



# RICHMOND HEIGHTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



*Striving to be the gold standard of policing*

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## A Message from the Chief

The Richmond Heights Division of Police is a small department doing really big things. Our vision is to be the Gold Standard of American Policing and our efforts in 2021 brought us much closer to achieving that goal. We conducted a citizen survey and 78% of respondents rated our department as Excellent while 16.4% rated us as Good. When combined, 94.4% rated us as either Excellent or Good. We also reached out to Lyndhurst Municipal Judge Dominic Coletta and his staff for feedback on our operations and interactions with them. The court is a critical partner in our law enforcement function and they rated us excellent in numerous areas to include professionalism. Our police prosecutor Mike Cicero handles our criminal cases and also provided solid satisfaction with our work.

Our department saw some personnel changes to include the retirement of 2 detectives, Chuck Duffy and Steven Molle, as well as one officer who made a career change to become a full time firefighter. We added three new full time police officers and 2 new part time officers. We also added a community policing K-9 named Angel. This white Shepard has made and continues to make a huge positive impact in our community.

Overall our personnel worked hard despite a world wide pandemic. Drunk driving arrests increased 50% from the prior year. On April 16, a sergeant saved the life of a baby that wasn't breathing and on July 24, three of our officers helped save the life of a gun shot victim. On December 31, three of our officers pursued a stolen vehicle connected to the murder of Cleveland Police Officer Shane Bartek and then arrested the driver. That arrest led to the apprehension of the person who murdered the officer. Sgt. Darren Porter performed exceptionally well leading our detective bureau despite being significantly short staffed at times. His peers recognized those efforts and voted him Officer of the Year for 2021.

Solving and preventing crime is a major component of our mission. Our agency leased two (2) Flock License plate readers and our City Council passed recommended legislation for mandatory video surveillance systems in our apartments. We also purchase a BOLA wrap device which is used to help safely control violent or resisting persons.

The health and safety of our police personnel was a primary focus in 2021. Officer Tim Casto coordinated a regional Spouse/partners virtual police academy and we had various speakers provide officer wellness roll call training for such topics as Officer rejuvenation, meditation, and how to properly stretch. Locally and nationally, police departments have had to face some real challenges in 2021. Our agency took a leadership role by hosting a "Challenging times require Bold Strategies" think tank program which addressed different topics of current importance to include an open discussion period. 21 participants from multiple agencies and 5 presenters were in attendance and their collective police experience totaled 697 years.

Our police department has tried to weave and integrate community policing principles within the entire fabric of our organization. We are very focused on developing a deeper symbiotic relationship with those we serve. Our officers deliver empathy on a regular basis. The following are two examples of the culture of this agency. On November 4, two of our officers encountered a homeless female and the following was written from the report: "Officers provided Tanzie with a warm breakfast from McDonalds and some cash for the bus. Tanzie was counseled on how to reach out for assistance, steps to minimize her vulnerability on the streets, and signs to look out for to prevent human trafficking and further becoming a victim of her circumstance. Tanzie thanked officers for their assistance and was dropped off at the bus stop at E260th and Euclid." Another time, an officer gave a news photographer a pair of dry, fresh sock after his become soaked from a water main break on Highland Road. We also started a new notification service for our residents who have family members with some type of cognitive disorder such as dementia or autism.

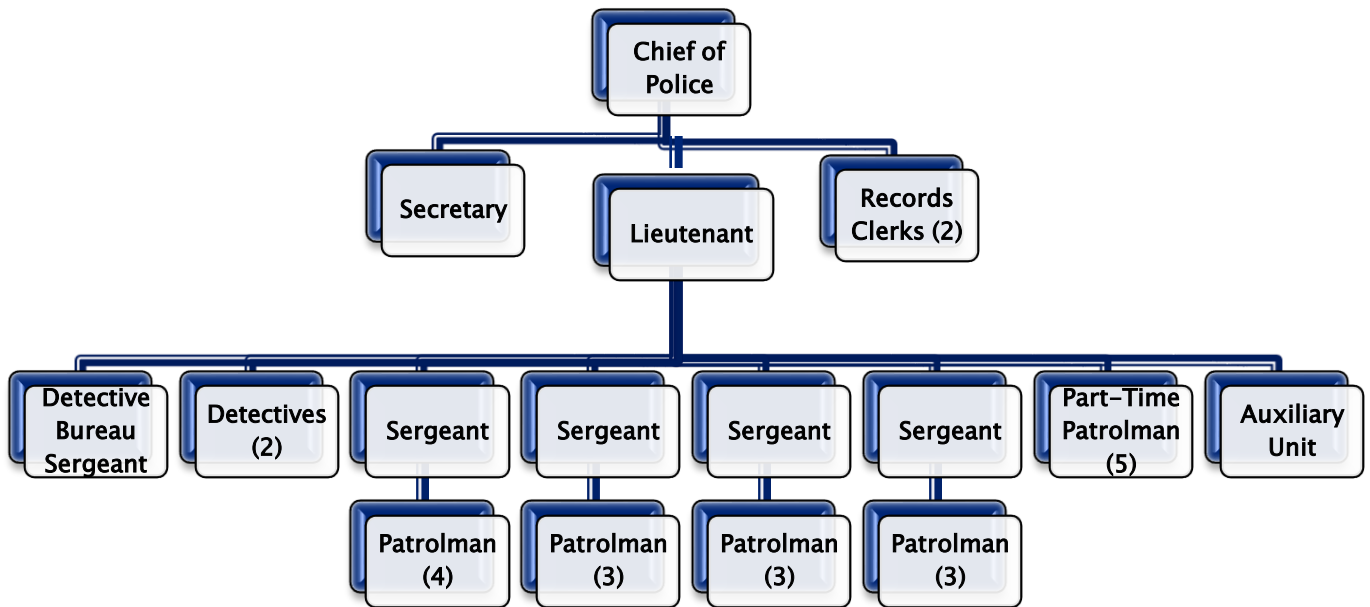
Our youth outreach efforts continue to make our agency one to be emulated when it comes to making friends with young people. The Ohio Attorney Dave Yost featured our department's youth outreach efforts in his "On the Job Criminal Justice Update" newsletter for the Winter 2021 edition. And we hope our unique and innovative Cop Scouts program can become a national model for how police officers can build bridges of trust and long-term relationships. In 2021, some of our officers and Angel visited our high school and conducted a Town Hall type meeting. This open dialogue allowed members of their Student Council to ask any questions they had regarding police officers. It was a wonderful experience that we plan to continue in 2022. To help promote youth outreach, we met with Caryn Candisky who is the northeast Ohio District Director for Senator Rob Portman to talk about our work in this vital area of community policing.

In the Fall, the Governor of Ohio Mike DeWine visited us and took a photograph by our "Blessed are the Peacemakers" rock at the entrance to our station. It was a special moment for us to have a sitting Governor of Ohio visit our agency.

In closing, I want to applaud the efforts of our personnel who work hard to try and make our Richmond Heights community a safe place to live and thrive. We will continue to strive to become The Gold Standard of American Policing and may very well achieve that visionary objective in 2022.

**Chief Thomas Wetzel**

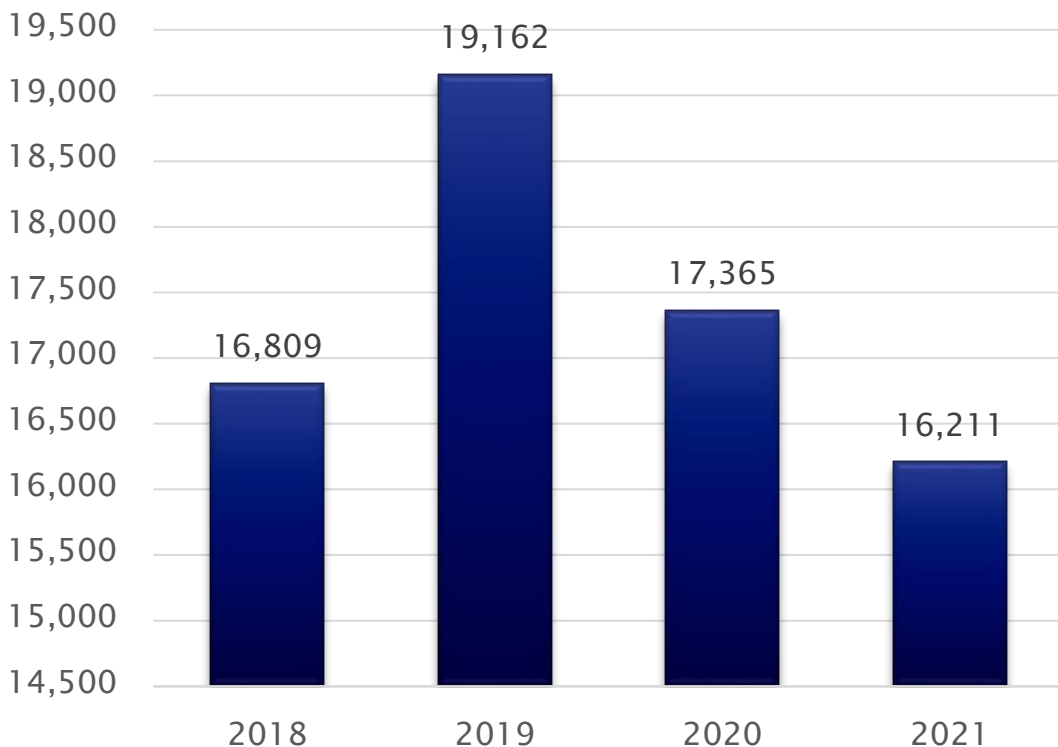
# Organizational Chart





# Calls for Service

There were 16,211 calls for service in 2021 as compared to 17,365 in 2020. Each time dispatch receives a call for an officer to respond to an incident a call for service is generated.

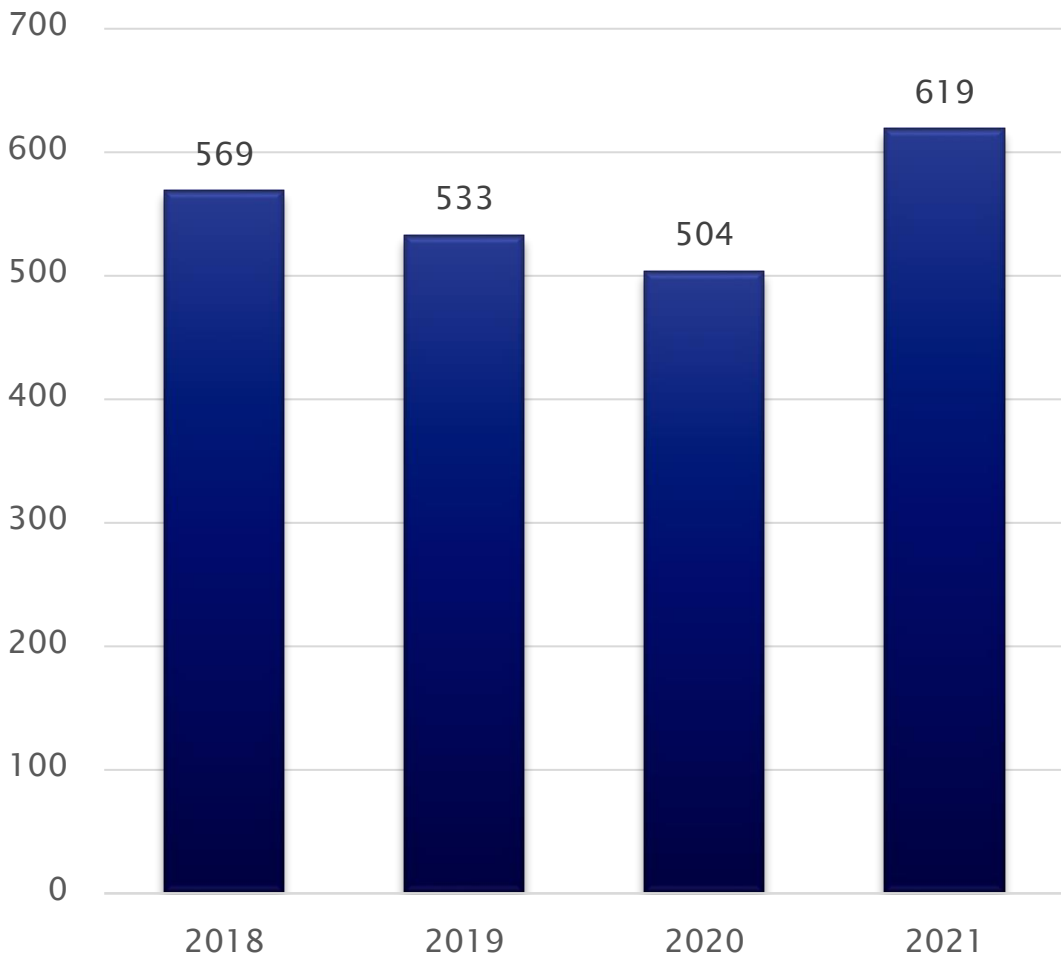


# Overall Crime

<u>Crimes</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Homicide	3	2	1	2
Rape	4	3	3	1
Robbery	16	11	5	4
Assault (Aggravated)	9	6	10	7
Burglary	46	34	16	17
Attempted Burglary	1	5	2	2
Larceny	134	135	124	113
Auto Theft	25	35	30	32
Assault	30	27	31	32
Arson	2	3	2	1
Forgery	1	3	3	3
Fraud	68	92	61	103
Embezzlement	0	0	0	0
Receiving Stolen Property	7	5	10	6
Vandalism / Criminal Damage	58	38	63	81
Illegal Use of Weapons	9	17	24	35
Prostitution	0	0	0	0
Other Sex Offenses	11	11	7	7
Drugs	30	45	45	87
Gambling	0	0	0	0
Operating a Vehicle Under the Influence	35	35	26	39
State Liquor Law Violation	21	4	20	26
Public Intoxication	12	5	2	3
Disorderly Conduct	38	17	19	14
Total	569	533	504	619



# Overall Crime

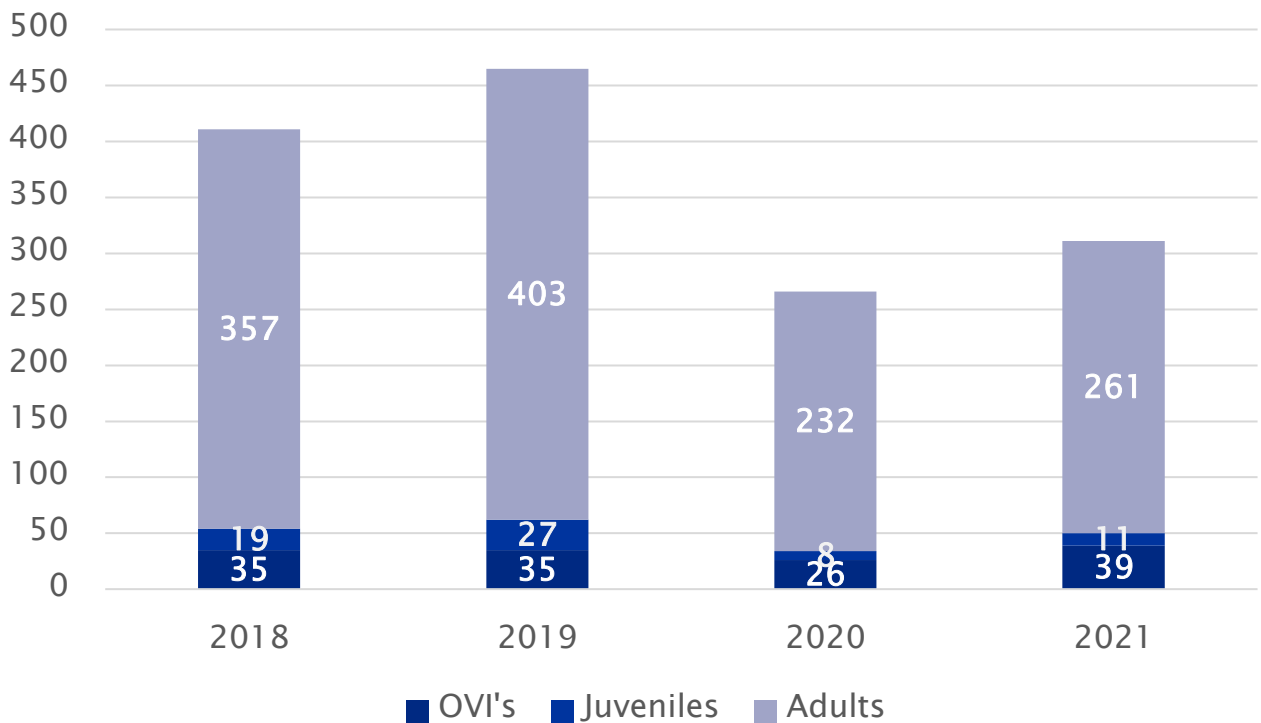


# Arrests

Adult Arrests: Total number of adult arrests in 2021 was 261 compared to 232 in 2020.

Juvenile Arrests: Total number juvenile arrests in 2021 was 11 compared to 8 in 2020.

OVI Arrests: Total number of OVI arrests in 2021 was 39 compared to 26 in 2020.



## Jail Statistics

➤ Daily Average number of Inmates = 0.51

➤ Average Length of Confinement = 1.08

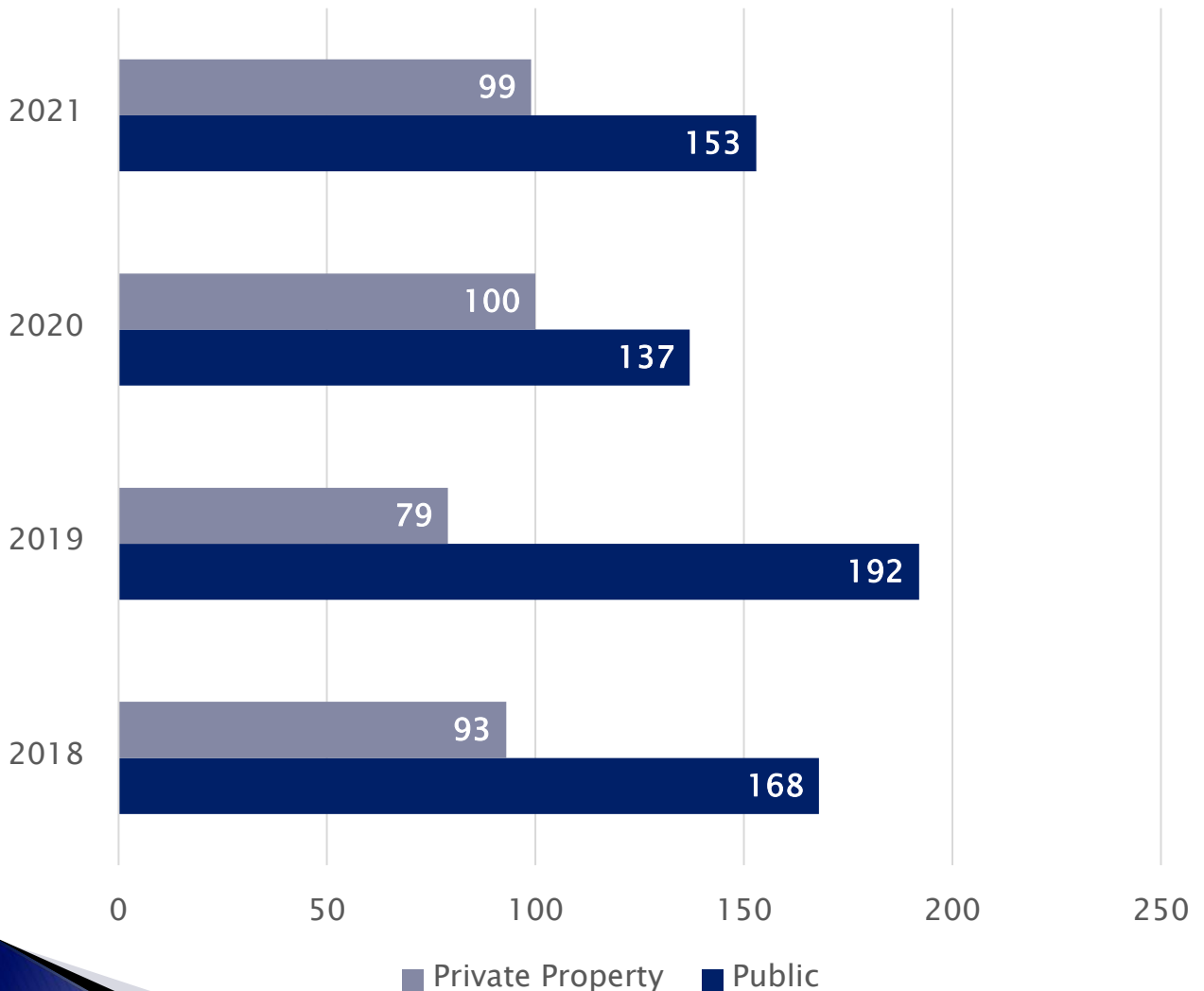
➤ Inmate Characteristics

- Felony = 42
- Misdemeanor = 188
- Male = 188
- Female = 73

# Accidents

Private property accidents decreased minimally from 100 in 2020 to 99 in 2021.

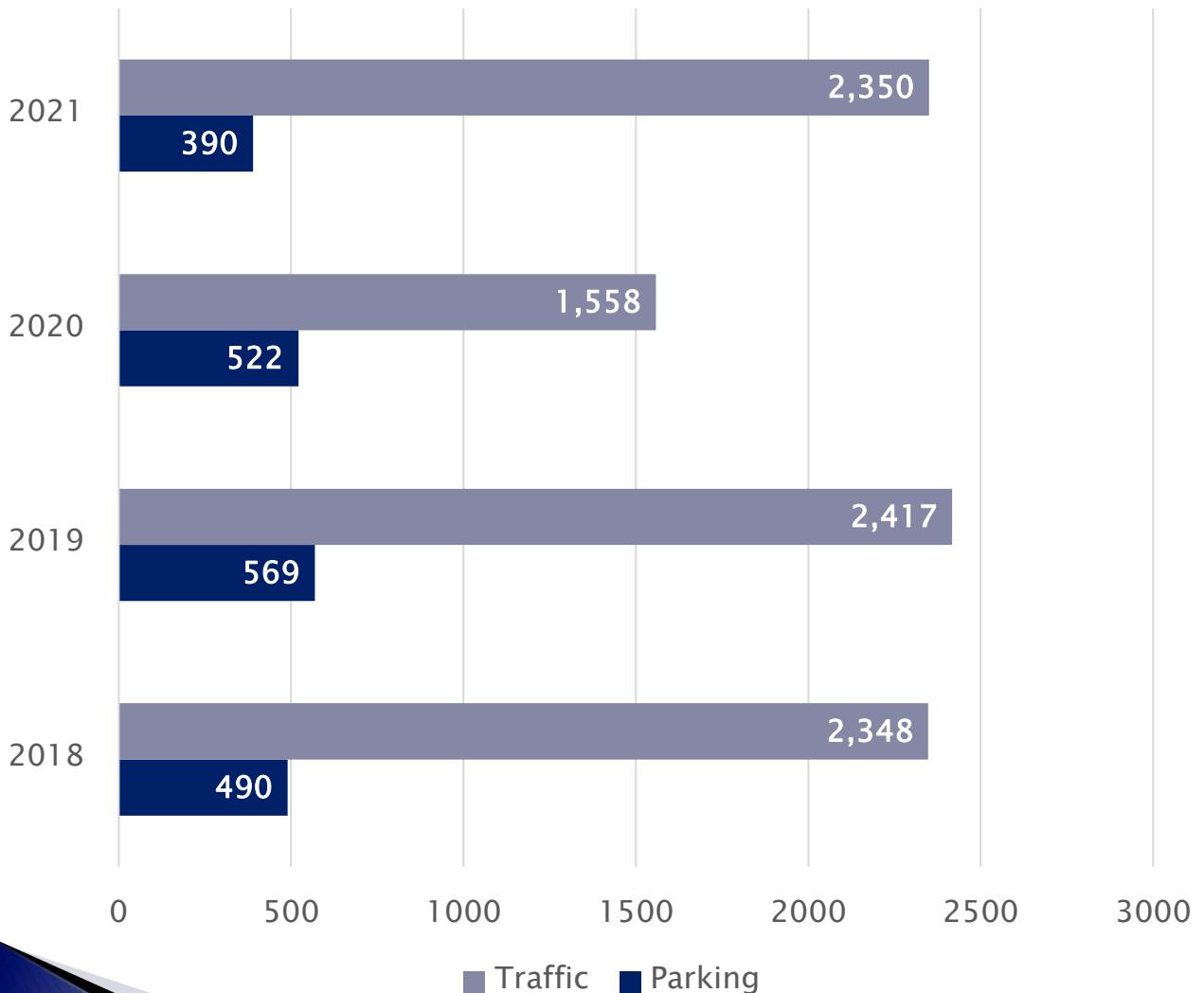
Public accidents increased from 137 in 2020 to 153 in 2021.



# Traffic Enforcement

Written traffic citations increased from 1,558 in 2020 to 2,350 in 2021.

Parking citations decreased from 522 in 2020 to 390 in 2021.



# S.P.A.N.

## Suburban Police Anti-Crime Network

The Suburban Police Anti-Crime Network is facilitated by the regional efforts which include the cities of Highland Heights, Lyndhurst, Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village and Richmond Heights. SPAN is made up of five (5) specialized units, a Special Weapons and Tactics Unit, a Bomb Unit, a Crisis Intervention/Negotiation Unit, a Traffic Accident Investigation Unit and a Drug Enforcement Unit. The Richmond Heights Police Department has two (2) officers assigned to the Special Weapons and Tactics Unit; two (2) officers on the Bomb Unit; two (2) officers assigned to the Crisis Intervention Unit; two (2) officers on the Traffic Unit; and one (1) assigned to the Drug Enforcement Unit.



# Detective Bureau

The Richmond Heights Detective Bureau is comprised of three detectives who have nearly 75 years of law enforcement experience. A Detective Sergeant is the commander of the Detective Bureau with two other officers who have been appointed as Detectives. The detectives do not specialize in one specific type of crime or investigative work as they are considered generalists. "Generalists" have a great deal of experience and training in all major types of crimes to include: Murder, Rape, Robbery, Burglary, Assault, and Theft.

The Detective Bureau supports the Patrol Division as they follow-up on cases, collect evidence, submit evidence to labs for analysis, and assist with the prosecution of individuals at the local (Lyndhurst Municipal Court), state (Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas and Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court) and federal (US District Court) levels.

In 2021, the Detective Bureau completed and filed charges against individuals in over (60) felony cases with the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office and handled/managed more than (510) items in the RHPD property room. A 20% increase in the number of felony case filings and an increase of 25% in the number of items taken in the RHPD property room.

Two officer retirements occurred in 2021, both of which were assigned to the Detective Bureau. One detective retired in July and another retired in December which reduced the staffing in the Detective Bureau to just one.

*Detective Sergeant Porter*

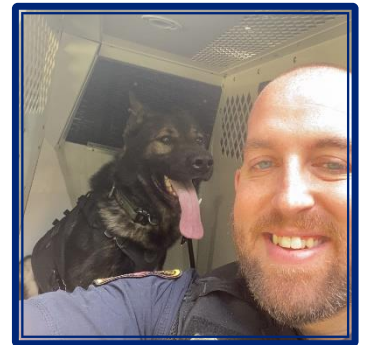


# K-9 Unit

In 2021 Officer Ross and K9 Bolt conducted approximately 234 hours of training. As a team they are required to train a minimum of 16 hours a month with a large group that consists of multiple K9 teams from the surrounding jurisdictions. Officer Ross and K9 Bolt completed a rigorous three-day Patrol K9 Tactics and Survival Class that was put on by the North American Police Work Dog Association (NAPWDA). Officer Ross and K9 Bolt completed certifications through NAPWDA (Nationally Recognized Certification) and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA).

The K9 team continues to grow and K9 Bolt was deployed a total 36 times throughout 2021. The number of deployments from 2020 to 2021 nearly tripled. 22 of the deployments were patrol deployments consisting of the following: tracking, area searches, article searches and building searches. The remaining 14 deployments were for narcotic detection. K9 Bolt assisted with seizing crack cocaine, marijuana, fentanyl, drug paraphernalia and a firearm. K9 Bolt recorded 7 apprehensions resulting in 0 bites.

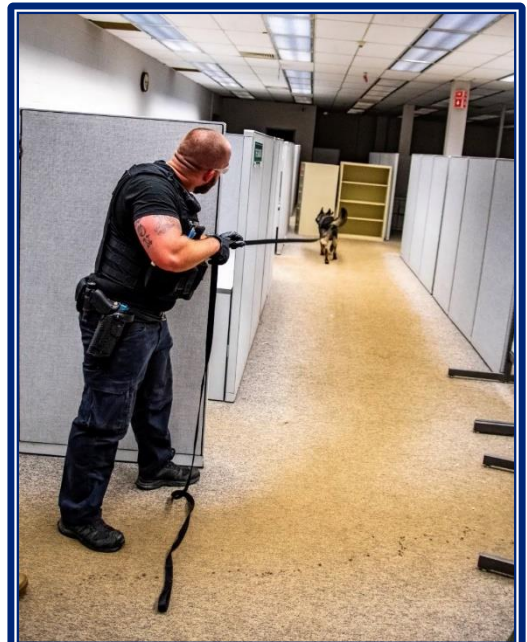
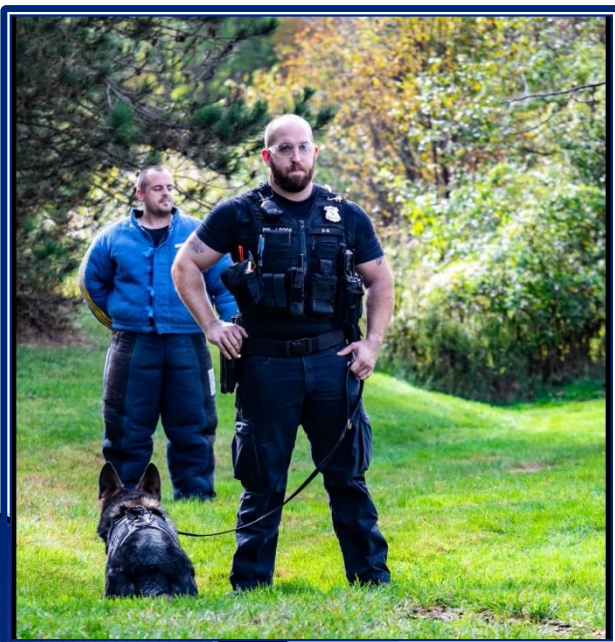
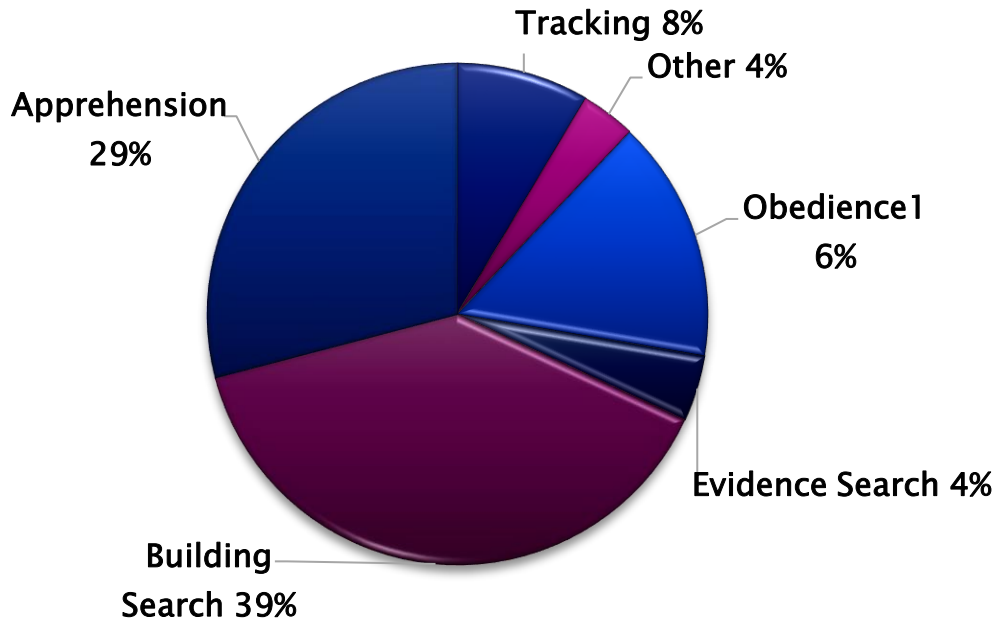
Officer Ross and K9 Bolt made a number of appearances at numerous community events. Officer Ross and K9 Bolt put on a K9 demonstration during the back-to-school event. Officer Ross and K9 Bolt also visited with students and staff at the schools. The K9 team assisted seven other agencies throughout 2021 including the SPAN Swat team.





# K-9 Unit Training

## Patrol Training Exercise Types



# Training

The professional development of personnel through formal training continued to be a primary focus in 2021. A special emphasis this year was placed on Officer Wellness. Various instructors provided some important roll call training which included organic eating, flexibility, officer rejuvenation, and meditation.

Police officers attended a variety of instruction, with some at no cost, to the agency. All police officers received Use of Force policy review training, to include a written test for Patrol Officers and Detectives. This important training provides supervisors an opportunity to present possible scenarios to officers and discuss appropriate responses. The instructional lesson plan also directs that supervisors should discuss de-escalation and its application. Officers also received instruction on our drug-free workplace policy.

Some highlights included having Bridget Brennan, the Acting U.S. Attorney for the Northern District, and Justin Herdman, the prior U.S. Attorney for the Northern District, as they provided Federal Civil Rights training. We also hosted an Autism and First Responder training class at the Kiwanis Lodge. By providing enriching training opportunities for our personnel as well as assigning them new and challenging responsibilities that fit their interests, we intend to help our personnel reach their fullest professional potential as we strive for EVERY member to achieve a self-actualization experience while employed with this agency.



# Juvenile Diversion Program

It is my honor and privilege to submit the following statistics for the 2021 Community Juvenile Diversion Program for Richmond Heights.

Patrolman Jonathan Ross assisted as a Juvenile Diversion Officer while Detective Sergeant Darren Porter continues to be the department's liaison with Juvenile Court. Sergeant Greg Patterson continued in his role as supervisor of the unit.

Five juveniles were referred to participate in the program in 2021. Juveniles accepted into the program work to finish assignments in order to successfully complete the program. Common assignments given to participants include writing essays to apologize for their actions and detailing how they intend to make better choices in the future. Other assignments often include completing some form of community service such as volunteering at a food pantry, or picking up litter from around the city. The juveniles were charged with the following offenses: Pandering Obscenity Involving a Minor, Nudity-Oriented Material, Disorderly Conduct, and Criminal Damaging.

Richmond Heights accepted two juvenile referrals from the South Euclid Police Department and the Highland Heights Police Department due to the fact that those departments do not currently have an active juvenile diversion program.

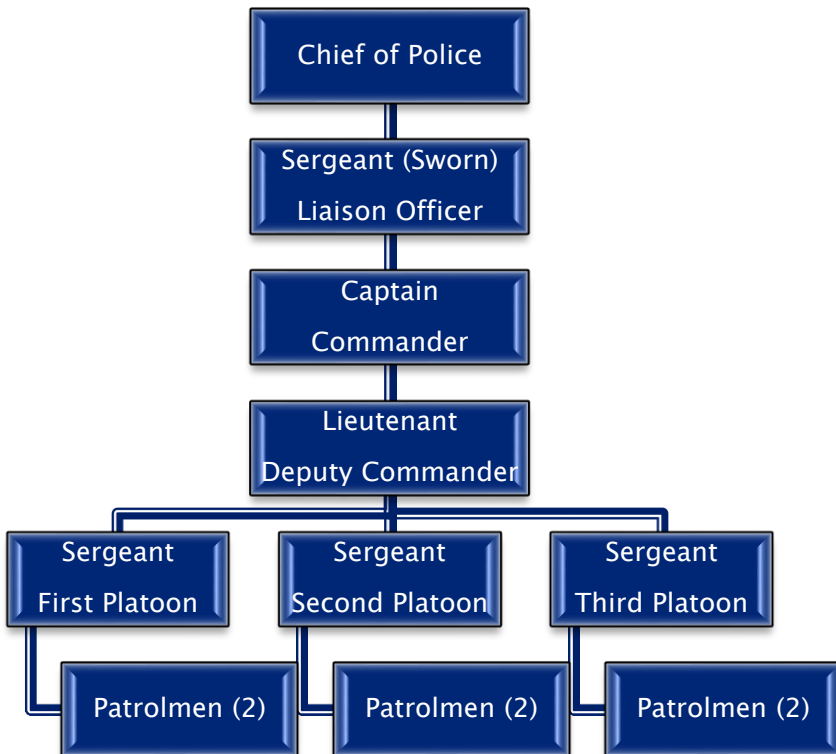
There were no hearings held in 2021 due to COVID 19 restrictions. There was also restructuring of the program which reduces the need for hearings and places an emphasis on the assignment/community service aspect of the program.

*Submitted by Greg Patterson, Sergeant*



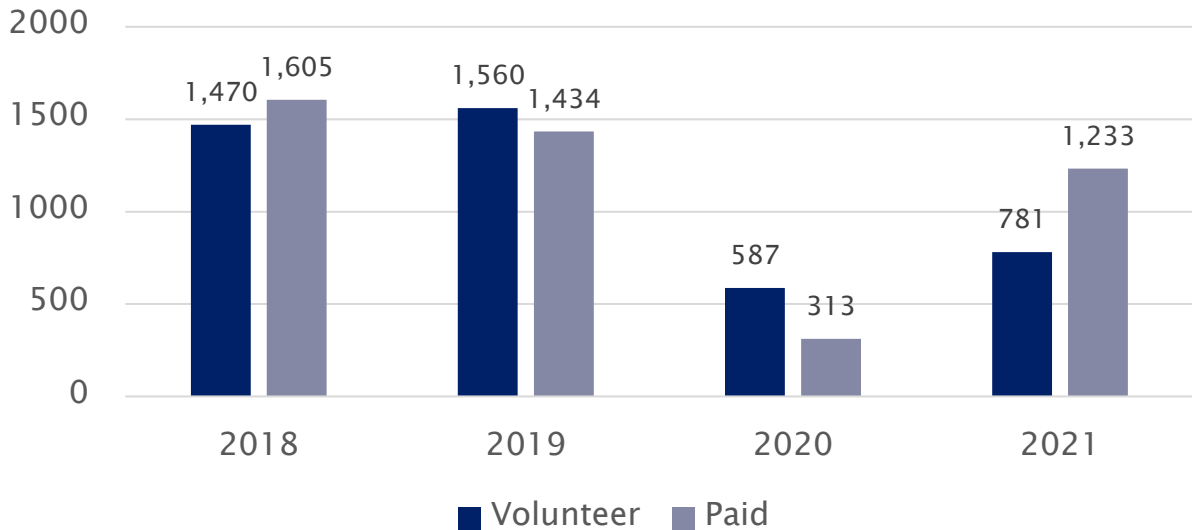
# Auxiliary Police Unit

The Dedicated members of the Richmond Heights Police Auxiliary Unit assist with many aspects within the Police Department including road patrols, special attentions, special events, park patrols, the lodge and security details.



# Auxiliary Police Unit

## Auxiliary Hours



Our Auxiliary Police Unit conducted three really fun community policing events. Two cruisers were decorated for Easter and were part of an Easter parade through the city. Two cruisers were also decorated in a Halloween theme and driven around the city while kids trick-or-treated. During the Christmas season, a cruiser was decorated with a Christmas theme and Christmas carols/songs were played over the loud speaker while it was driven around town. Auxiliary Police Captain Mark Hoageson helped coordinate these events which were positively received.





# Community Policing

Although the health pandemic continued to put a strain on our community policing efforts, we were still able to do a lot. We co-sponsored another Skate with a Cop event with the Euclid Police Department at the Euclid Orr Ice Arena. The event allowed for friendly interactions between police officers and ice skaters. We had four Coffee with a Cop events at the following locations: Greenwood Farm, Dave's Market, Z's Sunoco, and 444 Park. These allow for casual conversation and fellowship with our customers.



We had a wonderful National Night Out event at the new Secondary School in conjunction with their Back to School event. This combined effort allowed our department to have strong exposure within our city. We also provided a summer self-defense and awareness class conducted in the City Park that was well received. We had two Hike with a Cop events which allowed us to enjoy time outdoors with those we serve. And lastly, we held our first Shop with a Cop event at Christmas.



# Community Policing

Personnel from our Department were also at other city sponsored events such as the Memorial Day Service at our City Park and the Fall Fest at Greenwood Farm. We have a very active social media presence through Facebook and we try to communicate everyday with our friends through a post(s). This effort allows for regular friendly outreach to our customers as well as providing important transparency on what we do as a police department.



Our youth outreach efforts have become the Crown Jewel of our Community Policing mission. We regularly interact with our young people through our police scholastic program called "We Tip Our Badge to you for Academic Excellence," and this year we conducted a School Town Hall where we had an open dialogue event with some students. This interaction allowed them the opportunity to ask questions that concerned them and allowed our personnel the opportunity to provide feedback about what and why we do things. And we believe our innovative Cop Scouts program is a model for police departments throughout the nation on how to forge friendships and trust with young people and their families.





# Community Policing K-9

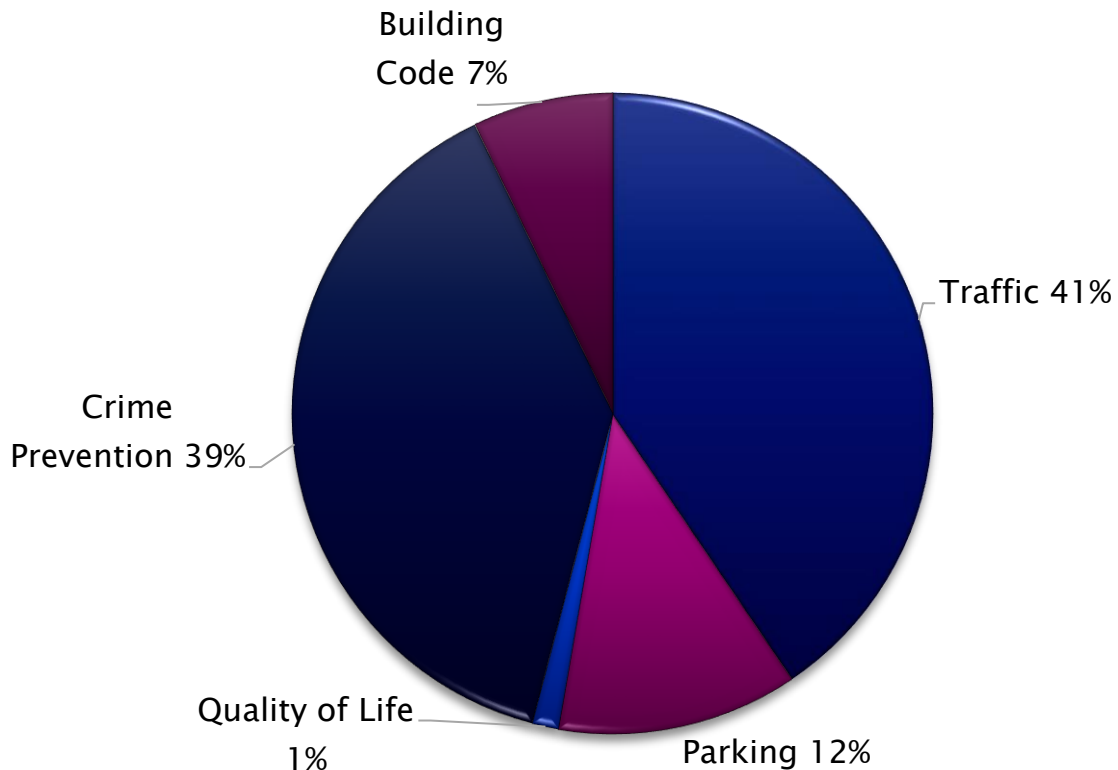
The most exciting part of our community policing effort was when our department added a new Community Policing K-9 named Angel. This white German Shepherd has had an amazing impact on building bridges of trust within our community. She has brought many smiles to people's faces and she is warming hearts with every interaction she has.



# Community Policing Initiative

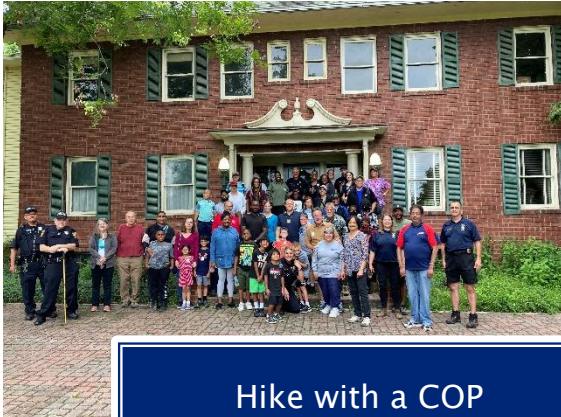
Community Policing Initiative (CPI) forms are used to address a variety of matters such as notifying residents that they left their garage door open overnight or they can be used as warning citations. In 2021, our officers issued 296 CPI forms.

## 2021 CPI Forms





# Community Outreach Highlights



Hike with a COP



Coffee with a COP



Meet and Greet with K-9  
Angel



Shop with a COP



We Tip Our Badge to You for  
Academic Excellence Award



Meet and Greet with K-9 Bolt

# *Striving to be the Gold Standard of Policing*

