duties, he is a Tactical Flight Officer with the Spokane Regional

Air Support Unit, an SPD Air Support Unit drone pilot, and a Field Training Officer. Even if I tried to calculate all the hours, all of the call outs, all of the extra duties he takes on – I couldn't keep up. A team of supervisors couldn't keep up!

Ofc. Thompson loves his job and is an incredible teammate. If there is equipment needed at a training, he is happy to bring it. If training needs to be planned, he is prepared and ready to present it. If there is an unexpected event needing a pilot for flying, he is quick to volunteer and always prepared to fly it. If there is maintenance or cleaning, he is quick to get the job done.

Officer Thompson is a solid officer. Not only is he available and dedicated, he is mature, organized, and complete in his work. He has never told me his personal creed, but I would imagine that it is, "If it is worth being done, it is worth being done right." If he has input or concerns about a mission, piece of equipment, or teammate he is tactful and thoughtful when he has discussions. He never presents a problem or obstacle if he doesn't already have a plan ready for action.

The SPD Air Support Unit is a small but growing group within our department. It is often used in TAC, SWAT, Patrol, and regional support roles. These missions vary from overwatch for command posts to clearing houses for tactical operations. He is one of the most technically proficient pilots and takes the time out of his normal hours to stay proficient and try new things. Ofc. Thompson stays motivated and driven towards making sure the Air Support Unit is successful. He often sacrifices his own time to be available so that the ASU meets the needs of the department. Ofc. Thompson works amongst great officers in our department. He stands out for his tireless motivation and relentless positivity.

## Civilian Employee of the Year: Jenetta Alford



Police Public Records Supervisor, Marissa Butler's nomination read:

Jen has been the sole person responsible for receiving and processing requests from CPS, APS, DSHS and other criminal justice partners, as well as military and government background checks and others. We have had a HUGE increase in the number of these requests. I currently have staffing to assign only one Public Record Specialist to this work. Jenetta does a fabulous job and often works OT to keep up with these requests, especially coming off weekends. The volume of these requests has grown significantly over the past year or

more. We have been seeing on average a 20-30% increase in requests received every month for the past year. Some months have increased by more than 100% over the same month in the previous year.

For March 2022, we reached a record-breaking number of requests received in any given month: 1074 requests – all received and processed quickly by Jen. This is a 24% increase from March 2021, and a 92% increase from March 2020. In 2022, for the first time we received over 1000 requests in a single month, and we did it 4 times. We had a total of 10,064 requests processed in 2022. This is a 10.75% increase over last year, and a 25.75% increase over 2020.

The workload that Jen handles every month is well above what should be expected from a single employee. Yet, every month Jen manages to keep on top of these requests. Jen is also a fantastic team member, and she never hesitates to help with anything that needs to be done and she continually receives positive comments from her customers.

### Outreach Update

Recently, the Community Outreach Unit attended meetings and events with the following organizations:

- American Indian Community Center – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- World Relief
- Thrive International
- Boys and Girls Club in Spokane
- Boys and Girls Club in Wellpinit
- New Tech Skills Center
- Shadle Prevention and Wellness Coalition
- PAL Boxing
- Shaw Middle School
- Lewis and Clark High School Visit to the Academy
- Career Day at East Valley High School
- Homeschool Students Tour of Public Safety Building

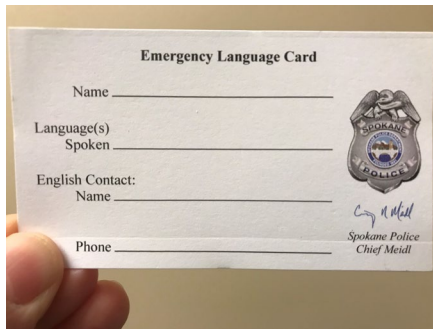
- Spokane Regional Health District’s Hidden in Plain Sight
- Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Apple School Tour
- Junior League of Spokane

Below, Secondary Transition Education Program Students at the Public Safety Building. Not only did they get to see SPD operations, they were able to visit Judge Ochoa-Bruck's courtroom to learn about the court system and how it works.



### Refugee Cards and Emergency Language Cards

For the last six years, SPD has been using Refugee Cards for recent refugees to the U.S. who do not speak English as their first language. The cards have been very popular with organizations that serve refugees. We thought that people who do not qualify as refugees may still have a need for a language card.



Based on the Refugee Card, we recently created an Emergency Language card. The card can list their primary language(s) and an adult contact who could translate to English. This could be used if the Language Line was not available. It could also be calming for the individual having a stressful experience to show the officer a card with the badge and Chief’s signature and to have someone come help.

the badge and Chief’s signature and to have someone come help.

If you would like more information about Refugee Cards or Emergency Language Cards, please contact [spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org](mailto:spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org).

(Police Activities League) PAL Boxing

This is a FREE program for youth ages 11-17, at Spokane Boxing Club on 115 S. Jefferson. It's held Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00-5:30pm. PAL programs engage participating youth in positive athletic and academic programs, including gang and drug intervention and prevention. Youth and officers work out together.



## SPD Volunteers in the Community

### Embrace Washington event for Foster Families

New shoes can transform the life of a child in foster care. Thirty-four kids in foster care received a new pair of shoes courtesy of Ticket to Dream Foundation, Famous Footwear, and Embrace Washington. Spokane Police Department and Spokane County Sheriff's Office quickly responded to Embrace Washington's invitation to help the kids pick out new footwear.

