

# 2020

# Annual Report



**Sparta Police Department**

121 E. Oak St  
Sparta, WI 54656  
608-269-3122

[www.spartawisconsin.org](http://www.spartawisconsin.org)







# SPARTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**Emilee Nottestad**  
Chief of Police

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Honorable Mayor Gust  
Members of the City Council  
Sparta City Hall  
201 W. Oak St.  
Sparta, WI 54656

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The City of Sparta Annual Police Report for the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 is herewith submitted for your review.

This report contains information regarding calls for service, crime trends, drug trends, officer training, officer defensive action, and more. I hope you find this information both interesting and useful.

Law enforcement has been met with difficult times throughout history. Last year felt like one of the most challenging times that I have seen during the course of my career. While the expectations and demands on officers are higher, police officer candidates are fewer, and public support is lower. I feel fortunate to work in a community where the Police Department has a strong connection with the public it serves. Rest assured we strive every day to provide you with the best police services possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Emilee Nottestad  
Chief of Police



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# Mission Statement

## **Our Mission**

The mission of the Sparta Police Department is to work in partnership with our community to enhance safety, protect life and property, and reduce crime.

## **Our Vision**

Preserving quality of life through innovation and excellence in policing.

## **Our Values**

Courage—To face one's fears in the face of adversity and do what is required to protect others.

Pride—In work and family we are accountable to each other and the Community.

Excellence—Strive for perfection knowing that "good enough" really isn't.



# Code of Ethics

*"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality, and justice.*

*I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to me or to my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed both in my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.*

*I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, political beliefs, aspirations, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.*

*I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of police service. I will never engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.*

*I know that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.*

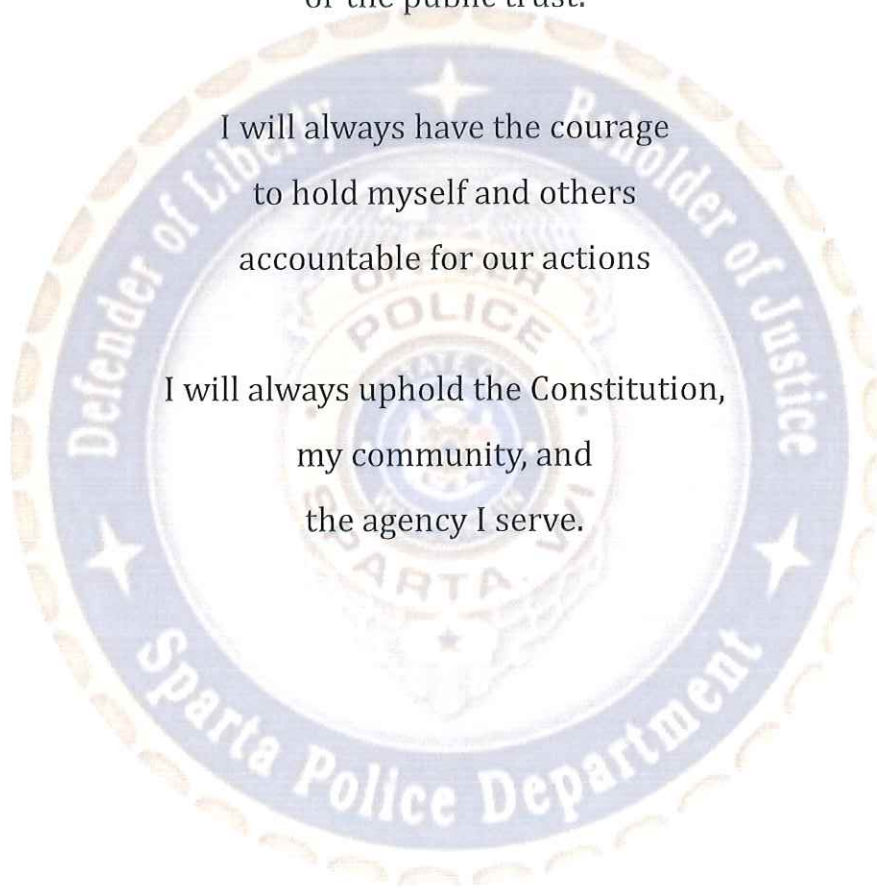
*I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession... **law enforcement.**"*

# Oath of Honor

On my honor,  
I will never betray my profession,  
my integrity, my character,  
or the public trust.

I will always have the courage  
to hold myself and others  
accountable for our actions

I will always uphold the Constitution,  
my community, and  
the agency I serve.





# Personnel



Chief  
Emilee  
Nottestad



Deputy Chief  
Booker  
Ferguson



Lieutenant  
Corey  
Johnson



Administrative  
Assistant  
Amanda Revels



Police Support  
Specialist  
Jessica Erickson



Sergeant  
Jason  
Pipkin



Sergeant  
Joel  
Ames



Sergeant  
Kyle  
Erickson



Sergeant  
Jenna  
Lee



Detective  
Jose  
Tovar



Detective  
Andrew  
Kuen



Officer  
Kyle  
Seubert



SRO  
Marc  
Nelson



Officer  
Kyle  
Guralski



Officer  
Zach  
Fischer



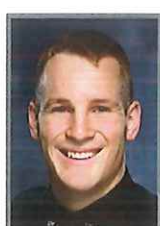
Officer  
Ethan  
Schroeder



K9 Handler  
Brian  
James



Officer  
Jacob  
Ludovice



Officer  
Brock  
Mrdjenovich



Officer  
Jager  
Mitchell



Officer  
Jamal  
Wagner



Officer  
Tyrel  
Brey



Officer  
Chase  
Nottestad



K9  
Kaiser



K9  
Nash



Facility Dog  
Xanthos



Evidence/Code  
Compliance  
Christine Haas



Chaplain  
Jef Skinner

# Personnel Changes

## New Hires



Tyrel  
Brey



Chase  
Nottestad



Nash



Xanthos

## Separations



David Kuderer



Christine Haas



Larz

## Promotions

- Emilee Nottestad was promoted to Chief on January 11, 2020.
- Booker Ferguson was promoted to Deputy Chief on June 1, 2020.
- Jenna Lee was promoted to Sergeant on June 1, 2020.
- Corey Johnson was promoted to Lieutenant on July 1, 2020.

## Career Milestones

- Chief David Kuderer retired as Chief in January 2020 after 40 years of service to the Department and the City of Sparta.
- Kyle Seubert's 20 year anniversary with the department was May 25, 2020.
- Marc Nelson's 15 year anniversary with the department was September 19, 2020.
- Christine Haas' 5 year anniversary with the department was February 19, 2020.
- Emilee Nottestad's 5 year anniversary with the department was May 18, 2020.
- Brian James' 5 year anniversary with the department was August 17, 2020.
- Officer Marc Nelson became School Resource Officer on August 1, 2020.



# Chief's Report

Through a year of unprecedented challenges, the Sparta Police Department continued to deliver professional police services and demonstrate its commitment to community in 2020. We met each goal set forth in the fall of 2019, and set aggressive objectives as we look toward 2021. We welcomed new members to our department, found ways to grow creatively within unique boundaries, and met challenges head-on as a team.

COVID, mandates, and lock-downs dominated much of 2020. As I looked through department-wide briefings from last year, the urgency of decision-making at various times is striking. We made swift and hard changes to the operations of the department in an instant, and new alterations came daily. Through the constant changes and updates early in the year, department members kept positive attitudes and helped each other. For part of the year, department members were split into "teams" that were not allowed to cross shifts. That meant no time off, canceled family plans, no spending time with close friends from work, and other hardships endured by our staff. Through it all, department members remained committed to service of the community. While times were challenging for so many community members, SPD staff looked for ways to bring some joy into the community – decorating outside the Morrow Home for residents, hosting a clothing drive, and taking squad cars to drive-through birthday parties for kids were just a few ways we found to spread some happiness during hard times.

As quickly as COVID struck, so did the civil unrest across our nation. Our city saw peaceful protests, where we had the opportunity to interact with the event organizers and participants. Through this time and these events, many questions were raised throughout the Nation, State, and City. As Chief, I spent a lot of time answering questions regarding Sparta Police Department's policies and procedures, as well as questions on how and why law enforcement does certain things. We looked at this as an opportunity to educate others on what we do, and become more engaged with our community. We invited citizens to ride with police officers, join our Police Reserves, and attend our Citizens Academy – all great opportunities for civilians to learn about law enforcement, understand our department, and get to know our officers.

As I look back at the 2019/2020 goals I set in the fall of 2019, I am very proud of the accomplishments of the Department. At that time, 4 main goals were established for 2020 and all were met:

1. Upgrade Technology – this had several portions, including finishing an on-boarding of a new records management system, installing all new squad and body camera systems, moving to cloud-based storage for photos and videos, and moving to cloud-based access for open records requests. All of these were completed.
2. Begin Plans for a New Police Department – The City acquired Lakeside School from the Sparta School District as the site for the new Police Department building. Sparta Police Department and the City of Sparta began their work with HSR to complete a design for the new site, utilizing input from key components of the Department (CTU, K9, Firearms, Records, Evidence, etc.)



3. Select Strategic Planning Committee – members of the Department were selected to serve on the committee. We began by planning an awards recognition ceremony for officers and families. Several officers were recognized for their contributions to the Department and community throughout 2019. The committee then began reviewing our mission statement and department vision. A new mission statement was created and can be found at the beginning of this report. Goals and priorities of the agency will be evaluated by the committee in 2021.
4. Begin to Review and Update Policies & Procedures – Sparta PD on-boarded with Lexipol, a company renowned for establishing best practice policies for law enforcement nationwide. Lieutenant Johnson began the massive undertaking of rewriting all policies for the department, working with a small committee of department members and following the guidance of Lexipol.

We are also well on our way to accomplishing the goals set forth for 2020/2021. Those goals outlined improvements in our staffing and coverage, continuing the review and update of department policies and procedures, auditing the evidence room and updating evidence room procedures, finalizing and moving in to the new Police Department, and ensuring that department orders are made from USA-owned companies, consisting of USA-made products, whenever possible.

We choose to look back at 2020 as a year full of opportunities for new leaders to emerge, our employees to grow as a team, and our department to focus on the community. We look at the year ahead as another year for us to serve with passion and professionalism while constantly striving for improvement.





# 2020 Officer Training

Even with the COVID-19 Pandemic cancelling many trainings and conferences across the State of Wisconsin, Sparta Police Department Personnel were able to continue to uphold our strong dedication to training. Utilizing many of our knowledgeable in-house instructors, the Department implemented a Department wide In-Service training in December 2020.

## Department In-Service

The Sparta Police Department In-Service consisted of the following:

- ◆ Biennial Vehicle Pursuit Training (State Mandated Training)
- ◆ Standardized Field Sobriety Test Refresher
- ◆ Fair & Impartial Policing
- ◆ TASER Update/Refresher
- ◆ ATV/UTV Regulations Review
- ◆ Less-Lethal Projectile Refresher

## Other Department Trainings

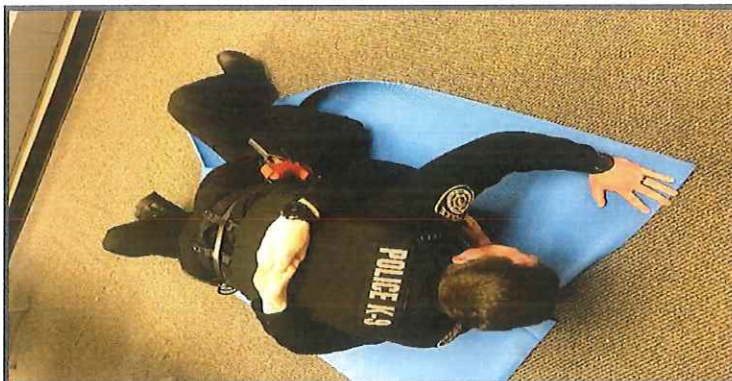
- ◆ Firearms Training and Qualification (State Mandated Training)
- ◆ Responding to Suicidal Subjects
- ◆ Legal Update

The Monroe County Combined Tactical Team (CTU) extended training hours to 12 hours a month, two 6-hour trainings, to stay on top of their tactical skills and better prepare them for deployments throughout the Region.

The Sparta Police Department K9 Unit continues to train a minimum of twice a month, two 8-hour sessions, with other Regional K9 Teams, not including time training at home and on-duty.

## Gracie Survival Tactics

In April 2020, Department members were instructed in Gracie Survival Tactics (GST). GST is Brazilian Jiu Jitsu based and provides officers with alternative methods, outside of basic academy training, in regards to subject control, weapon retention, compliance techniques and officer defense.



Report Compiled By Lt. Corey Johnson

### Individual Officer Trainings

- ♦ Patrol Response to Homicide Investigations/Scene Management (Sgt. Erickson)
- ♦ Handgun and Rifle Instructor Course (Off. Fischer)
- ♦ Cellebrite Advanced Smartphone Analysis (Sgt. Lee)
- ♦ Fair & Impartial Policing Train the Trainer (Off. Ludovice and Chief Nottestad)
- ♦ National Basic School Resource Officer Course (SRO Nelson)
- ♦ DAAT Instructor Course (Off. James)
- ♦ Interdiction Mastermind (Off. Fischer, Off. James, Off. Ludovice)
- ♦ Facility K9 Training (Chief Nottestad, Off. Mrdjenovich, DC Ferguson, Off. Guralski and Off. Mitchell)
- ♦ Basic Field Training Officer Course (Off. Ludovice and Off. Fischer)
- ♦ Wisconsin Public Records Law (Chief Nottestad, DC Ferguson and Lt. Johnson)
- ♦ Sniper Training (Off. Guralski)
- ♦ WI ASP Conference (SRO Nelson, Off. Guralski)
- ♦ Winter Chief's Conference (Chief Nottestad and DC Ferguson)
- ♦ Criminal Justice Instructor Development Course (Off. Fischer, Off. Schroeder and Off. Ludovice)



Report Compiled By Lt. Corey Johnson

# 2020 Officer Awards

- ♦ The **Medal of Valor** was awarded to Officer Kyle Guralski for his actions while presented with an armed individual at the Cotter Pin on November 5, 2019. The actions taken by Officer Guralski protected the lives of several patrons inside the business as well as all officers on scene.
- ♦ The **Exemplary Officer** award was presented to Officer Corey Johnson for his continued dedication to the law enforcement profession and consistent high-quality performance as a professional police officer.
- ♦ The **Award of Excellence** was presented to Officer Zachary Fischer. Officer Fisher was deployed with the Army National Guard in 2019. Upon his return from deployment, he quickly picked back up where he left-off, as an active member of the department's patrol division. He has proven himself to be a dedicated Army National Guard Reservist as well as a respected leader within the department .
- ♦ The **Award of Excellence** was presented to Officer Marc Nelson for his dedication to the Sparta community by educating and promoting active shooter response to area businesses and the Sparta Area School District. His dedication, tactical knowledge, and experience are a great asset to the Sparta Police Department, the Combined Tactical Unit, and the City of Sparta.
- ♦ The **Career Achievement Award** was presented to Evidence Custodian Christine Haas for her years of dedication to the Sparta Police Department. Haas served as a police officer from 1993 until 2001. She then returned to the department in 2015 to serve as the Evidence Custodian and Code Enforcement Officer.



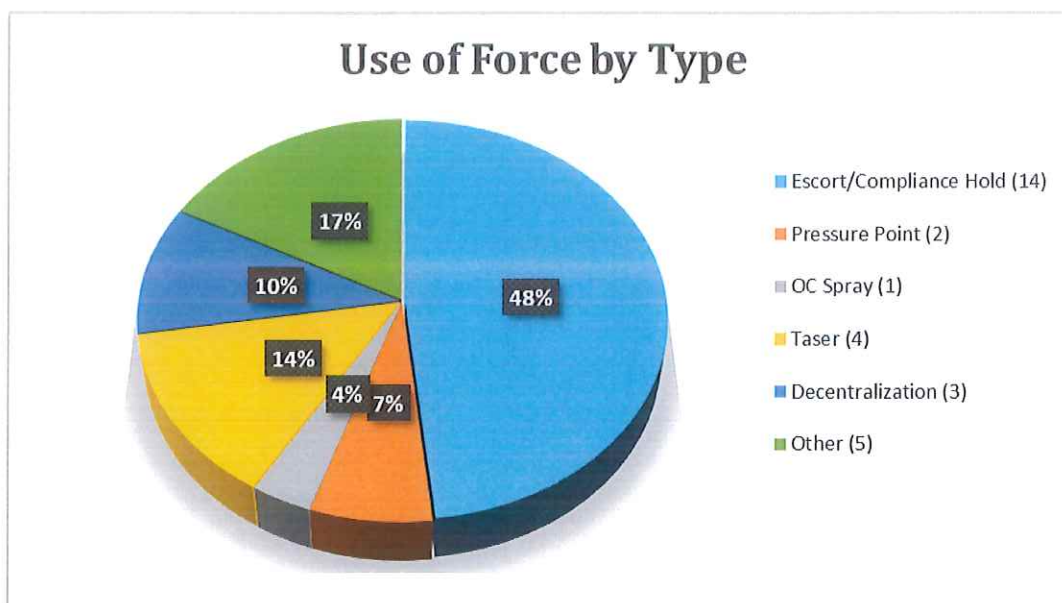


# 2020 Defensive Action Comparison Report

During 2020 the Sparta Police Department responded to over 16,000 calls for service. In the multitude of contacts our officers have with members of the public on a day-to-day basis, and the hundreds of physical arrests that were made during the year, officers only utilized any type of "force" 29 times in 2020. The suspect was actively resisting officers in 22 of those incidents (fleeing, attempting to escape, resisting handcuffing, etc.) and was assaultive toward officers in 6 of those incidents (kicking, striking, spitting, etc.).

You may notice this year's number is higher than in 2019 (18). Some of this increase is explained by a new category of defensive action added to our Defensive Action Report. This category is titled "other" and is used for circumstances not otherwise categorized within the report. This is a way for us to track any type of hands-on action that may not historically have been viewed as a use of force. It is typically used by officers in instances such as assisting EMS by holding a combative subject on an ambulance cot for emergency medical treatment, or assisting in the Emergency Room by holding an arm down for a blood draw when needed by medical staff.

Once officers complete a Defensive Action Report, that report is reviewed by 3 supervisors. Supervisors have the option of forwarding the DAR to a Defensive and Arrest Tactics Instructor for further review. Following that review, recommendations for further investigation, discipline or training are forwarded to the Chief of Police if needed. A similar review would be done as a result of a citizen complaint regarding inappropriate use of force. In 2020 DAAT instructors completed 2 use of force reviews, both at the request of supervisors. The Sparta Police Department received no citizen complaints regarding use of force.

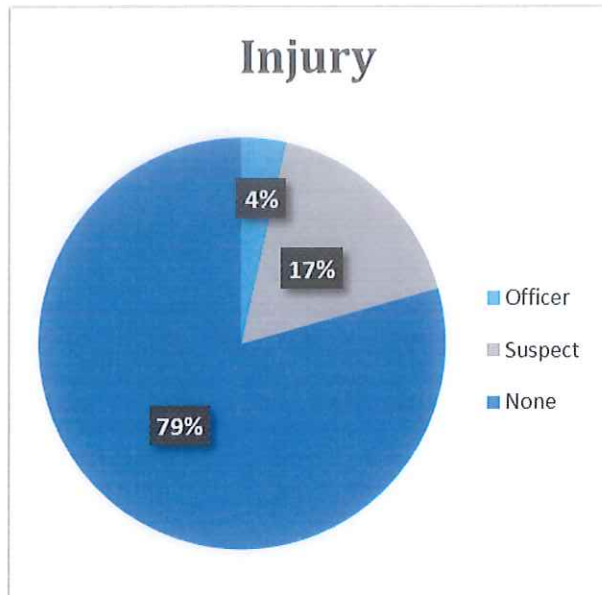


\*More than one type of action may have been used during a single incident. The data includes the highest level of defensive action utilized.

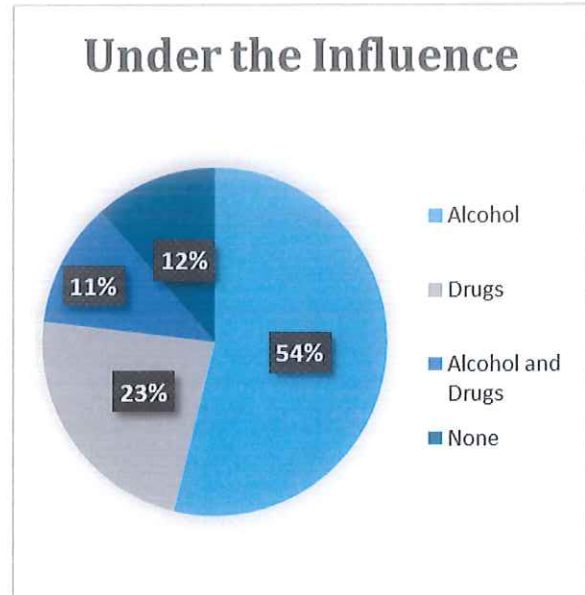


# Defensive Action Statistics

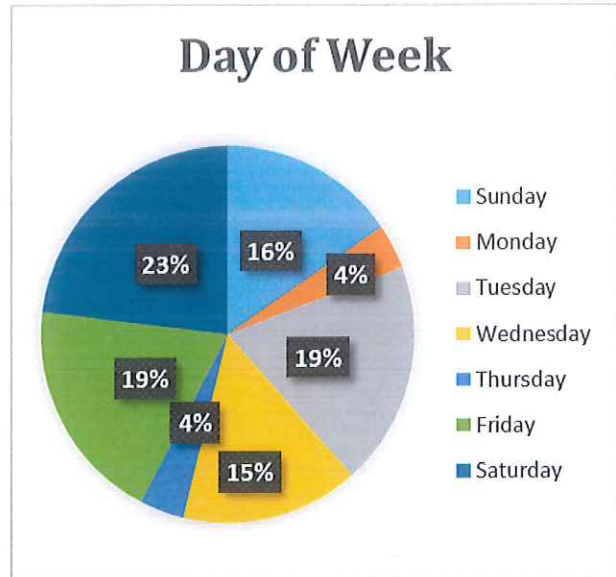
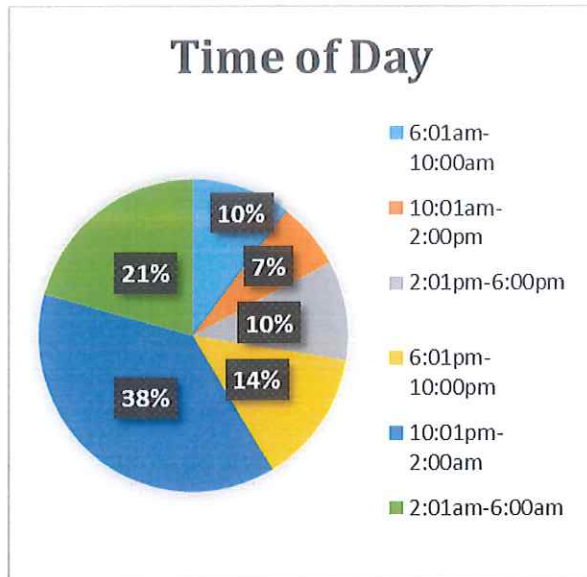
Injury Ratio



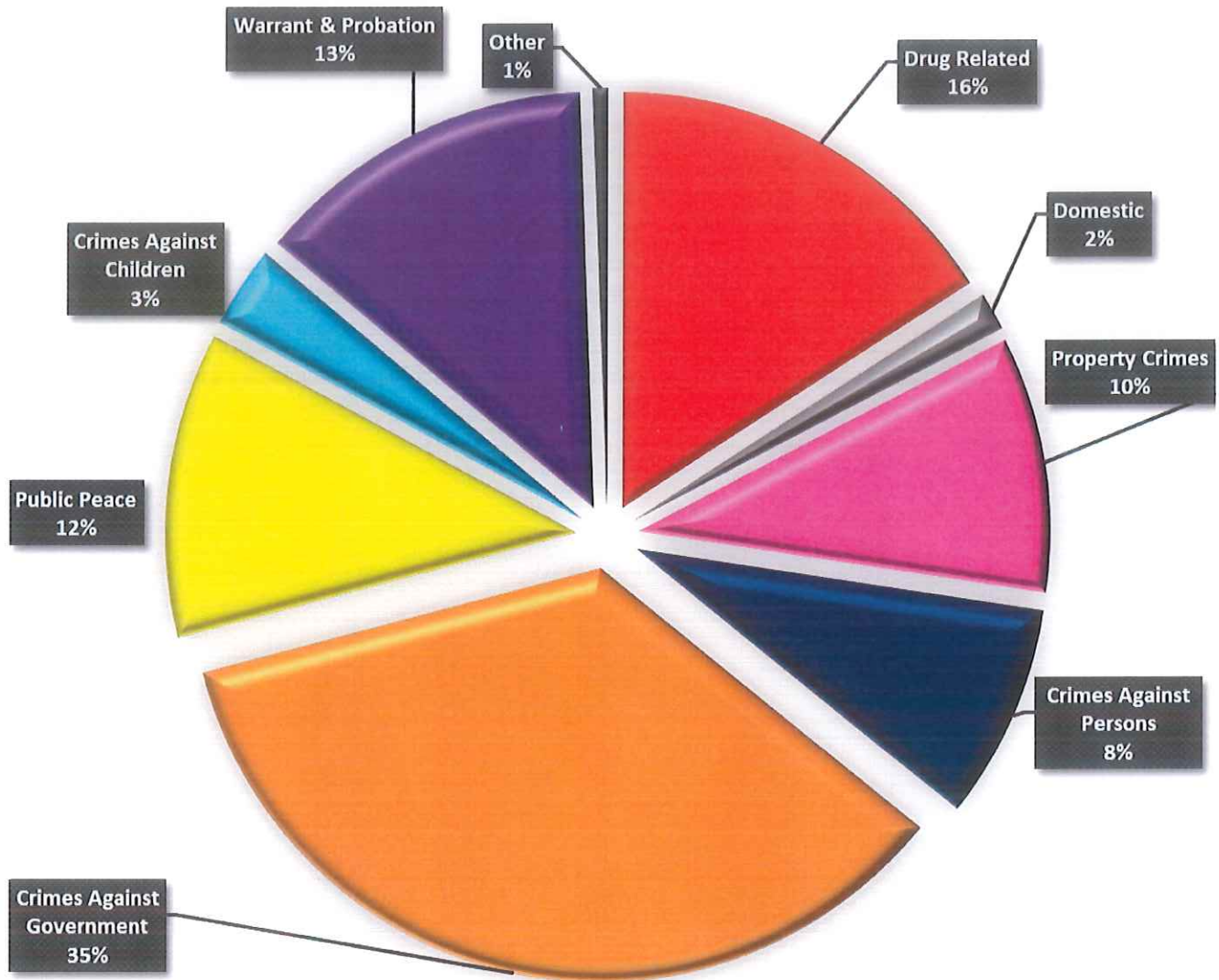
Alcohol and/or Drug Use by Suspect During Incident



2020 Defensive Action by:



# Arrest Percentage By Type of Crime

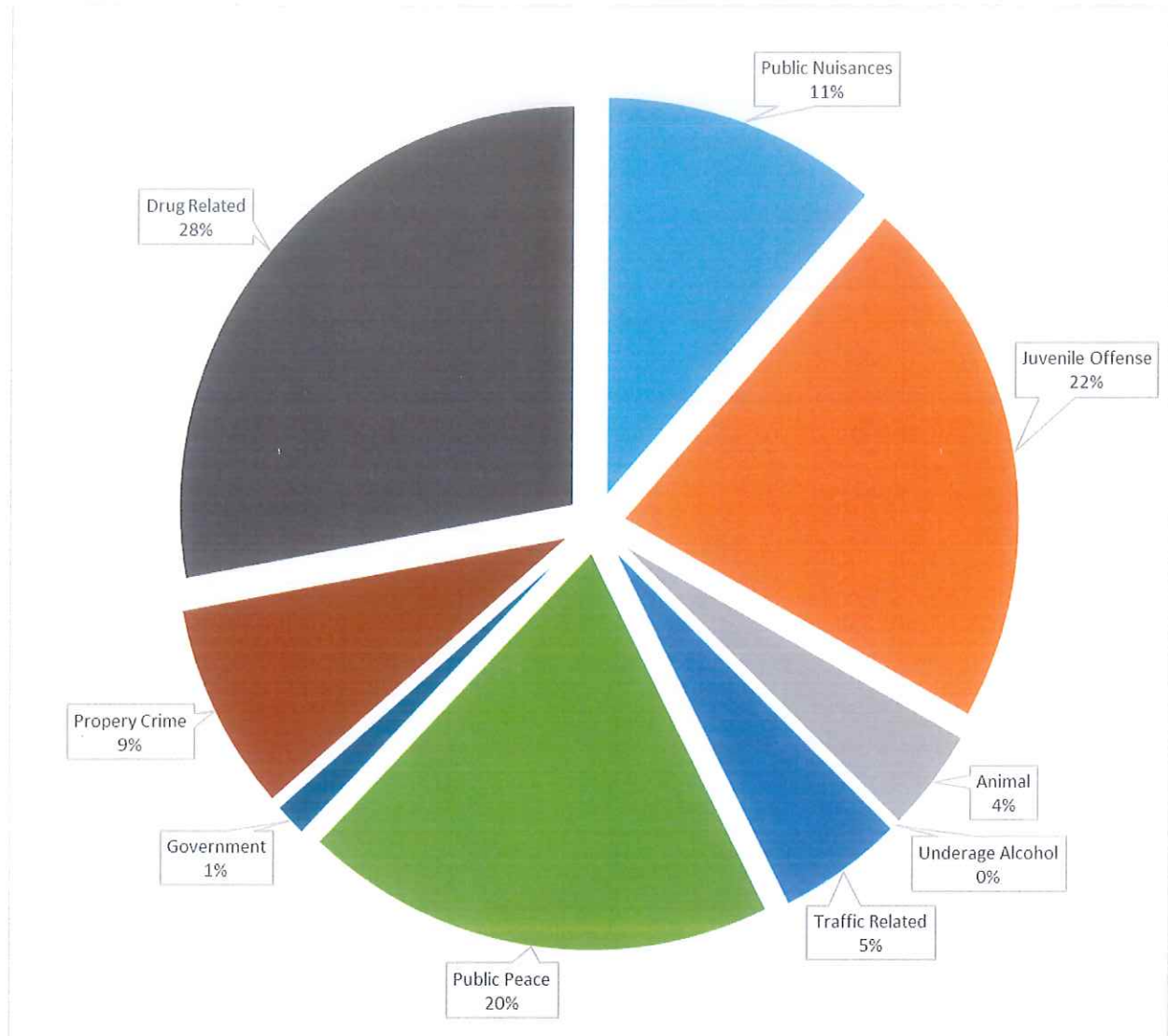


## Compared to 2019:

- Drug related arrests increased by 1%
- Crimes Against the Government arrests increased 6%
- Crimes Against Persons' arrests increased 2%
- Warrant & Probation arrests decreased 7%



# Municipal Offense By Type



## Compared to 2019:

- Drug related municipal citations increased 3%
- Juvenile related municipal citations decreased 8%
- Underage Alcohol municipal citations decreased 6%
- Public Peace related municipal citations increased

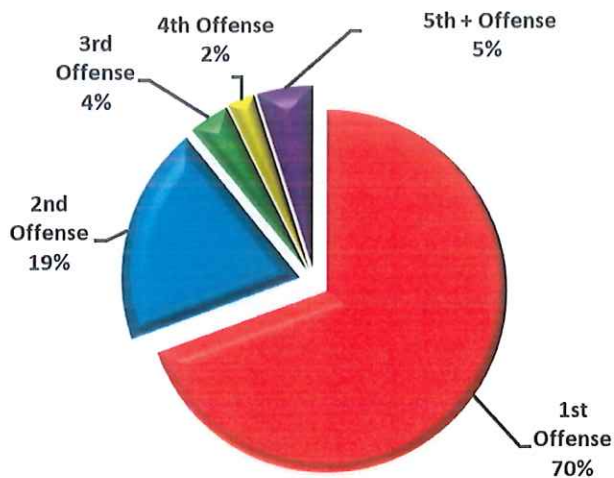




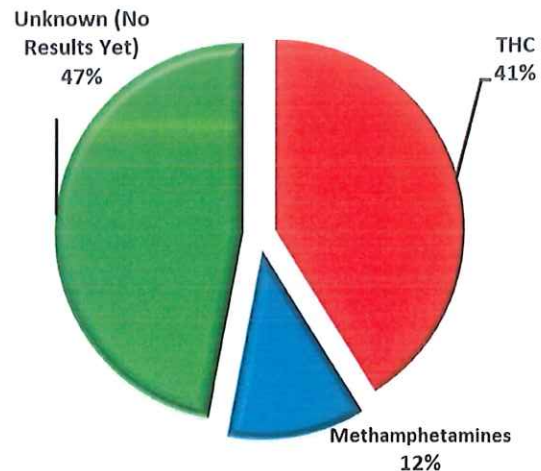
# OWI Statistics BAC/PAC Results

| Month              | Average Blood/Breath Alcohol Concentration | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense | 4th Offense | 5th+ Offense | W/ Controlled Substance |
|--------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| January-5          | .148                                       | 3           | 0           | 1           | 1           | 0            | 0                       |
| February-6         | .210                                       | 3           | 2           | 0           | 0           | 1 (10th)     | 0                       |
| March-6            | .160                                       | 5           | 1           | 0           | 0           | 0            | 2                       |
| April-1            | N/A  | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 1            | 1                       |
| May-9              | .222                                       | 7           | 1           | 0           | 0           | 1            | 3                       |
| June-6             | .181                                       | 5           | 1           | 0           | 0           | 0            | 1                       |
| July-6             | .133                                       | 4           | 1           | 1           | 0           | 0            | 0                       |
| August-13          | .159                                       | 9           | 3           | 0           | 0           | 1 (9th)      | 3                       |
| September-13       | .199                                       | 10          | 2           | 1           | 0           | 0            | 1                       |
| October-9          | .156                                       | 7           | 1           | 0           | 1           | 0            | 2                       |
| November-2         | .194                                       | 2           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0            | 1                       |
| December-6         | .164                                       | 2           | 4           | 0           | 0           | 0            | 3                       |
| <b>Total (82):</b> | <b>.178</b>                                | <b>57</b>   | <b>16</b>   | <b>3</b>    | <b>2</b>    | <b>4</b>     | <b>17</b>               |

### Repeat Violation Offenses

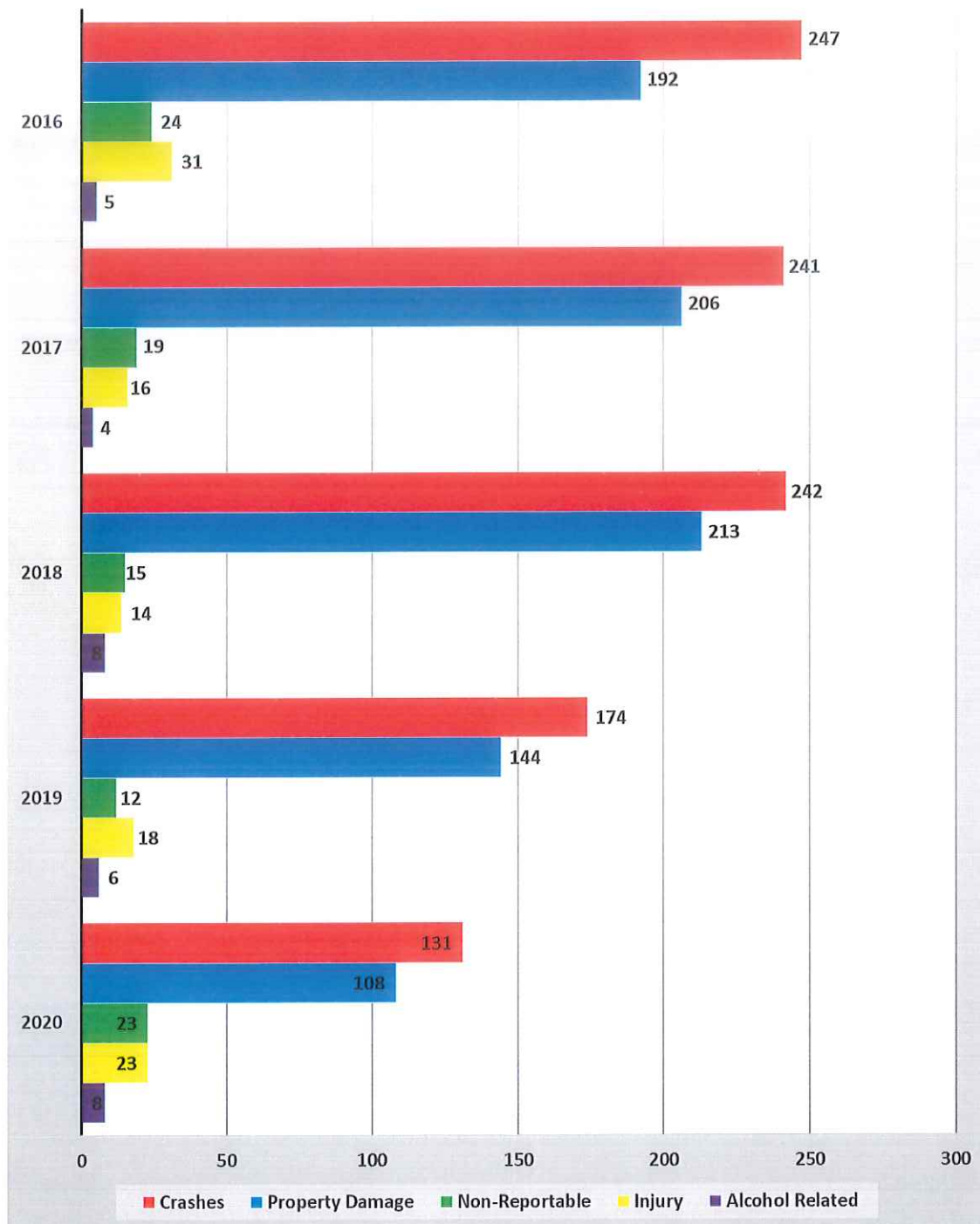


### Controlled Substance OWI's

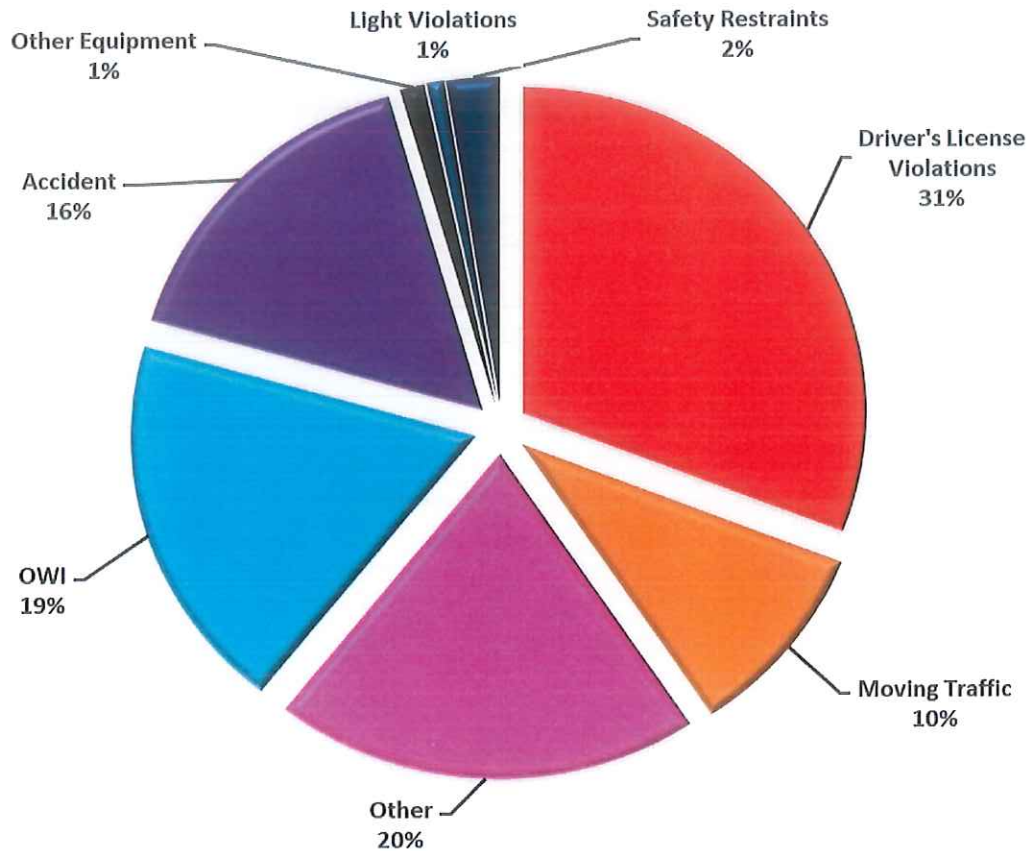




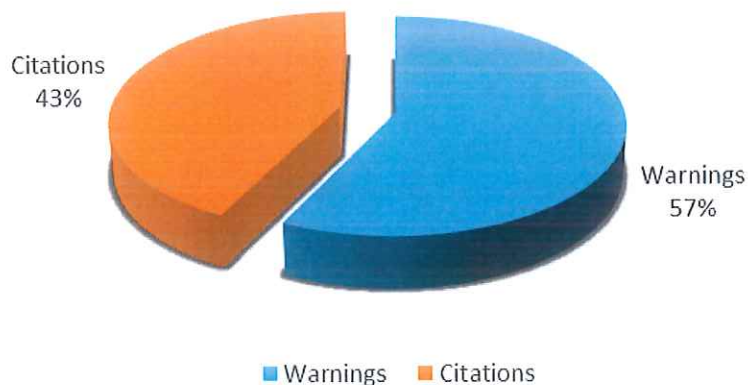
# Five Year Traffic Crash Trend



## Traffic Citation Percentage By Type of Offense



## Traffic Stop Citations vs. Warnings



# Parking Summary by Ordinance

01/01/2020 to 12/31/2020

| Ordinance Description     | Current Year<br>(2020) | Fine Total<br>(2020) | Last Year<br>(2019) |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| All Other Parking         | 1                      | \$15.00              | 10                  |
| Alternate Parking         | 957                    | \$14,355.00          | 1327                |
| Excess of 48 Hour Parking | 25                     | \$375.00             | 55                  |
| Handicapped Parking       | 0                      | \$0.00               | 1                   |
| No 2am to 6 am Parking    | 23                     | \$345.00             | 50                  |
| No Parking Anytime        | 1                      | \$15.00              | 6                   |
| No Truck or Van Parking   | 2                      | \$30.00              | 5                   |
| Overnight Parking         | 6                      | \$90.00              | 33                  |
| Residential Parking       | 0                      | \$0.00               | 0                   |
| Restricted Parking        | 7                      | \$105.00             | 8                   |
| School Zone Parking       | 0                      | \$0.00               | 3                   |
| State Traffic Parking     | 0                      | \$0.00               | 1                   |
| Thirty Minute Parking     | 0                      | \$0.00               | 2                   |
| Two Hour Parking          | 5                      | \$75.00              | 5                   |
|                           |                        |                      |                     |
| <b>Totals:</b>            | 1027                   | \$15,405.00          | 1506                |

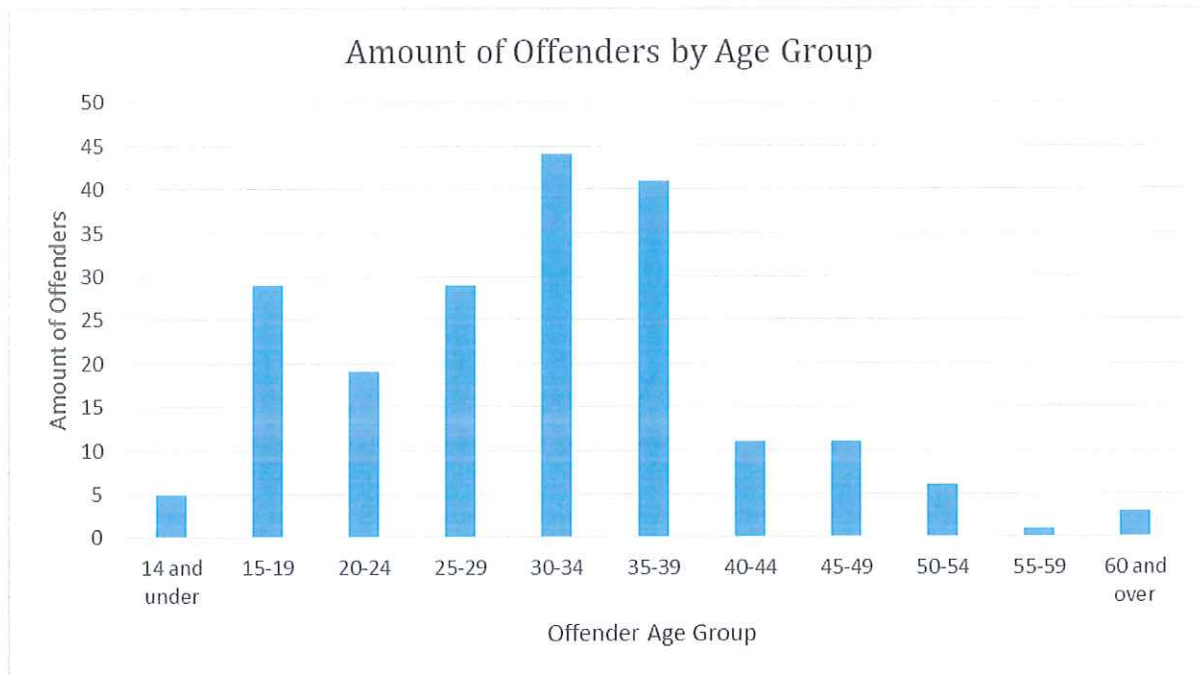


# 2020 Drug Report

*For the purpose of this report, a "drug seizure" is an incident in which an illegal substance and/or drug paraphernalia as defined under WI Statutes Chapters 961 and 450 was seized, located, or recovered and taken into police custody. Data in this report has been compiled from SPD's records management system and evidence tracking program with information provided by the reporting officers. Illegal substances have been primarily tested and identified using presumptive field tests, although some have been confirmed from the Wisconsin Crime Lab.*

## Offender Demographics

In 2020, 176 different offenders were found in possession of illegal drugs. Twenty three subjects were repeat offenders (within the year) and one offender had six different cases. Offenders' age ranged from 12 to 63 with the average age of an offender being 31. The majority of offenders, almost 68%, were males.

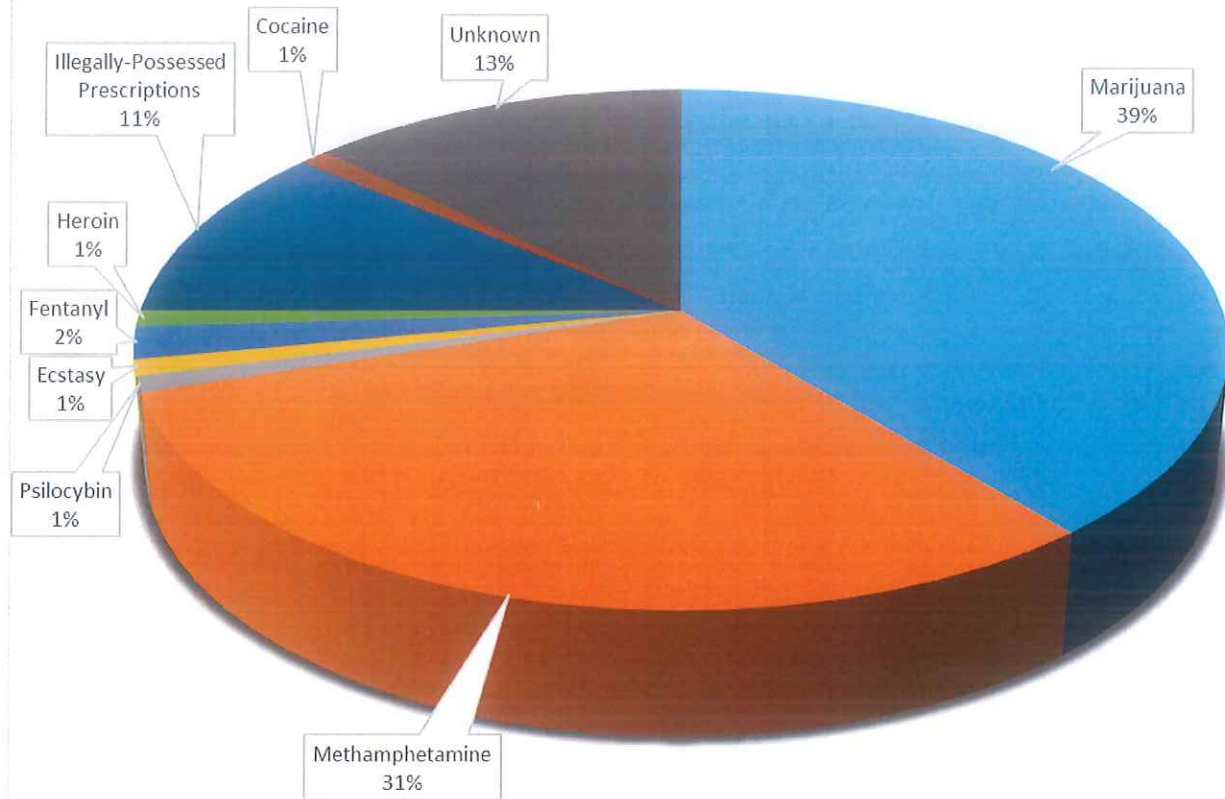


Report Compiled By Sgt. Kyle Erickson



## What Drugs Were Seized

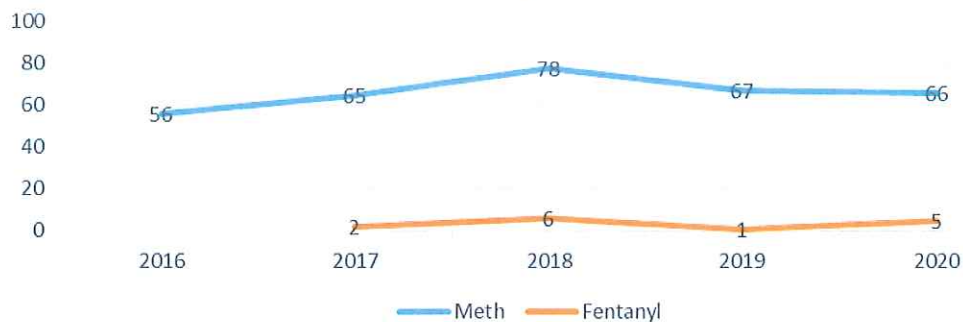
### Frequency of Drug Type



## How Drugs were Processed

In 2020, 60 drug-related municipal citations were issued, and 142 offenders were arrested or referred to the District Attorney on drug charges. Drug citations were issued for possession of marijuana, possession of synthetic marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

### Meth and Fentanyl Seizure Trends



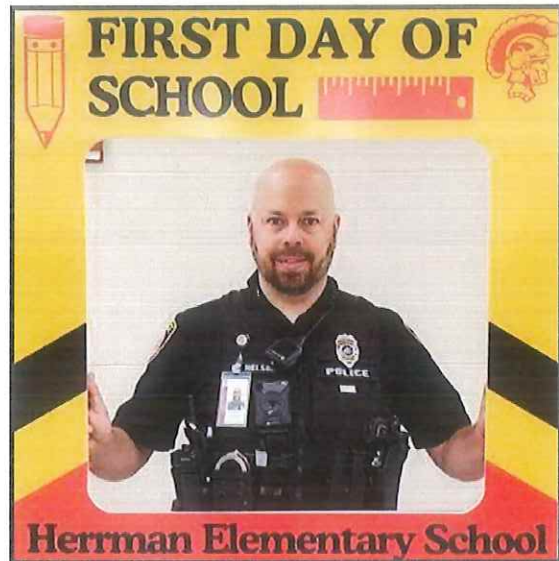
\*Fentanyl data for 2016 was not available as of this report.

# School Resource Officer

Like every other aspect of life, the Sparta Area School District was greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. School Resource Officer Jenna Lee ended the 2019-2020 school year early due to staffing restrictions at the police department and school district switching to virtual learning in March of 2020.

In August of 2020, Officer Marc Nelson was assigned to the position of School Resource Officer for the 2020-2021 school year. Officer Nelson is a 15 year veteran of the Sparta Police Department and had been working with the school district for several years on improving school safety. His prior knowledge of the school district and staff made it a smooth transition for him into the SRO position. Officer Nelson looks forward to continuing to build positive relationships with staff and with students at all grade levels.

In September 2020, the SASD saw the opening of the brand new Herrman Elementary School, which combined all 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grades citywide. The restructuring of school system also included Southside Early Learning Center which now houses Pre-K and Kindergarten and the elimination of the Intermediate school. Meadowview Middle School now houses 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades.



The 2020-2021 school year started in a modified format in September for grades 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> in a "cohort" schedule meaning students were in-person two days per week. Cohort A attended in-person classes on Mondays and Tuesdays while Cohort B attended in-person classes on Thursdays and Fridays. Students attended school virtually on days they were not scheduled to attend in-person classes. Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade continued to attend school in-person five days a week. Then in October, the school district went entirely virtual again due to the rise in positive COVID cases in the area.

As the SRO, Officer Nelson spends time doing home visits for students who are struggling with classes. He also assists in meetings between students and school counselors to help address the needs of the students. He has helped with delivery of school issued Wi-Fi Hotspots to families who struggle with sufficient internet access. Additionally, he has been working on projects to improve school safety throughout the school district.



Report Compiled By Officer Marc Nelson



## SRO Calls for Service

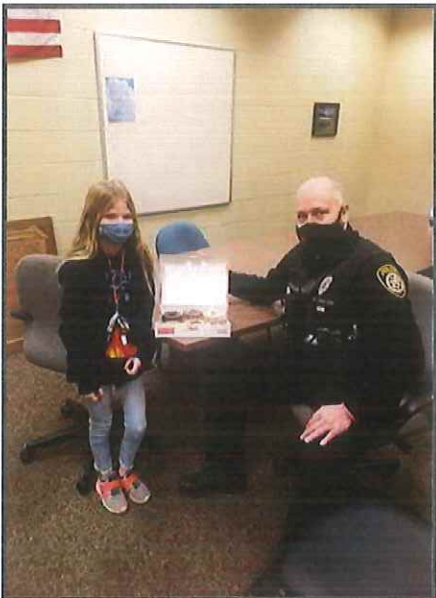
Calls for service in 2020 are drastically different than previous years due to COVID and virtual learning. There were 147 calls for service in 2020 compared to 626 calls for service in 2019.

Initially when school went virtual, we were informed that the City's truancy ordinance would not apply. In December of 2020, the truancy ordinance was updated to include all types of virtual learning, so we are now able to enforce truancy violations as we did previously.

In looking at attendance information from Sparta High School during 1<sup>st</sup> semester of 2019-2020 vs 2020-2021, there were 22 students with five or more unexcused absences in 2019. There were 215 students with five or more unexcused absences in 2020. The lack of attending school in person illustrates the importance of the home visits that Officer Nelson has been doing.

Attending sporting events has always been a highlight of the SRO position. For most of 2020, the school district either did not allow spectators or allowed a very limited amount of spectators. Unfortunately, there was no need for the presence of the SRO at those events during 2020.

In retrospect, we have learned a lot during the year of COVID and we look forward to 2021 returning to normal.



Report Compiled By Officer Marc Nelson



# K-9 Unit

2020 was a big year for the Sparta Police Department K-9 Unit! First and foremost, the department said goodbye to K-9 Officer Larz as he retired in March. Officer James and K-9 Larz joined the Sparta Police Department as a team in October 2015. Officer James and K-9 Larz provided a top example of how a K-9 team should perform and K-9 Larz' contributions to the department and the community will be missed.

Although difficult to watch K9 Larz leave the department, Officer James was paired with his new partner, K-9 Nash, in May 2020, and they are quickly learning together as a new team and making a positive impact in the community.

The Sparta Police Department was fortunate enough to not only add one new face to the K-9 Unit, but TWO! The department welcomed K-9 Xanthos to the department in June 2020.

## New Additions

### K-9 Xanthos



K9 Xanthos is a 3-year-old Yellow Labrador Retriever purchased from Journey Together Service Dog Inc. in Oshkosh, WI. K9 Xanthos is titled as a "Facility Dog" and his primary duties include: Supporting victims of crime, school related activities, and mental health support for officers and other members of the department. K9 Xanthos is also able to clearly communicate to members of the department when it is time to empty trashcans.



## K-9 Nash

K9 Nash is a 2-year old Belgian Malinois who was purchased from Working K9 in Canada. Officer James spent a week in Canada working with K9 Nash and lead trainer Tony Pallotta. K9 Nash is a dual-purpose K9 trained in: narcotics detection, officer protection, criminal apprehension, tracking, articles and building searches.



## Community

Even with the COVID-19 Pandemic putting a damper on our community involvement, the K9 Unit was still able to engage in some activities throughout the year to include: Theisen's Touch-A-Truck Event, K9 Demonstration for the Sparta Lion's Club, Sparta Dental Kid's Day, and our annual K9 Unit Golf Outing.

**Thank You K9 Larz!**





# 2020 Day Shift Report

The Sparta Police Department Dayshift consists of two different sides, A side and B side. The sides work opposite days from each other, 12 hours shifts, from 6am to 6 pm.

Officers working dayshift in 2020 included: Officer Ethan Schroeder, Officer Brian James, Officer Jager Mitchell, Officer Kyle Seubert, Sgt. Joel Ames, and Sgt. Jason Pipkin.

Activity was down somewhat in 2020, mostly due to Covid 19 activity restrictions. Here are just a few of the cases Sparta PD dayshift officers handled in 2020:

## **Officer gains compliance through Taser display**

On January 27<sup>th</sup> Dayshift officers responded to an apartment on St. Anne Street where an intoxicated male was reportedly getting violent with a resident there. When officers arrived they found the suspect still inside the residence, physically preventing the victim from letting officers in. Officers manage to engage the suspect through an open window, and with the threat of taser deployment gained compliance and entry to the apartment. The suspect was taken into custody.

## **Careless Smoking causes fire**

On April 23, 2020 Officers responded to a reported house fire on Prairie Ave. Upon arrival, officers used a fire extinguisher to knock down the flames on the front porch area of the house. Officers then entered the back door of the residence. The occupants were unaware their house was on fire. All occupants were safely removed and no injuries were reported. A male occupant told officers he had just smoked a cigarette and placed the still burning cigarette in a container that caught fire. The male was cited for careless smoking.

## **Barricaded Suspect threatens to shoot officers and threatens to send his pit bull**

On May 6 an officer responded to a welfare check at a residence on the 600 block of Pearl Street. A male subject at the residence was found to have warrants for his arrest and he barricaded himself in the house. When confronted, the suspect refused to come downstairs, threatened to shoot the officers, and threatened to release his pit bull to attack police. Eventually, the suspect fled through a second story window and attempted to run away. He only made it across the street before officers apprehended him.

## **Stolen Ranger located in Onalaska**

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, a Ford Ranger pickup was reported stolen from Poole Street. The following day the vehicle was recovered in Onalaska. Multiple suspects are facing charges in Monroe and LaCrosse Counties.

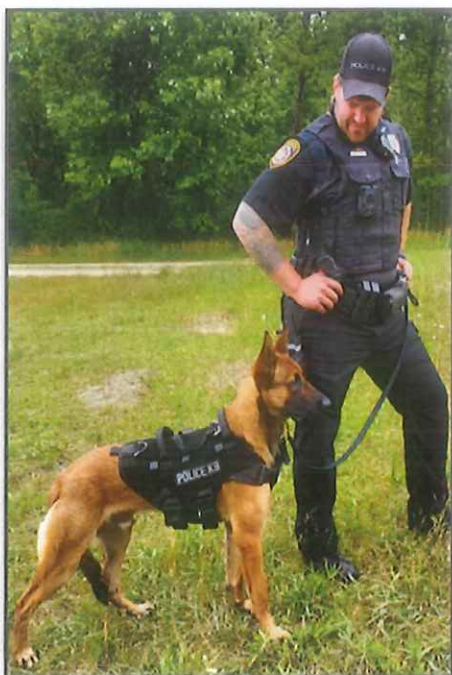
## **Stolen tools lead to high speed pursuit**

On November 25<sup>th</sup> Officers responded to a reported theft incident at the All American Store on Wisconsin Street. Suspects stole multiple Milwaukee Brand tools valued at more than \$1200.00. Another officer spotted the suspect vehicle and a pursuit ensued. The suspects were captured near Cashton and taken into custody for multiple felonies.

Report Compiled By Sgt. Jason Pipkin

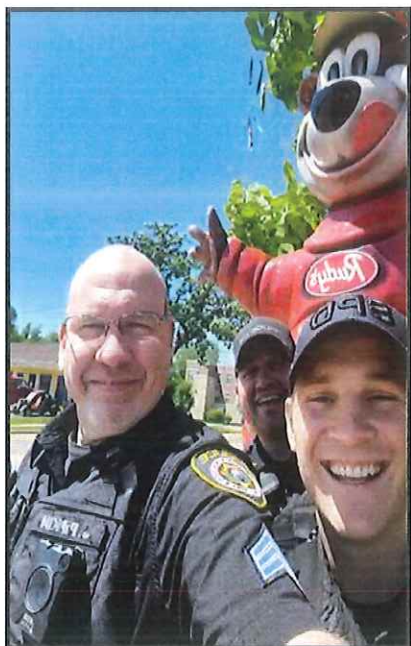


Officer James and K-9 Nash at training.



Officer Schroder tossed the football around with a few kids on Summer Lane.

B-Side Dayshift officers take a selfie with the Rudy's Bear!



Sparta PD's first facility service dog, Xanthos, was there for us during the challenging year.



Report Compiled By Sgt. Jason Pipkin

# 2020 Night Shift Report

The Covid-19 pandemic struck during the 2020 year, changing everyone's "normal." Officers took numerous safety precautions and preventative measures to protect themselves and others, while continuing to serve the public and respond to calls for service. Everyone in the community made adjustments to the new normal. The Sparta Police Department equipped officers with masks, glasses, and a lot of hand sanitizer.



The 2020 night shift is separated into two shifts; The A side and the B side. A side comprised of Sergeant Erickson, Officer ohnson, and Officer Ludovice. Officer Mitchell worked a swing shift, which overlapped both day and night shift. B side comprised of Sergeant Nelson and Officer Fischer, with Officer Guralski working the swing shift.

Several shift changes were made over the summer. A side consisted of Sergeant Erickson, Officer Mitchell, and Officer Mrdjenovich. Officer Ludovice worked the swing shift for A side. B side consisted of Sergeant Lee, Officer Fischer, and Officer James. Officer Guralski worked the swing shift for B side.

The Sparta Police Department night shift officers responded to numerous calls throughout the year. Some of the most notable calls include:

## **Female Hiding in Snow Arrested**

On February 19, 2020, at approximately 6:36 PM, an officer observed a female, who had an arrest warrant, leaving an apartment complex. The officer made contact with the female as she attempted to hide in the snow in near sub-zero temperature. The female was taken into custody, as she attempted to hide a bag of methamphetamine nearby. A search warrant was executed at the apartment and additional drug-related items were seized. The 31-year-old Sparta woman was arrested for her warrant and multiple drug-related offenses.

## **Damaged Car Leads to OWI – 10<sup>th</sup> Offense**

On February 22, 2020, at approximately 1:06 AM, an officer observed a vehicle driving on Wisconsin St. with significant front end damage. At the same time, a Monroe County Deputy located several road signs that had been damaged at the roundabout on STH 16/STH 71. The officer made contact with the male driver and noticed his speech was slurred. Standardized Field Sobriety Tests were conducted and the male was arrested for Operating While Intoxicated – 10<sup>th</sup> Offense, Operating While Revoked, and a Probation Violation. It was later determined that the male had a blood alcohol level of 0.24.





### **Woman Sets Own Vehicle on Fire**

On April 18, 2020, at approximately 2:55 AM, officers responded to a 911 call near the railroad crossing on S. Water St. When officers arrived, they found a Sparta woman had intentionally parked her vehicle on the tracks and had just lit a clothing item on fire, which lead to the vehicle's open gas tank. The woman was detained and the fire was quickly extinguished. The woman was arrested for several felony offenses.



### **Attempted Homicide**

On May 18, 2020, at approximately 9:10 PM, officers were called to an address on Kent St. in which a woman reported her ex was pounding on her door. Officers made contact with the male suspect, who was highly intoxicated and walking toward his vehicle. The male, from Taylor, WI, admitted to driving to the victim's residence, as he planned on shooting her. A loaded firearm was located in the suspect's vehicle. The male was arrested on multiple felonies, and was charged with attempted homicide.

### **Homicide Investigation**

On June 11, 2020, at approximately 1:13 AM, officers responded to the intersection of Court St. and Hill St. for a report of a shooting. When officers arrived, they located the victim in a nearby residence. The victim was transported to the hospital but was pronounced dead later that morning. Multiple agencies assisted the Sparta Police Department with the investigation, including the Tomah Police Department, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Wisconsin State Patrol, West Allis Police Department, Milwaukee Police Department, and Wisconsin Department of Justice. The extensive investigation led to the arrest and charging of three suspects.





### **Sex Offense**

On July 24, 2020, at approximately 6:43 PM, an officer received information about a sexual assault of a child by a step-father. Further investigation led to the arrest of the male for 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Child Sex Assault, Cause Child 13-18 to View Sexual Activity, and Possession of Child Pornography.

### **Traffic Stop Leads to Arrest**

On July 29, 2020, at approximately 4:00 AM, an officer stopped a vehicle for an equipment violation and a moving infraction. During the officer's contact with the three occupants of the vehicle, the officer noticed the occupants displaying suspicious behavior. A K-9 sniff was conducted on the vehicle and the K-9 alerted to the presence of narcotics. Officers searched the vehicle and located multiple drug-related items, including methamphetamine and a firearm. All three occupants were arrested.

### **Fleeing the Pharmacy**

On August 20, 2020, at approximately 8:30 PM, a local pharmacy reported a male suspect was attempting to pick up a prescription using a fraudulent order. When an officer attempted to contact the suspect in the drive-through, the suspect attempted to flee in a vehicle. A short motor-vehicle pursuit ensued and the suspect crashed in a yard on the City's west side. The suspect, from Chicago, was taken into custody at the scene of the crash. The suspect possessed a fake identification and other fraudulent prescription orders. He was arrested for several offenses and cited for multiple traffic violations.

### **Snooping Felon with Firearm**

On September 24, 2020, at approximately 11:19 PM, an officer was conducting foot patrol in the downtown area when he observed a male peeking in a resident's garage windows. The officer made contact with the male, who said he was not going to break into the residence. A knife and a firearm were located on the male. The male was arrested for numerous offenses.

### **Disoriented Fellow**

On October 12, 2020, at approximately 3:30 AM, officers were called to a residence on Court St. The residents reported they were woken up by a male subject who forced entry into their house and sat down in their living room. Officers arrested the 22-year-old intoxicated male for damage to property and criminal trespassing. The suspect then intentionally struck his head while in the squad car, and needed medical attention prior to being taken to jail.

### **Open Door Leads to Even More**

On October 17, 2020, at approximately 10:30 PM, officers located an open door to a business in the downtown area. Officers searched the building and located a male hiding under a stairwell. Methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia were located in the male's possessions. The male



was arrested for Unlawful Entry into a building, Criminal Damage to Property, Bail Jumping, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, and Possession of Methamphetamine.

### **Grab 'N Go**

On October 18, 2020, at approximately 1:48 AM, officers responded to the Sparta Cenex Gas Station for a hold-up alarm. Contact was made with the employee, who stated that a male entered the store while he was outside taking a break. The employee said the male opened the cash register and took an undisclosed amount of cash. As the employee was walking back into the store, the male took off. The suspect remains at large.

### **Suspicious Activity Leads to Arrest**

On November 14, 2020, at approximately 11:15 PM, officers responded to a complaint of suspicious activity on Water St. An officer made contact with two subjects sitting in a vehicle. As the officer was talking to the male in the driver's seat, the officer noticed several hypodermic needles in plain view. The male refused to follow the officer's directions and was escorted out of the vehicle. At this time a knife fell to the ground. The subject was placed under arrest and the vehicle was searched. Several drugs and paraphernalia were located in the vehicle. The subject was arrested for Carrying a Concealed Knife, Possession of Methamphetamine, Possession of Marijuana, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Resisting an Officer, Disorderly Conduct, and Felony Bail Jumping.

### **Making a Run for It**

On December 15, 2020, at approximately 3:50 AM, an intoxicated male subject flagged down an officer in the downtown area. The subject was uncooperative when asked what he needed, and ran on foot from the area. A short time later, officers responded to a report that the same subject, a 22-year-old from Sparta, stole a vehicle from the downtown area. As officers attempted to locate the vehicle, the suspect crashed the vehicle head-on into a curb at a high rate of speed, on the north end of town. The suspect then attempted to leave the scene before he was located. The suspect was ultimately arrested for Operating While Intoxicated, Operating a Motor Vehicle without Owner's Consent, and Disorderly Conduct. He was also cited for multiple traffic offenses. A chemical test revealed the suspect had a blood-alcohol level of 0.22.



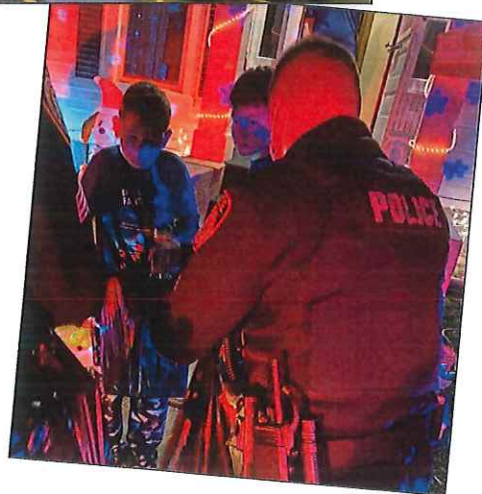
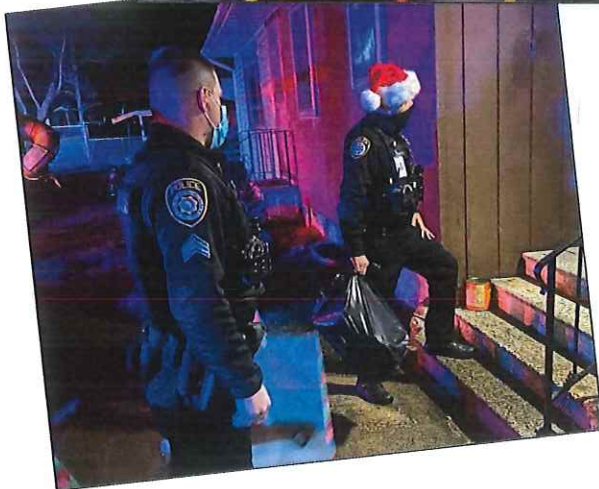


## Shop with a Hero

The COVID-19 pandemic gave us the opportunity to reimagine the Shop with a Hero Event. In years past, we invited the children and their parents to Walmart where they were paired up with a local police, fire, EMS, or military hero to shop for their gifts.

Due to social distancing recommendations, we made a few changes to the 2020 event. Families were nominated to take part in the event by counselors at Herrman Elementary. We had eight families with a total of 29 children. The families were divided up among the Sparta Police Department, Sparta Area Ambulance Service, and Erv's Sparta Area Fire Protection District. Members of these three agencies were given wish lists for the children and did the shopping and wrapping of the gifts. On December 21, 2020, the agencies got together and delivered the gifts to the children at their homes. The children were also able to take a look at the police cars, ambulances, and fire trucks.

This event is funded entirely by donations and monies raised by the Chicken Q that was held in October. The Chicken Q raised over \$4,000 for Shop with a Hero.







## **Sparta Police Department**

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