

UNIVERSITY PLACE BETWEEN THE LINES

MARCH 2024

A City of University Place Publication

A Message from U.P. Police Chief Pat Burke

When I arrived in University Place last year, I was excited to be joining a community where residents, businesses and City staff have a demonstrated record of working together to make U.P. the best it can be.

Seven months later, I can say with certainty that I have not been disappointed.

"It is incredibly rewarding to see people so engaged and eager to work with us to create a safe community."

I have been truly impressed by the feedback members of our department have received during our community events such as National Night Out, Coffee with a Cop and bagging groceries at Trader Joe's. It is incredibly rewarding to see people so engaged and eager to work with us to create a safe community.



U.P. Police Chief Pat Burke

Four of our officers have recently accepted special duty assignments within the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. As a result, four new officers have joined our team. These law enforcement professionals bring diverse talents, backgrounds and skill sets that help us provide outstanding service to the community (see the related story on page 3). Hiring additional staff remains a top priority for me. We are actively working with the Pierce County Sheriff's Department (PCSD) to reach our levy staffing goals.



We also continue to implement additional patrols to increase police visibility, deter crime and address the community's public safety concerns. I'm pleased to report that since June 2023 we have:

- Put an emphasis on combatting shoplifting, making 23 arrests, 29 trespass notifications and recovering thousands of dollars in merchandise.
- Increased visibility patrols on the Bridgeport corridor, racking up 91 traffic stops, 14 arrests, 98 patrol assists and making more than 200 citizen and business contacts.

This spring, we will host regional training for Critical Incident Stress Management for law enforcement personnel from across the region, including members of University Place Police Department and the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. It's an honor to be able to show off our amazing staff, top-notch facilities and outstanding community.

I speak for all members of our department when I say that we are proud of the progress we've made. But we are always open to hearing from you on what we can do better. So if you have feedback, please let me know. I'm grateful for this community and the opportunity to serve it.





UPPD in the Community

When Police Chief Pat Burke took the helm of UPPD last year, he made a commitment to increasing one-on-one interactions with the community. “I wanted to build on what former Chief Greg Premo had started,” Burke said. “Both Chief Premo and I firmly believe that one of the best ways for us to serve the community is to make sure the public has the opportunity to interact with us outside of emergency situations.”

Last year, members of the UPPD participated in Coffee with a Cop at Starbucks, bagged groceries at Trader Joe’s and handed out holiday goodies to shoppers at Green Firs Towne Center. Chief Burke also held Conversations with the Chief,



which give residents and business owners an opportunity to discuss their concerns with him directly and get insights on important topics such as how to keep our children safe.



“We look forward to doing more of these kinds of things in 2024, including a new youth-focused event called Cocoa with a Cop and special self-defense classes for women,” Burke said. “In addition to these efforts, the Public Safety Advisory Commission will be using the City’s FlashVote online surveys to get input on other ways we can engage with the community, including focus groups to gain more detailed insights on key issues.”

To sign up for FlashVote, simply visit www.CityofUP.com and click on the FlashVote icon on the left side of the page or scan the QR code on the back page of this newsletter.

Answering the Call

In response to residents and business owners’ requests for regular updates on police calls for service, the Police Department has launched the Police Blotter on the City’s website (www.CityofUP.com) in 2023.



Based on the number of views the Police Blotter has received, it has proven to be a huge success. It is updated every two weeks and contains descriptions of incidents including traffic stops and arrests as well as updated statistics on violent crimes and property crimes such as car prowling, theft and vandalism.

The Blotter is just another example of our commitment to transparency with the community. There is a link to the blotter in each issue of the City’s Headlines e-newsletter. We encourage people to make sure they are on the mailing list for Headlines since it is a way for us to communicate this information, as well as other important news regarding public safety to the community.

Upcoming Events



Parks Appreciation Day is April 20, 2024



Duck Daze is Saturday, June 1, 2024



Four New Officers Join UPPD

The new year has brought with it four new Pierce County Sheriff's Department officers who have joined the ranks of the University Place Police Department. Brian Saechao brings 17 years of PCSD experience to U.P. He started his career as a corrections officer and has experience as an investigator and use-of-force instructor.

Greg McClendon has been with the PCSD for more than eight years and has specialized training as a firearms instructor and as a field training officer. He is an FBI-certified public safety bomb technician on the PCSD bomb squad and is completing a master's degree in forensic science from Oklahoma State University. He has been in the U.S. Army for 13 years (5 active duty and 8 in the National Guard) as an explosive ordnance disposal officer and an officer candidate school instructor.

Brent Johnson has been with the PCSD for more than 16 years and has served as a community liaison deputy, using his de-escalation skills to help resolve potentially volatile situations before they become full-fledged conflicts. Brittney Chapman is a defensive tactics instructor with PCSD and holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Pierce College.

"They each have special skills that we need to help us further our goal of developing positive police-community relationships."

"I'm really pleased with the depth and breadth of experience these officers bring to the department," said U.P. Police Chief Pat Burke. "They each have special skills that we need to help us further our goal of developing positive police-community relationships."

That is exactly why Officer Chapman is excited to join the UPPD. "When the community feels they can trust its police officers then we can work towards building a stronger as well as safer community overall," she said.



New personnel pictured above, left to right: Officer Greg McClendon, Officer Brian Saechao, Officer Brittney Chapman and Officer Brent Johnson.

Don't Be Fooled by AI Phone Scams

As the use of artificial intelligence (AI) grows, scammers are putting the technology to use to try to extort phony ransom payments from victims, often the elderly.

UPPD warns everyone to be aware of "virtual kidnappings" that threaten harm or violence by claiming falsely that a family member or close associate has been kidnapped and is in imminent danger. Scammers are now using AI to mimic the voices of the alleged kidnap victims to instill even more urgency in their demands.

If you or someone you know has received one of these calls, follow these steps:

- ALWAYS attempt to contact your loved one before paying any ransom.
- Do not provide any details or identifying information about yourself or the alleged victim.
- Ask for answers your loved one would know (pet name, first car, etc.).
- Stall for time. Scammers want to expedite a ransom payment.
- Contact the UPPD non-emergency line at 253.287.4455 or call the FBI at 800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324). You can also email a report at www.fbi.gov/contact-us.



City of University Place
3609 Market Place West, Suite 200
University Place, WA 98466-4488

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Tacoma, Washington
Permit No. 235

ECRWSS
Postal Customer

City Hall

Open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.



3609 Market Place W., Ste 200



253.566.5656



city_hall@cityofup.com



www.cityofup.com

City Council Contacts

Mayor Javier Figueroa	253.682.7379
Mayor Pro Tem Ed Wood	253.677.5707
Council Member Frank Boykin	253.566.5656
Council Member Steve Worthington	253.565.4855
Council Member Denise McCluskey	253.566.5656
Council Member Stan Flemming	253.566.5656
Council Member Melanie Grassi	253.566.5656

National Night Out

Gather your neighbors and get ready to celebrate another National Night Out in U.P.

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, **Aug. 6, 2024** when members of U.P.'s public safety team will join City Council members and City staff in visiting neighborhoods across the city to celebrate a night out against crime.



For more than 25 years, U.P. neighborhoods have turned on their lights and turned out for gatherings that feature everything from potlucks to barbeques, all in a collective demonstration of the power of community connections as a way to deter crime.

Check the next issue of Between the Lines for more details about how and when you can register your neighborhood to be included on the public safety caravan.

Want the Newest Info?

Stay in the know with our bi-weekly e-newsletter "Headlines"! Be the first to hear about events, programs and initiatives shaping your local U.P. community.



E-Newsletter

But it doesn't stop there – join FlashVote to have your voice heard on important topics that matter to you! Sign up today and be a part of the conversation.



FlashVote

Scan the QR codes above to sign up for either of these great opportunities to hear and be heard.

