



MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK POLICE – MONTGOMERY COUNTY DIVISION

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW





MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PARKS

MIKE RILEY



The COVID-19 pandemic and declared State of Emergency in 2020 certainly posed many unique challenges for all of us. For the Montgomery Parks Department, it was a year of rapid closing and gradual reopening, interpreting constantly changing health orders, and understanding and enforcing gathering limits, facility capacity and social distancing requirements. Our Park Police rapidly adapted to this new reality and took proactive measures to promote safe use of our highly visited outdoor spaces and trails which remained open during the pandemic and were popular outlets for county residents to support their physical fitness and mental health during a particularly stressful time.

Our Park Police are fully integrated and essential team members in advancing all of the Department's top priorities. Examples include our Open Parkways initiative whereby we closed 7 miles of parkway to vehicular traffic on the weekends and opened them to people to walk, run and bike; our White-Tail Deer Management program in which we are the lead agency for Montgomery County; our Vision Zero program where we strive to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities for users of our 250 mile trail network; and numerous CPTED analysis of our parks and capital projects to maximize safety of our park patrons.

Our nationally recognized park system plays a vital role in achieving Montgomery County's racial equity and social justice goals by assuring all residents have access to public spaces and opportunities to recreate, stay physically and mentally healthy, experience nature, and bond with their neighbors to build strong communities. Our Park Police enabled several peaceful protests this year related to racial injustice while balancing First Amendment Rights with the safety of park patrons and residents. They adeptly handled an assault on one of our trails that garnered national attention as the victims were assaulted while posting social justice posters. Their fine work resulted in the apprehension and charging of the perpetrator.

Our Park Police play a vital 24/7, 365 day a year role to keep our parks welcoming and enjoyable for all. The proactive presence of our officers in the parks on foot, horse, bike, ATV or boat keeps our parks safe, as validated by our most recent crime statistics and increasing visitation. All the investment in our parks would be compromised if our visitors did not consider these valued public spaces safe.

At a time when law enforcement agencies across the country face ever-increasing challenges to keep our communities safe, this strategic plan lays out a framework for continued success for our Park Police to meet the needs of the future and to assure our award-winning park system remains a primary reason people choose to live, work and play in Montgomery County.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE

DARRYL MCSWAIN



It is my pleasure to share this annual Year in Review report with you. The year 2020 was certainly unique, but also one that further demonstrated the level of passion, courage, and commitment my staff embodies on a daily basis. Despite the dangers of the COVID-19 pandemic, they continued to serve the community 24/7 while processing thousands of administrative duties and responding to hundreds of calls for service. Within this report you will read of acts of bravery, the development of new programs to enhance our service delivery, and compassion extended to thousands across the county as we worked with demonstrators to facilitate peaceful First Amendment Right gatherings in light of calls for social justice/equity. Despite the circumstances which prompted the noted demonstrations, I was pleased to receive expressions of appreciation from the community for the professionalism exhibited by Park Police Officers who assisted.

This year's annual report builds upon a 3-year Strategic Plan we outlined in 2020. As we enter year two (2) of our contract with the community and each other, we remain committed to finishing objectives planned for 2021 and beyond. A small sample of recent accomplishments include:

- Expanded our **Peer Support** capabilities and employee wellness initiatives.
- The Montgomery County branch of the Park Police joined a select group of law enforcement agencies across the nation chosen to participate in the evidence based **Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) Project** created by Georgetown Law's Innovative Policing Program and global law firm Sheppard Mullin LLP to provide practical tools specific to peer intervention.
- Continue to employ the de-escalation program **Integrating Communication, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT)**.
- Sponsored several Park Police Officers to attend the "Train the Trainer" course of the nationally recognized **Fair and Impartial Policing® curriculum**.
- Convened a diverse group of community representatives to inform our **cultural competency training** plans. We ultimately contracted a Doctor of Education/Social Scientist from the University of Maryland to train staff on recognizing, addressing, and minimizing the impact of implicit biases to facilitate productive and high quality interactions for all parties.
- The Park Police has also begun research into a community based **mediation program**.
- Mandated consultation with a licensed psychologist after experiencing a **critical incident** to not only address any mental trauma sustained, but also remove the stigma that seeking help is a sign of weakness.
- Developed a **Community Survey** to regularly assess our service delivery effectiveness and make necessary improvements when warranted. Preliminary returns to date, by those who have interacted with Park Police members, have been listed as either **good or excellent 90%** of the time in the categories of Helpful, Knowledgeable, and Fairness; with the vast majority noted as *excellent*. As it relates to safety, **86.8%** of the respondents **feel secure** within our Park system. Just as important, we sincerely appreciate the written recommendations that will lead to continuous improvement.

It remains my honor to work with the men and women of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. Each member has contributed to the safe park system we continue to enjoy in some manner by providing their unique ideas, ingenuity, and life experiences in the decision-making process; further demonstrating that we [community and police] are *Stronger Together!*

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ABOUT THE PARK POLICE

MISSION

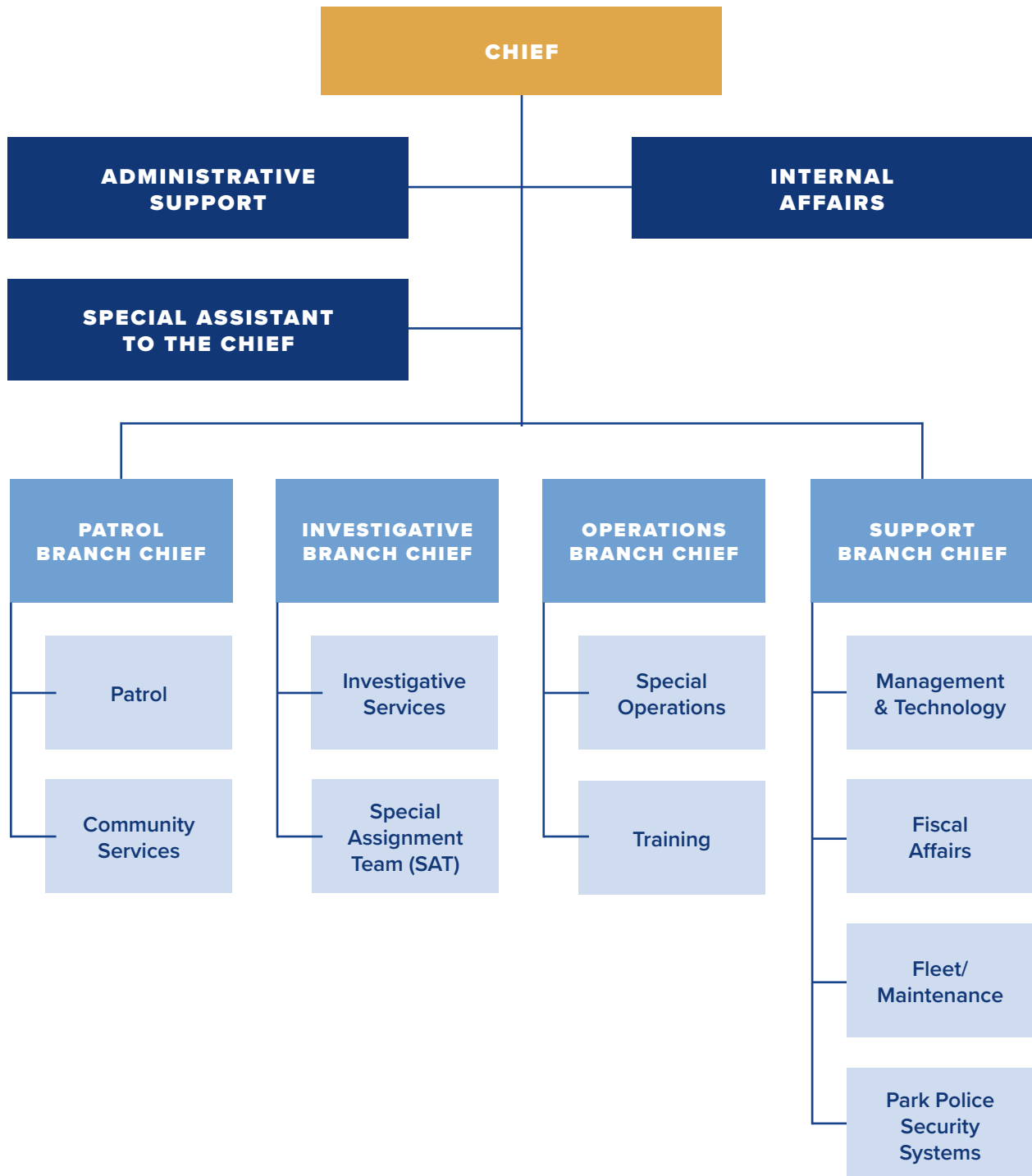
The Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Montgomery County Division, is committed to working in partnership with the community to provide quality public safety services in a professional and timely manner. We value the attendance of all community members and visitors to the park system. We endeavor to facilitate a safe, peaceful and joyous experience for everyone.

HISTORY

The Maryland-National Capital Park Police was founded in 1953. It began with three officers who worked six days a week for an annual salary of \$3,000. The officers shared one police car until it broke down and the Commission purchased two used cars to replace the initial vehicle. The Montgomery County Division has grown into an agency with an authorized staffing level of 122 position—96 sworn and 26 civilians. Park Police operates 24 hours a day throughout a park system that is comprised of 37,000 acres, which are spread across 496 square miles within Montgomery County. This includes 422 parks, 251 miles of trails, 273 playgrounds, 134 picnic areas and 342 athletic fields. In addition, there are numerous pools, campgrounds, horse stables, golf courses and a soccer stadium. The parks accommodate an estimated 14 million visitors each year.

ABOUT THE PARK POLICE

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW



ABOUT THE PARK POLICE

MEET THE COMMAND STAFF

CAPTAIN NICOLE ADAMS ASSISTANT CHIEF, OPERATIONS BRANCH



Captain Adams began her law enforcement career with the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington D.C. and transferred to the Maryland-National Capital Park Police- Montgomery County Division in 1996. She has served as an Officer, Detective, Patrol Sergeant, Lieutenant in Patrol, Administration, and Internal Affairs. Captain Adams was the agency's first female Firearms Instructor. Captain Adams served as Acting Captain of the Patrol, Operations and Support Branches, and was the first African-American female promoted to the rank of Assistance Chief in the history of the Park Police. She is also the agency's secondary Public Information Officer. Captain Adams is an alumna of Howard University where she studied Business Management and a 2015 graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command.

CAPTAIN SHIBU PHILIPOSE ASSISTANT CHIEF, INVESTIGATIONS BRANCH



Captain Shibu Philipose is a 22-year veteran with the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. He is the first Indian-American Officer to hold the rank of Assistant Chief in Park Police history. Captain Philipose has served in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. Past assignments have included: Acting Captain of the Operations Branch and Patrol Branch; Commander of the Internal Affairs Section and the Special Operations Section; Supervisor of the Management and Technology Section; Backgrounds and Recruitment Section; Internal Affairs Section and Patrol Unit. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland. In 2016 Captain Philipose was awarded the Silver Medal of Valor by the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce.

CAPTAIN MICHAEL MURPHY
ASSISTANT CHIEF, SUPPORT BRANCH



Captain Michael Murphy is a 22-year veteran of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. He has served with both the Montgomery and Prince George's County Divisions. Past assignments have included: Patrol Officer, Tactical Officer; Task Force Officer on the ATF Regional Area Gang Task Force; Patrol Sergeant; Police Community Action Team (PCAT) Sergeant; Detective Sergeant; Commander of Investigations; Commander of Management and Technology; Evening Shift Patrol Commander; and Special Operations Commander. In addition to earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Baltimore, Captain Murphy attended the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (LEEDA) Training Program and is also a graduate of the Southern Police Institute Administrative Officers Course at the University of Louisville.

Captain Murphy is a well decorated veteran with several commendations to include multiple Commendable Service and Meritorious Service Awards, the U.S. Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award for Law Enforcement and Officer of the Year. Captain Murphy continues to represent the Park Police, Montgomery County Division, on the FBI Joint Task Force.

CAPTAIN JEFFREY COE
ASSISTANT CHIEF, PATROL BRANCH



Captain Jeffrey Coe is a 22-year veteran with the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. Prior to joining the Park Police, Captain Coe served with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office for 3-years. None the less impressive, he also served our nation as a member of the U.S. Army for 9-years. As a Park Police Officer, Captain Coe has a very diverse work history with several assignments. His most recent assignment was the Special Assistant to the Chief where he assisted with policy development, the oversight of major division projects, Honor Guard Commander, Firearms Program Coordinator and the Primary Public Information Officer. Captain Coe's previous assignments within the Park Police included: Commander of the Special Operations Division, Community Services Supervisor, Mounted Unit Supervisor, and Police Activities League Officer. Captain Coe is a 2018 graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command where he was awarded the Franklin M. Kreml Leadership Award. He completed the M-NCPPC Leadership Development Program in 2014 and has continued to pursue higher education through credits earned at Thomas Edison State College and the Frederick County Community College where he is currently enrolled.



LT. KEVIN COLES

Office of the Chief
Internal Affairs



LT. SARAH MIKALAUSKAS

Commander
Special Operations
Section



LT. CODI EVANS

Commander
Patrol-Midnights



LT. HECTOR REYES

Commander
Investigative Services
Section



LT. PATRICK LAU

Office of the Chief
Special Assistant
to the Chief



LT. CHRIS TIPPERY

Commander
Management and
Technology



LT. ADAM MACLEOD

Commander
Patrol-Evenings



LT. CINDY WEISMAN

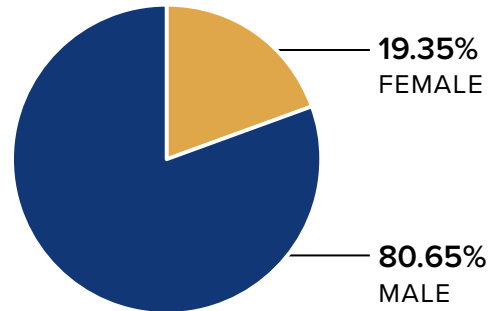
Commander
Patrol-Daywork

ABOUT THE PARK POLICE

STATS & DEMOGRAPHICS

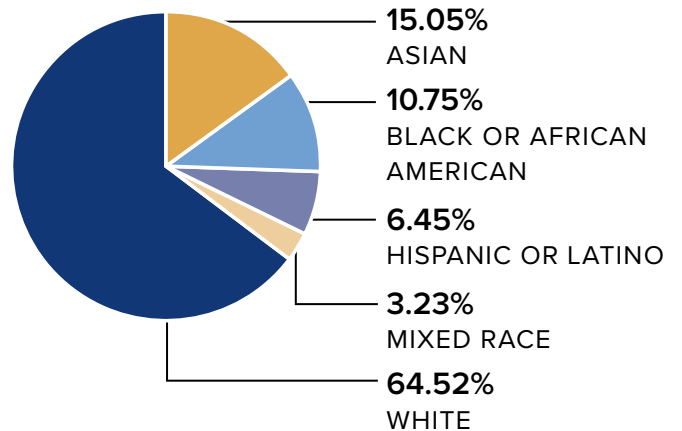
GENDER

| GENDER | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES | % OF SWORN PERSONNEL |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Male | 75 | 80.65% |
| Female | 18 | 19.35% |
| GRAND TOTAL | 93 | 100.00% |



RACE/ETHNICITY

| 1.3125 IN | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES | % OF SWORN PERSONNEL |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Asian | 14 | 15.05% |
| Black or African American | 10 | 10.75% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6 | 6.45% |
| Mixed Race | 3 | 3.23% |
| White | 60 | 64.52% |
| GRAND TOTAL | 93 | 100.00% |



In pursuit of our goal to better diversity our workforce, we revamped every aspect of the recruiting process nearly 2-years ago. Our concerted efforts are producing measurable results. Over the past two (2) years, 66% of our police recruits have been people of color and/or women and 75% of our non-sworn staff hires has been a person of color and/or woman. There is more work to be done, but we are confident that this on-going commitment to a more diverse agency will benefit us all with the addition of new ideas, perspectives, and life experiences.

Figures include sworn staff and candidates as of October 2020. Does not include current vacancies. Numbers subject to change.

ABOUT THE PARK POLICE

NEW MEMBERS



SHANELL BROWN

Communications Technician



ALEXANDRA MLYNARSKI

Police Officer Candidate



NOAH GUEVARA

Police Officer Candidate



MATTHEW ROSE

Lateral Police Officer



ALEXANDER HUELBIG

Police Officer Candidate



HANNA STERNER

Communications Technician



YEAR IN REVIEW

Boyscout Hand Sanitizer Give-Away, Olney, Md. June, 2020



YEAR IN REVIEW

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Masks sewn by our staff

Assistant Barn Manager Caitlin McCauley receiving an "Iron Person" Award for going above and beyond to make masks for dozens of our personnel.



In March of 2020, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan declared a **State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic** and issued an Executive Order which significantly limited public movement. Soon thereafter, the Order was amended to include a Stay at Home mandate. In addition to the closure of several public facilities, the Executive Order prohibited public gathering of more than 10 people which required the Parks System to balance public demand for outdoor recreation with proper “social distancing” practices. The longer the Stay at Home mandate persisted, community members by the thousands began to seek exercise and outdoor exposure in the Parks and along the trail system. To minimize the spread of the virus, the Parks System installed social distancing signage, closed hundreds of outdoor facilities, and restricted vehicular access to three major parkways to pedestrians and bicyclist alone in order to provide additional alternatives for exercise with sufficient spacing for social distancing.



Although the aforementioned signage, facility closures, and restricted vehicular access to parkways contributed greatly to the stated goals, the Park Police remained challenged with dozens of calls for social distancing violations at parks and along trails across the county. With a commitment to respect the Governor's Pandemic Order, while simultaneously providing safe outlets for good mental and physical health, the Park Police chose to emphasize education and proactive presence over enforcement to gain public compliance.

By the nature of their work, Park Police Officers could not stay at home or telework. Despite this reality, they pushed aside their own fears of the virus to unselfishly meet the demands of this public safety emergency. Calls for service statistics were analyzed to assess where the frequency of violations was highest or most likely to occur due to population density. **Over the course of 10-weeks during the beginning of the pandemic, the Park Police conducted over 2,800 proactive park checks.** Concurrently, hundreds of patrols were carried out on trails and designated parkways by bike, foot, horseback, ATV, and motorcycle. Although various violations of the Governor's Order were encountered by Park Police, the officers repeatedly utilized the opportunities to educate community members on the law, de-escalate initial resistance, and exercised patience to gain compliance. As the weeks passed, **the Park Police recorded significant decreases in calls for service of observed violations, thus contributing to the overall Parks System's efforts to provide needed outdoor recreation while helping to slow the spread of COVID-19 in the county.**



Neighborhood Birthday Parade, August, 2020

YEAR IN REVIEW

PROTECTION OF FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS



Park Police and County Police helping to escort a large public demonstration.

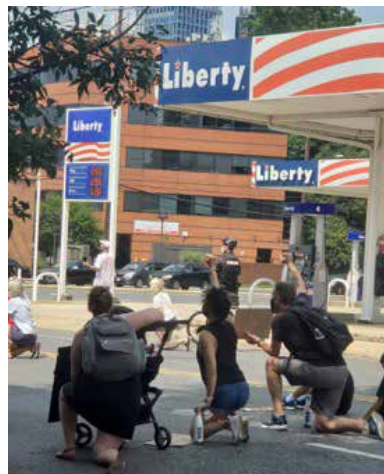
In response to various social justice related matters, millions of people across the nation came together in various communities to voice their concerns through demonstrations. Over 100 such opportunities for members of the public to exercise their First Amendment Rights were respected in Montgomery County throughout the year by public safety agencies. At several gatherings involving 10 to 1,000 community members, the Park Police was present to work with organizers, suspend normal park permitting requirements, assist attendees with vehicular parking, facilitate street crossings, and participate in escorts along public thoroughfares.

The Maryland-National Capital Park Police recognizes that regardless of when or where an incident occurs in our nation that strains police/community relations, we all have a collective responsibility in the goal of a “...more perfect union.” The Maryland-National Capital Park Police remains committed to this crucial work and recommendations printed in the *President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing* published in 2015. All six (6) pillars serve as key components in our internal Strategic Plan that was released in January of 2020. We are well on our way to meeting key objectives, but can’t



succeed without the public’s trust, input, and support. Each day we vow to live up to our mission statement to work “...in partnership with the community to provide quality public safety services in a professional and timely manner...” The Maryland-National Capital Park Police values the sanctity of life and will ensure our policies, hiring practices, training, community engagement efforts, and officer wellness programs remain consist with a standard of excellence. The Park Police cannot reach its full potential without you. The realization of our full potential as a society is dependent upon embracing our diversity and recognizing that our strength lies in our togetherness.

Park Police and County Police helping to escort a neighborhood demonstration.



Park Police assisting with a demonstration in Bethesda

YEAR IN REVIEW

NEW SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM



The Montgomery County Division is responsible for over 37,000 acres of land, to include four (4) lakes, 490 miles of streams, 251 miles of paved and natural surface trails, and 273 playgrounds.

The Search and Rescue Unit was created in 2020 to respond for all park types and incidents ranging from critically missing children and adults, lost hikers/bikers/campers, and mentally or physically disabled patrons. The Search and Rescue Unit also can be utilized when trying to locate criminals who are attempting to avoid capture and arrest.

The Search and Rescue Unit works in a collaborative manner with regional units to provide services not only to the Park System, but to allied agencies as well.

The unit consists of a Search Manager, four canines (three bloodhounds and one german shorthair pointer) unmanned aircraft systems (drones), horse mounted patrol, all-terrain vehicles, and the recently acquired search response vehicle with specialty equipment to function as a command post for complex missions.

In 2020, the Search and Rescue Unit handled over 35 events (Consultations, K9 Response, Deployments, etc.) including positive finds, investigations, and/or joint efforts with allied agencies.



YEAR IN REVIEW

CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS



Over the course of 2020, the crime prevention efforts of Park Police were enhanced with technological upgrades, operational improvements, and on-going proactive patrols. Our **emphasis is not just responding to crimes that have already occurred, but instead preventing them in the first place** by being present through non-confrontational means which foster good rapport with the community. As such, we readily utilized bicycles, ATVs, horseback, or motorcycles to patrol. Over this past year, our proactive **trail checks increase by 79% from 4,740 to 8,478.**

Recognizing that the Park Police cannot be in all places at all times, soliciting the eyes and ears of the public is crucial. The Park Police has subsequently expanded the means through which the public can provide pertinent information in their native language, anonymously, etc. Examples include greater utilization of social media platforms, reporting links on our website, a new citizen reporting module included in a mobile rollcall system, and email/ phone-based tip lines. Emerging technology will also allow for text to 911 capability.

Due to our partnership with the community and the good public safety work of our Park Police members [sworn and non-sworn], we realized the following **crime decreases:**

- 69% decrease in robberies
- 8% decrease in thefts
- 64% decrease in indecent exposures
- 26% decrease in simple assaults



We do remain concerned about the most prevalent crime within the park system – vandalism. There was a **50% increase in reported vandalism** incidents from 2019 to 2020. In particular, 139 of those events involved **graffiti**. Various strategies are being pursued to reduce the crime of vandalism to include utilization of more surveillance cameras at chronic locations and enhancing the aesthetics of challenged sites with professional murals.



Realizing sustained decreases in crime overall requires a holistic approach. It is for this reason the Park Police is leading a **Safety in the Parks** initiative supported by Director Mike Riley. It is a collaborative work involving various operational Divisions within Montgomery Parks, to include: Information Technology, Planning/Stewardship, Facilities/Maintenance, Management Services, Public Affairs/Community Partnerships, and Park Development. Each group represents complimentary expertise to bring about modern-day upgrades in the interest of public safety. These upgrades entail – “reminder” signage, better lighting, trimming of obstructive shrubbery, digital surveillance cameras in public spaces, increased trail markings to aid in orientation and to minimize pedestrian/ bicycle conflicts, and crime prevention through environmental design. In addition to preventing crime, we are committed to working in partnership with the State’s Attorney’s Office to seek restorative justice alternatives in low to medium offenses in hopes that the perpetrator(s) can repay society in a constructive manner and lead a productive life.



Substance Abuse & Peer Pressure Prevention at the Kerala Cultural Society.

YEAR IN REVIEW

VISION ZERO

Montgomery Parks remains committed to reducing the number of fatalities within Montgomery County under the Vision Zero initiative. In particular, Montgomery Parks is constantly reassessing the safety of various trail crossings while also seeking means to reduce pedestrian/motorcyclist/bicyclist conflicts. Educational, engineering, and enforcement work continues, with the bulk of the emphasis on education and engineering for long-term success. This work is a joint effort with other State and local agencies to include the Department of Transportation. Smart signage, striping, intersection reconfiguration, road diets, and other means have all proven to be effective. In order to maintain successes already gained, the Park Police continues to patrol trail crossings throughout the county, especially at our busier sites. In 2020, the Park Police conducted 533 checks at trail crossings. For the past 4 years, no pedestrian or bicyclist fatalities have occurred at M-NCPPC trail crossings.

Montgomery Parks closed parkway initiative designed to provide a socially distanced means of outdoor recreation.







BRANCHES

OPERATIONS

INVESTIGATIONS

PATROL

SUPPORT

BRANCHES

OPERATIONS BRANCH



The Operations Branch houses the Training Section, Mounted/Marine/Motorcycle Units, Canine Section and Barn Staff. Due to the various specialties that exist, members of this Branch are regularly involved in community engagement, public safety, and search operations. One of the newest initiatives we developed to help us better serve vulnerable community members is our in-house **Autism and Intellectual or Developmental Disability (IDD) program**. In early 2020, we opened the doors to our Woodlawn facility for a tour by Autism Ambassador Jake and Officer Laurie Reyes of MCPD. The program has since received favorable responses and partnerships have been established with local autism advocacy groups. As such, we will continue to expand this outreach endeavor with various Autism/IDD community members associated with schools, adult centers, and/or private residences. We are convinced of the therapeutic benefits which can be derived while interacting with our friendly staff and animals, as well as participating in fun activities across several acres of our Woodlawn facility.

During a normal year, members of the Special Operations Section remain busy participating in parades, attending neighborhood celebrations, giving demonstrations at schools, or facilitating large public gatherings at regional parks. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, tens of thousands of youth found themselves conducting school activities on-line. Although circumstances would not allow for regular in-person engagement, the creative staff of Special Operations not only participated in a virtual career day, but also developed short instructional videos on the various aspects of their jobs. We welcome youth and adults alike to enjoy the short educational videos posted on YouTube to learn more about our wonderful staff – humans and animals alike!



- **Barn Tour with Police Horses**
https://youtu.be/Y_xFCagmr4g
- **Motorcycle Demo**
<https://youtu.be/LAucPtfbIPA>
- **Patrol K-9**
<https://youtu.be/L7I5TO7K4iQ>
- **Explosive & Search and Rescue K-9**
<https://youtu.be/Ukk9HhJeEhc>



A member of our Special Operations Section helping to rescue a stranded motorist on Beach Drive after a flash flooding event.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Crisis Intervention Training** is ongoing for all personnel, although COVID restrictions did slow the process down. Officers and Command Staff also attended Customer Service Training conducted by Dr. Kris Marsh to enhance our awareness of this vital aspect of policing, to include an understanding of **Implicit Bias**.
- While COVID greatly impacted our ability to interact at **community functions** in person, we have taken full advantage of digital means of communication hosting virtual tours of our Special Operations facility and engaging with students in online career days.
- Partnerships have been developed with local autism advocacy groups to expose that community to the therapeutic benefits of being around horses. Many positive interactions have resulted from this activity.

- The Operations Branch has filmed several videos designed to enhance our **recruitment and retention** with an emphasis on improving the cultural diversity, language skill, and gender distribution of our sworn staff. We received a \$34,500 grant from the Governor's Office on Crime Control and Retention which was utilized to better attract diverse applicants with advanced degrees, military experience, and/or bilingual skills.
- Cpl. Andrews was awarded K9 officer of the year for his dedication to the unit and the training of new K9's.
- On 05/26/2020 K-9 units successfully located a missing juvenile male with autism from the water's edge at Lake Needwood.
- Park Police is happy to announce the completion of its first Search and Rescue Bloodhound Canine Training program. The completion of this training adds two new certified Bloodhounds to the divisions K9 Unit, K9 Roxy and K9 Chloe. Three new mounts were acquired, one donation and two purchased.
- Sergeant Myrical Gratton received awards for **Supervisor of the Year** and distinguished Community Service for organizing the Autism/IDD program and several other proactive efforts.



Corporal Matthew Byers received a Bronze Star Award for pulling an unconscious woman from a burning vehicle that had left the roadway and struck a tree. The woman did recover thanks to the heroic efforts of Corporal Byers and a passerby.



“CLIFFORD”



“ODIN”



“LEVI”



“RILEY”

- Three new mounts were acquired; one donation and two purchased.
- Mount Riley was retired to a new home on the Eastern Shore after 11 years of dedicated service
- The Branch hosted a 10-week Basic Horse Mounted School from which 6 officers graduated, including one attendee from the Cape May New Jersey Sheriff’s Office. The Division’s Horse Mounted Training cadre is recognized regionally and nationally for their expertise.



BRANCHES

PATROL BRANCH



The chances of a Montgomery County park patron becoming a victim is less than 1/10 of 1 percent. However, this reality is due to thousands of proactive park checks conducted by our officers to prevent crimes by their presence alone. At times when a crime does occur, or our park patrons are in distress, our brave officers respond immediately and employ sound public safety principles to successfully resolve the matter at hand. The following is just a sample of such work in 2020:

- As a member of the multi-agency DUI Task Force in Montgomery County, Officer Clay recorded **29 DUI arrests**, helping to make our roads safer. He was one of the top producers.
- March 2020 - Officer Micele located a **suicidal teenager** who had escaped from security at Holy Cross Hospital. She was returned to the hospital for care.
- March 2020 – Shift 5 Officers responded to the call of two missing children on the Capital Crescent Trail. A father lost his two children on the trail while riding bicycles. Officers drove the crowded trail **locating the lost children and reuniting them with their father.**
- April 2020 - Officers Arana, Sanchez, and Hans responded to assist with the search of an **armed suicidal subject** around Parklawn Group Picnic area. After searching the pavilion and campfire areas they began to search the trail where Sgt. Raghubar joined them. They soon came upon a man matching the



description of the suicidal subject laying in a hole in the distance. Utilizing sound safety tactics, they called the subject out towards them and seized a gun from his left pocket without harm to any party. He was later transported to a local area hospital for further assistance.

- May 2020 – Officers responded to Lake Needwood for the report of a **critically missing 12-year-old autistic boy**. Officers Andrews and Burroughs ventured out on a trail and located the child standing in waist deep water while flailing his arms. After gentle coaxing, they were able to get him to wade out of the waist deep water and onto the shore.
- June 2020 - Officer Kusolimint recovered a privately made firearm (**ghost gun**) at Dewey Local Park. Subject identified and charged with possession of a regulated firearm under 21-years of age.
- July 2020 - Officers responded for a **missing nonverbal autistic teen** at MLK. The child was found by patrol officers outside of the pool area.
- August 2020 – Officer Bratburd conducted an illegal weapons possession case and was able to determine that the **firearm was stolen from a home** without the owner’s knowledge.
- August 2020 - Officers Kusolnimit and Arana were on patrol in Ellsworth Urban Park when they encountered two suspicious individuals. Subsequent on-scene investigation led to the recovery of a **firearm from a “fanny pack.”**
- September 2020 - A subject exposed himself to a juvenile female near the playground at North Four Corners Park. A M-NCPPC Tree Crew employee saw the suspicious behavior. Officer Gayle located the suspect shortly thereafter and charged him with **indecent exposure**.

BRANCHES

INVESTIGATIVE BRANCH



Members of the Investigative Branch

The Investigative Branch enhanced its capabilities to better detect and predict the incidence of crime utilizing more collaborative research and data analysis models. This commitment was also supported by leveraging technological upgrades involving social media alerts, advanced crime tracking software, and other such initiatives.

The Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU) saw increased clearance rates in 2020 for the following crime categories:

- **2nd degree assault** – Increased to 67% from 11%
- **Larcenies** – Increased to 22% from 12%
- **Robberies** – Increased to 50% from 31%

The following are samples of some investigative highlights from 2020:

ASSAULT – CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Patrol responded to the report of an assault that took place on the Capital Crescent Trail. Three young adults were posting Social Justice related fliers on telephone poles along the trail. The suspect, riding a bicycle, forcibly took the fliers and assaulted one of the young adults physically. The victims were able to provide a blurry video image of the suspect. The story and suspect image were posted on our Twitter account to seek the public's help in identifying the suspect. This tweet went viral and placed the Park Police investigation in the national spotlight. In the process of reviewing hundreds of tips, utilizing technology to narrow down potential suspects (clearing some through in-person interviews), employing plainclothes surveillance on a person of interest, and working with the State's Attorney's Office, the subject was identified within days and subsequently charged.

ASSAULT – NORTH FOUR CORNERS PARK

On January 28, Park Police responded to North Four Corners Park Local Park for a large fight involving multiple suspects and a crowd of onlookers. When patrol arrived, the involved individuals fled the area. The fight reportedly involved a handgun and knives. Through keen investigative skills, Detective Wong was able to identify several juvenile participants and the primary aggressor who was charged with multiple criminal counts related to the assault.

THEFT FROM AUTO / DISTRIBUTION OF CDS – BROOKSIDE GARDENS

On July 21, plainclothes Special Assignment Team (SAT) members were conducting surveillance on theft from auto suspects. SAT observed the suspects conducting an illegal narcotics transaction and made the arrest. This led to a subsequent investigation involving an undercover Park Police detective, assigned to the Montgomery County Drug Investigative Unit. Ultimately, one of the defendants was determined to be a person of interest with the DEA Task Force. Within a few days, the multiagency investigation resulted in the drug supplier's arrest by the DEA Task Force with the assistance of SAT Detective Brian Rumsey.

ASSAULT / SHOOTING– GUNNERS BRANCH PARK

On July 25, Park Police and Montgomery County police officers responded for the shooting call at Gunners Branch Park. Arriving officers confirmed that there were three shooting victims. The Criminal Investigations Unit and SAT Detectives arrived at a chaotic scene with multiple victims and several witnesses. Quick action by detectives and officers on scene to identify and interview witnesses provided very specific lookout information. Good teamwork between Park Police and the County Police led to the apprehension of all subjects.



THEFT FROM AUTO – CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK

On October 18, a victim reported a theft from auto that occurred at Cabin John Regional Park. The victim's credit cards were stolen and immediately used at a retail store to purchase multiple gift cards. Through an intensive investigation, and with the assistance of SAT detectives, Detective Wong was able to obtain a positive ID on a female suspect in Florida. The investigation ultimately revealed that the suspect was a member of the South American Theft Group. Detective Wong met with police from the Chilean Embassy who informed him that the suspect had an active warrant for robbery in Chile. They also provided the female suspect's criminal history and known associates. CIU continues to work with federal partners to bring this suspect to justice.

BRANCHES

SUPPORT BRANCH



Quarterly Award Recipient Tammy White

- An Internal review of all **Standard Operating Procedures** has been completed to ensure the accuracy and content of these documents. A protocol for continuous review has been established in the Support Branch.
- We have instituted a robust **inventory and inspection** protocol for assets, equipment, and overtime. We have also mandated and achieved a **95% compliance** rate for our body worn camera program.
- **PowerDMS™** has been added to manage document storage and allow for easy access and storage of critical paperwork.
- Several internal systems have been deployed, such as a virtual roll call program, and a **Frontline Training System** which are designed to provide a much better platform for information sharing.
- We have partnered with PACP to receive weekly data on various **quality of life** complaints to better deploy resources.
- **Motorola Avigilon™** camera systems were installed and deployed at Long Branch and Wheaton facilities. An application for a Byrne Grant was submitted for additional units.
- **Drone Program** – Purchased three drones. Training, policy creation, and implementation were performed.
- M-NCPPC **Alarm and Camera Shops** were transferred to Park Police
- **Communications Section** was moved into the newly constructed wing of Saddlebrook Headquarters.
- **Vesta 911™** was purchased and deployed. Enables us to enhance our dispatch service delivery while improving officer safety.
- **Lexis/Nexis Virtual Crime Center (VCC)** – Greatly increases our ability to map crime trends for quicker identification and closure. In addition, the program provides detectives with improved investigative leads to locate individuals wanted for crimes.
- **Everbridge** – Alert System implemented for more timely and efficient incident notifications and call outs.



MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK POLICE

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DIVISION

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