

# WICKENBURG

*Police Department*



2023  
**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



# Town of Wickenburg

## About Wickenburg, Arizona

Wickenburg lies in the foothills of the Bradshaw Mountains, along the banks of the Hassayampa River one hour from Downtown Phoenix.

Henry Wickenburg came to the area in search of gold. He was rewarded with the discovery of Vulture Mine (1863-1942), where over 340,000 ounces of gold and 260,000 ounces of silver were found. There are still relics around the area that stand as a tribute to these early adventurers, as well as a walking tour around Vulture City, which is adjacent to the present-day Vulture Mine.

Ranchers and farmers discovered the fertile flood plain of the Hassayampa River. The Hassayampa River Preserve lets you escape to a literal oasis with lush, streamside habitat that include many endangered birds and animals. Together, with Henry Wickenburg and the miners, they helped found the young community of Wickenburg in 1863. The Town of Wickenburg was incorporated in 1909.

To learn more about Wickenburg, it's wide-open spaces and why it's considered the roping capital of the world visit:

<https://www.wickenburgaz.gov>

**Type of Government:**  
**Council – Manager**

**Year Established:**  
**1863**

**Land Area:**  
**26.5 square miles**

**Population:**  
**8,340**

**Median Age:**  
**64.4**

**Maricopa County Population:**  
**4,615,909**

**Yavapai County Population:**  
**251,932**

**State of Arizona Population:**  
**7,497,004**

\*Stats per worldpopulationreview.com

# Mayor, Council Members and Town Manager

		Rui Pereira Mayor	
	Kristi Henson Vice-Mayor		Art Rubash Council Member
	Kristy Bedoian Council Member		BG Bratcher Council Member
	Rebecca Rovey Council Member		Brian Jones Council Member
		Stephen Erno Town Manager	

## Message from the Chief

As the Chief of Police, it is my pleasure to present the Wickenburg Police Department's 2023 Annual Report.

Throughout the past year, the members of the Wickenburg Police Department have worked tirelessly to identify and resolve the crime issues impacting our community, while adhering to our three principles of excellence: pride, valor, and service. I am extremely proud of the professionalism and dedication shown by the members of our department. They work, 24/7, risking their lives every day and night to serve and protect our community and visitors alike.

Over the past year, the Wickenburg Police Department has seen an increase in its sworn staffing, including the hiring of 6 new police officers to help fill vacancies in patrol. Along with the hiring of new officers came a generous 2-million-dollar award from the State, that was used to purchase new equipment, vehicles and software. The availability of these funds has gone a long way in assisting the department in its recruiting efforts and mission to better serve our community. The department collaborated with the school district and was awarded a grant to add an additional two school resource officer positions, located at Vulture Peak Middle School and Hassayampa Elementary.

Contained in this document are additional crime statistics, as well as accomplishments which are directly attributed to the hard work of our officers and their community policing efforts. In 2023, Wickenburg experienced a 16% reduction in violent crime, and a 19.7% reduction in property crime while traffic crashes increased by 17.3%. The Wickenburg Police Department response time to priority one calls decreased by 14% from 2022 to 2023 as well.

The Wickenburg Police Department pledges to remain steadfast in its efforts to address crime and the trepidation of crime to keep Wickenburg one of the safest communities in Arizona. On behalf of the men and women of the Wickenburg Police Department, we want to thank you for the wonderful support shown by the staff, citizens, and elected officials of our community.

Les Brown  
Chief of Police



# Our Commitment to the Community

## Vision

We are servant leaders. The care and dedication we feel for our community is expressed every day in the relationships and trust we garner by serving the community with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

## Mission

The Wickenburg Police Department strives for professional excellence, reflected in the quality of service we provide to our citizens. By creating and maintaining partnerships with our community, we are committed to ensuring Wickenburg remains a safe western town.

## Values

- **Pride** — We express pride in our department and community in which we serve, through the quality and professionalism of our work.
- **Service** — We instill trust in the community members and visitors by providing transparent and unbiased law enforcement services.
- **Valor** — We demonstrate our courage and compassion by helping and defending our most vulnerable citizens, dedicating our effort to ensure our community is protected from crime and fear of crime.



# The Department's **CORE** Values

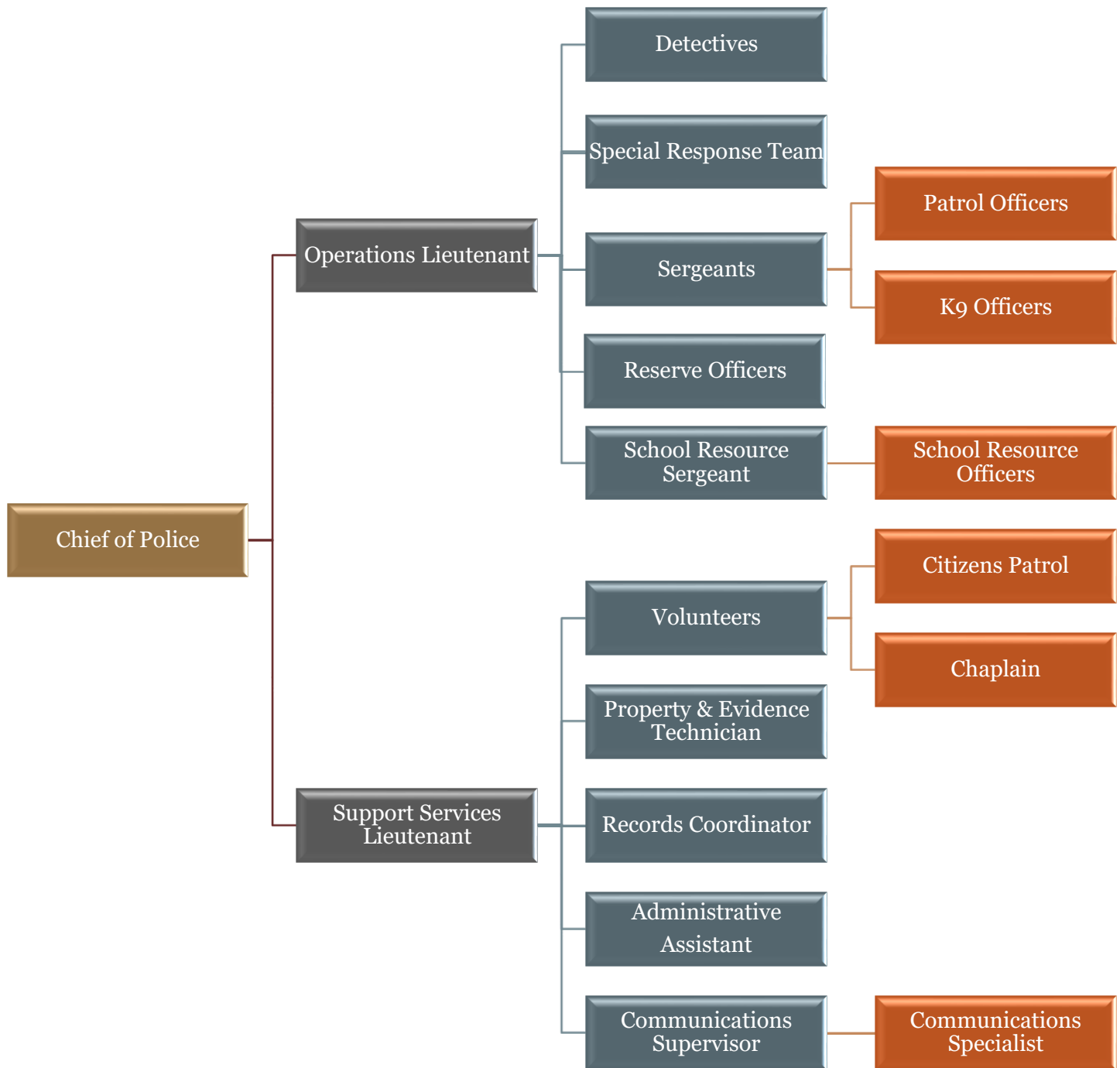
**C – Contacts:** Calls for service. This is the bread and butter of why we are here. Our public needs help, and we provide it. Also, with CONTACTS is focusing on traffic and drug issues, which are salient to us AND our community.

**O – Observation:** This is all of our proactive patrols. Proactive work leads to positive citizen contacts AND crime identification and prevention. Also, think of OBSERVATION as observing YOUR safety and those of our team, and our policies and procedures.

**R – Rapport:** This is our community engagement. The police are the people, and the people are the police. Only the police have been given the honor and responsibility to be chosen BY THE PEOPLE to devote their time and energy to protecting the community. We are the public, do not forget that. These are not my words, rather Sir Robert Peels (founder of modern LE), but they hold true today. We will be active in being professional at all times and build relationships with our citizens through quality service and community engagement opportunities (Coffee with a Cop, Explorers, Cops Who Care, etc.).

**E – Excellence:** We will strive for personal excellence in all we do: Our reputations, how we present ourselves (verbal and dress), our understanding of laws and policies, our reports, our proactivity. Remember our reputation is EVERYTHING. It is almost impossible to get it back once you have tarnished it with one serious event. Build a reputation as a “Go to” person for your profession, one that knows their craft and excels.

# Organizational Structure



**Total Allocated Employees: 34**

Commissioned: 24

Non-Commissioned: 10

**Total Volunteers: 18**

Reserve Officers: 1

Citizen's Patrol: 16

# Community Engagement

## Citizen's Patrol



The Wickenburg Citizen's Patrol is a volunteer branch of the Wickenburg Police Department consisting of 15 community members. In 2022, the Citizen's Patrol provided over 1925 volunteer hours. Members conduct vacation watch on homes, assist with traffic during high volume events, work on special projects, conduct fingerprinting, assist on patrol, and attend meetings and trainings. In addition, Citizen's Patrol members install and maintain the Medical Alert Program (MAP). The MAP allows people with medical problems to live alone with the benefit of a notification device that can contact the Wickenburg Police Dispatch if a medical necessity arises. The Citizen's Patrol is an invaluable asset to the Wickenburg Police Department and the community. If you are interested in becoming a Citizen's Patrol volunteer, please call 928-684-5411 or stop by the Wickenburg Police Department during normal business hours.



## School Resource Officer (SRO)

The Wickenburg Police Department has been staffed with a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) since August of 2017. The position is funded through a federal grant awarded to the Wickenburg Unified School District, which was awarded for an additional three years in 2020, with the focus being at the Wickenburg High School though the officer is designed support all three-district schools located within the Wickenburg community when needed. The current SRO is Officer Joe Lahey, a 16-year veteran of the department, and he spends his days ensuring campus safety, awareness classes and more. In 2021, Officer Lahey was awarded the Law Related Education Officer of the Year by the Arizona Bar Foundation.





## Cops Who Care

In 1982, a collection was taken by local Wickenburg officers that allowed the purchase of Christmas presents for 250 needy children. Following this event, in 1983 a charity was formally founded as Cops Who Care (CWC), a non-profit organization that was comprised of local and surrounding law enforcement officers of multiple agencies. Though Cops Who Care is commonly identified by members of the community as a police department program, it is actually a non-profit organization managed through the volunteer work of Department personnel and community members.

In 2023, Cops Who Care received \$38,325.64 in donations. With those donations, in partnership with the Wickenburg Community Action Program, over 201 families were provided Christmas gifts and other supplies. In total, 536 children from Wickenburg & surrounding communities were given approximately 1072 gifts.

Other events held included the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Car Show & Toy Drive and the annual Easter Egg Hunt held at Coffinger Park. Cops Who Care was also able to provide multiple sponsorships including:

- Wickenburg AYSO
- Wickenburg Little League
- Wickenburg Christian Academy Basketball
- WHS's Future Business Leaders of America's Santa Fest
- Camp Imagination

None of this would have been possible without the generous support and donations of the community. Anybody who is interested in supporting or volunteering for Cops Who Care can reach them at [copswhocare@gmail.com](mailto:copswhocare@gmail.com).

The Cops Who Care board and volunteers wishes to express their profound thank you to the Wickenburg Community and its supporters; "Without our donors and supporters, none of what we do could be possible and we would like to say "THANK YOU!" – Cops Who Care Board

The 2023 board (pictured below) was comprised of Lt. Kenny Lutkiewicz, President; Officer Kris Pedroza, Vice President; Lt. Aaron Hadley, Treasurer; and citizen member Jeana Johnson, Secretary.



\*Photos Courtesy of The Wickenburg Sun

## Coffee with a Cop

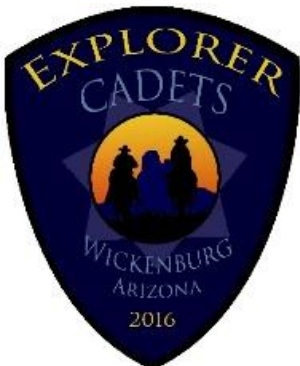
Coffee with A Cop began in 2011, in Hawthorne, California as a way for local police officers to increase interactions with their citizens. Now, in 2022, Coffee with A Cop events are taking place in all 50 states in numerous cities all over the U.S. These events are great opportunities to speak with your local officers in a relaxed setting and ask them a variety of questions whether it is something as simple as what their job entails to concerns one may have within the community.

The Wickenburg Police Department first began holding these events on November 22, 2016 and continues today with an event being held approximately every quarter with the venue rotated through the variety of local businesses.

The main advertisement for this event is on the Wickenburg Police Department's Facebook page.



## Explorers



Explorer Post #1863 of the Wickenburg Police Department was originally founded in 2016 as a way to engage young adults who have an interest in law enforcement whether curiosity or as a possible career. The program is designed to develop a young adult's interest in helping their community in a positive manner. Participants are taught different police tactics, practices, expectations and more while given opportunities to volunteer and engage within the community. Explorer Post #1863 is always looking for new volunteers and participants, and anybody interested can reach out to the program director by calling or visiting the Wickenburg Police Department.

## Complaints & Internal Investigation



## Use of Force Overview

35 Total Number of Incidents	40 Total Number of Reports Received*	1 Number of Incidents Outside of Policy
2 Suspect Injured Requiring Medical Treatment	0 Officer Injured Requiring Medical Treatment	0 K9 Deployment/Bite
4 Less Lethal Discharge	0 Suspect Threatened or Used Potential Deadly Force	0 Suspect Active or Aggravated Resistance

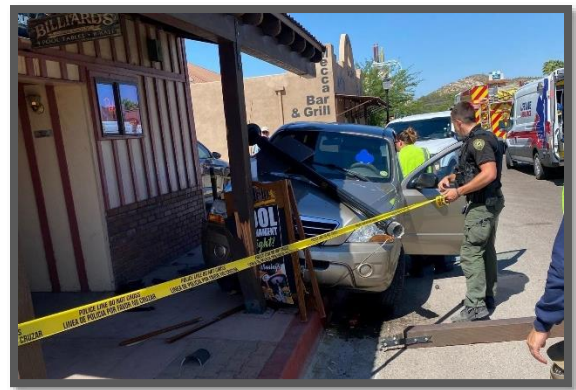
\*More than one report can be received per incident



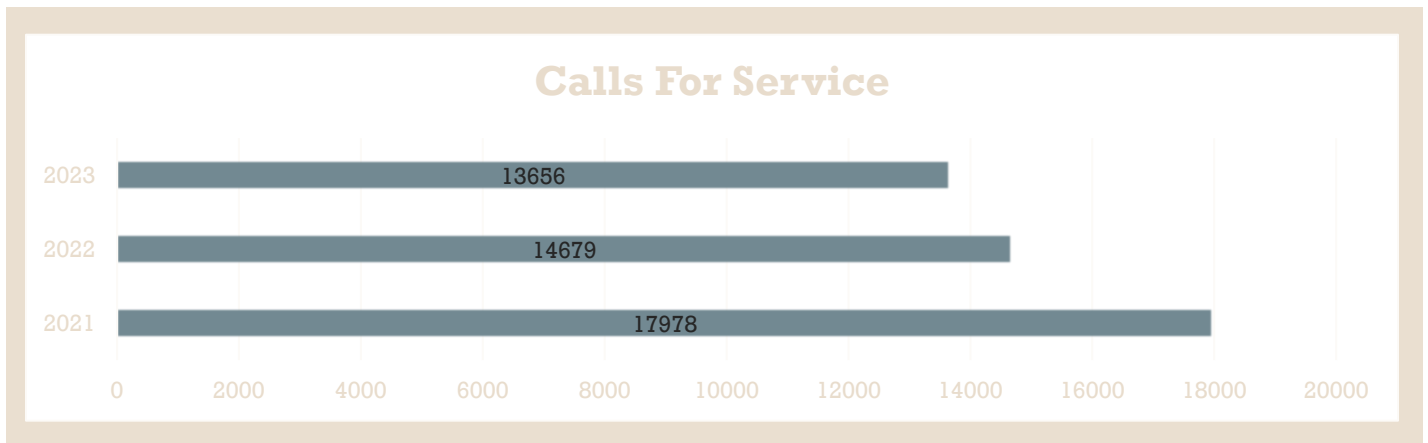
# Patrol Unit

## What we do...

- Prevent Crime and Apprehend Criminals
- Protect Life and Property
- Conduct Preliminary Investigations
- Enforce Traffic Laws
- Impaired Driver Enforcement and Traffic Enforcement for Civic Functions
- Enhance the Quality of Life for Residents and Visitors
- Proactive Policing
- Business Checks
- Build Relationships with Members of the Community

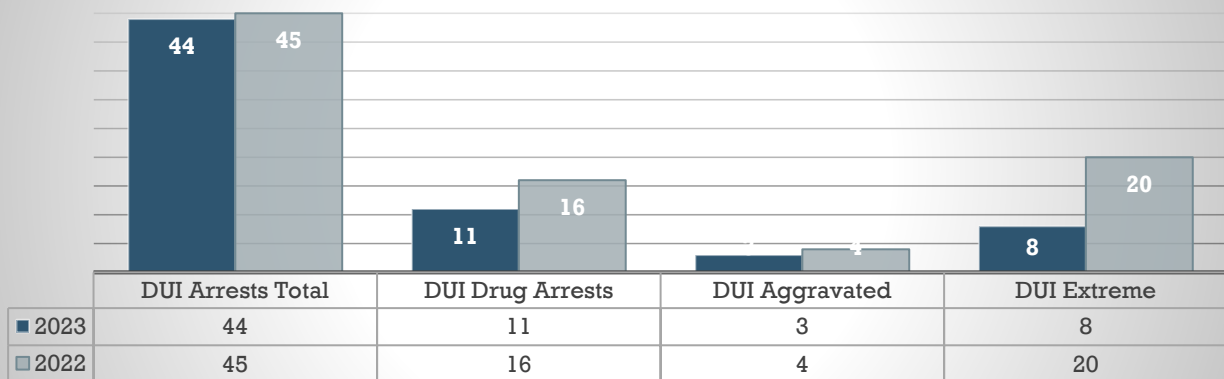


The WPD's patrol operations is the largest section of the department making up 14 of the 20 sworn officers of the Department and almost half of the total of Department personnel. Our patrol officers are trained in a variety of skills that support the Department in its mission and offers services to the community that would normally come from separate specialized personnel in many other departments.



\*Data presented in this report was obtained through our records management software system. This data has been collected on a calendar year, is based on imprecise source data, subject to change and is for general reference only

## DUI

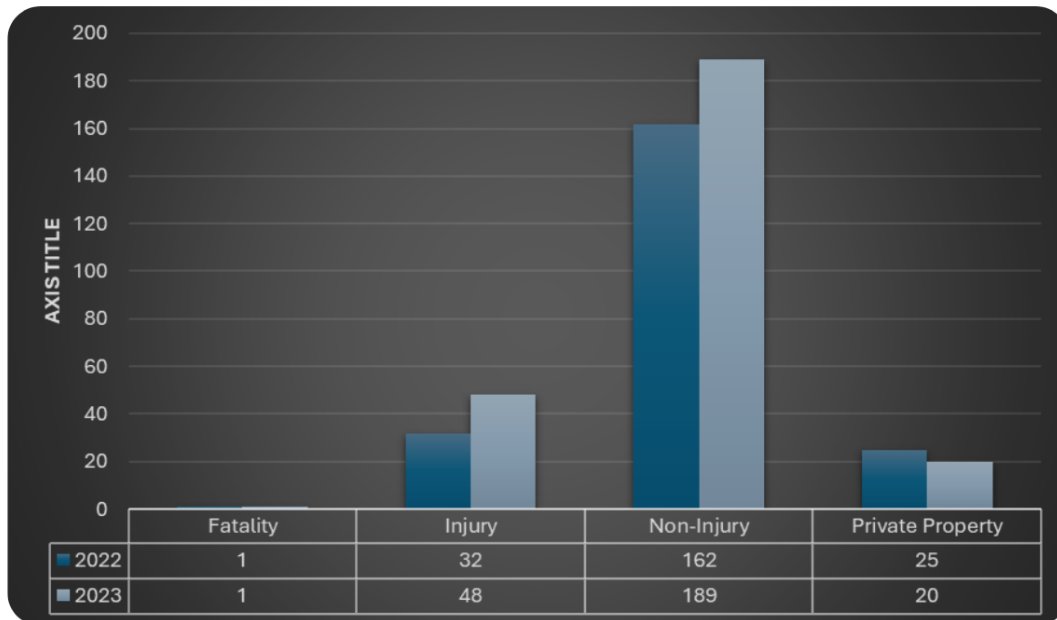


## PART 1 CRIME COMPARISON

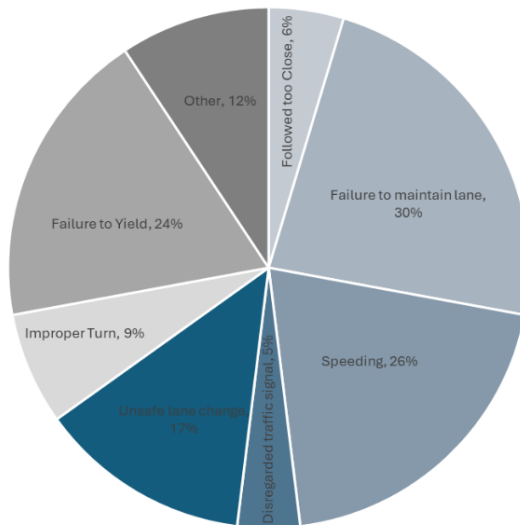
	2023	2022	2021
Homicide	1	0	1
Sexual Assault	4	2	5
Robbery	0	1	1
Assault	34	39	56
Burglary	30	34	20
Larceny	98	120	106
Grand Theft Auto	14	21	23
Arson	0	0	1
Year Totals	181	217	213



# COLLISIONS



## MOST COMMON CAUSES



32%

PERCENT OF  
COLLISIONS THAT  
OCCURRED IN A  
ROUNDBOUT

# Investigations / Detectives

## What we do...

- Primary, Follow-Up, and Supplemental Case Investigation
- Crime Scene Processing
- County Attorney Liaison
- Departmental Representative for Grand Jury



Calls for  
Service  
518

Reports  
150

New Cases  
86

Ongoing  
Cases  
52

# Special Response Team (SRT)

## What we do...

- Made up of members of the Wickenburg Police Department and Fire Department
- Trains for and responds to critical incidents or other high-risk situations such as active shooter response, emergency hostage rescue, barricaded suspects, search warrant service, surveillance, and tracking operations
- Conducts monthly trainings to prepare for their assignment



To be a part of the team, candidates must pass a rigorous physical fitness test, and maintain this level of fitness for annual testing. After the fitness tests, potential members participate in a one-day screening that evaluates the candidate's physical fitness, mental toughness, decision makings, and firearms skills. Upon successful completion of the screening, members attend a basic 40 SWAT operator school, and then further advanced trainings.

# Public Safety Dispatcher

The Communications personnel for the Wickenburg Police Department, and the Wickenburg Fire Department, are the first line of defense between the public and the emergency services they may need.

The Communications Center is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



**ESSENTIAL DUTIES** The following are intended to describe core work functions of this classification. While the level and broad nature of essential duties may not change, specific work tasks will vary over time depending on the Town's needs.

- Receives, evaluates, and prioritizes requests for emergency and non-emergency services from the public, Town employees, and other police agencies; communicates with callers to obtain accurate and essential information; routes calls to Officers through the use of a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.
- Ensures the proper location of officers and other public safety personnel; ensures the safety of officers in the field, responding to calls; maintains proper status of calls and officers; ensures officers and other public safety personnel has appropriate resources for response.
- Provides emotional support to callers.
- Conducts research, enters, updates and retrieves information from computerized databases.
- Monitors and relays information to other agencies through the use of Town traffic cameras, various 911 assistance tools, multi-agency report databases, etc.



## K9 Unit

### Caerus



- Belgian Malinois (2 years old)
- Purchased through K9 Kaos from Vahn Liche (\$9,500)
- Dual purpose patrol/Narcotics

Currently partnered with K9 Officer Amavizca



### Bikkel



- Belgian Malinois/Dutch Shepard (6 years old)
- Purchased through ALECA Circler K grant from K9 Group Holland (\$15,000)
- Dual purpose patrol/Narcotics

Currently partnered with K9 Sergeant LaJeunesse





# Records Unit



## What we do...

- Filing and Maintenance of Case Files
- Document Archiving and Security
- Public Disclosure and Records Requests
- Criminal Statistical Reporting
- Report Processing and Monitoring

Requests  
Processed  
1104

Cases  
Submitted  
210

Files  
Purged  
52

Boxes  
Purged  
30

# Property and Evidence Unit



## What we do...

- Intake, processing, and storage of evidence
- Transporting evidence to/from crime lab
- Transporting evidence to/from county attorney's office and the courts
- Disposing of items once they are no longer needed
- Coordinate and return items to citizens
- Processing of requests for video files

Items  
Impounded  
1286

Guns  
Impounded  
49

Money  
Impounded  
\$23,609

Public  
Requests  
Completed  
386

Items  
Disposed  
107



# Meet the Sergeants!

Name: Brandon Dalley

Time at WPD: 13 years



**Specialties:** SRT / SRO / Firearms Instructor

1. What is the favorite place I have Traveled to? Last summer I took my family on a cruise to Bermuda. Bermuda was very cool! It is a mix of a tropical paradise with the beautiful pink sandy beaches with clear blue water and a splash of history due to the Great Britain historical naval bases there. At times it felt like you were walking through a Pirates of the Caribbean movie set. The people were very friendly as well and were not overly aggressive trying to sell items to tourists. Also, it has a very low crime rate.
2. What would I like to be known/remembered for? I would like to be remembered as being a good husband, father, son and brother.

3. What was the best piece of advice I have been given? I was once told by a wise man that if I wanted my children to be good people and to give them the best chance to succeed in life then I needed to make sure they knew how much I loved their mother.

4. What is my favorite holiday and why? My favorite holiday hands down is Christmas for 2 reasons. First reason is I am a religious fellow and celebrating the birth of Christ would make it special all on its own. The second reason is I get to be Santa Claus! I get so much joy being Santa for my kids. One year I made a contraption and enlisted the help of my brother. When it got close to bedtime my brother secretly climbed up on my roof. My wife and I gathered our kids around in the family room by the fireplace, we were prepping for Santa by putting cookies out and hanging up their stockings. My brother then lifted the contraption and dropped it on the roof causing a sound that would be like reindeer landing he then yelled "Ho Ho Ho" down our chimney. The look on my kids' faces was priceless. One of my best memories ever.

Name: Zach "Mullet Cop" La Jeunesse

Time at WPD: 10+ Years



**Specialties:** K9 Sergeant / DRE / Collision Reconstruction / Radar & Lidar Instructor

1. What is your favorite season of the year and why? Arizona season because there is only one.
2. If you were a vegetable, what vegetable would you be and why? A tomato, because is it really a vegetable or is it a fruit?
3. If you could be in any movie, what would it be and what character would you play? Pirates of the Caribbean, Captain Jack Sparrow
4. What is your favorite TV show? The Red Green Show

Name: Jared Loesing

Time at WPD: 5 Years



Specialties: FTO Coordinator

1. If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? In n Out Burger
2. If you could be in any movie, what would it be and what character would you play? Memphis Rain from Gone in 60 Seconds
3. If you could pick up a new skill in an instant, what would it be? Firefighter
4. If you could meet any historical figure, who would you choose and why? James Braddock. I'd like to know how he pulled off winning the title again against such odds.

Name: Kristopher Pedroza

Time at WPD: 8 Years

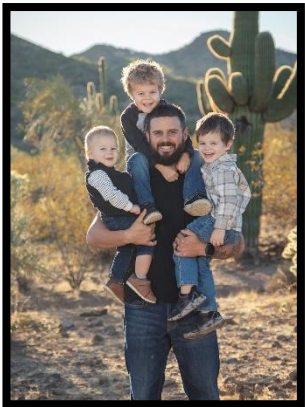


Specialties: Defensive Tactics Instructor / Taser Instructor

1. You must sing Karaoke, what song do you pick? Journey-Don't Stop Believin' and would be a duet with Sgt. Loesing.
2. If you could pick up a new skill in an instant, what would it be? Juggling chainsaws that are on fire.
3. What's the best piece of advice you have ever been given? "If you can dodge a wrench, you can dodge a ball."
4. What's your favorite family tradition? Making tamales during the holidays.

Name: Aaron Urlaub

Time at WPD: 10 Years



Specialties: SRT / Defensive Tactics Instructor

1. If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? Steak and vegetables.
2. What book did you read that changed your life the most? Bible
3. What would you like to be known/remembered for? Reliable
4. What's your favorite family tradition? Friday with the boys

# Training

Listed below are training courses completed by sworn and professional staff. Training courses are tailored to the individual needs of the person and based upon Department needs and current assignments.

- Annual Firearms Qualifications (handgun, rifle, and less-lethal munitions)
- Decision-Making Qualifications
- Taser Training & Annual Taser Certifications
- Annual SWAT & Monthly SRT In-Service Training
- General Instructor School
- Defensive Tactics
- Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Training
- Property & Evidence Management
- Monthly K9 In-Service Training
- AZ Tactical Officer Association Conference
- AZPOST Basic Leadership Academy
- WPD Rifle Operator Class
- K9 Academy
- AZ Homicide Association 40-hour Training
- Internal Affairs (IA) Training
- AR15 & Glock Armors Certification
- Active Shooter Training
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Resilience Training
- ALEAP Accreditation Conference
- AZLERMA Conference
- TraCS Training





## Accomplishments & Highlights

- Obtained \$20,000 in GOHS grants for personnel funding of traffic safety details.
- Obtained new FTO, Policy, and Schedule software through PowerDMS.
- Switched CAD/RMS systems.
- Migrated over to the State's traffic forms server (TraCS).
- Received our LPR cameras; to date we've installed 2 cameras.
- Conducted a Mass Casualty Drill with Police, Fire, Ambulance service, Hospital, and School District. (this may be 2024?)
- Procured 15 new patrol vehicles, 13 patrol vehicles and 2 traffic vehicles.
- Started a West Valley Speed and Aggressive driving task force.
- Obtained 2 more drones for our UAS program.
- Added Cradle points to all our new vehicles.
- Obtained a speed/message trailer and a fixed speed sign for traffic safety.
- Received a State funded grant for \$2 million.
- Purchased new Command vehicle and Rescue vehicle
- New handguns and rifles for Department
- New Ballistic shields purchased for squads
- New less lethal systems purchased for squads
- New tasers for all officers



## Awards

<b>Officer of the Year</b>	
<b>Robert Pendergast</b> Patrol Officer	
<b>Firearm Proficiency Award</b>	
<b>Master Proficiency</b>	<b>Expert Proficiency</b>
Brandon Dalley Zach La Jeunesse Kenny Lutkiewicz	Nate Amavizca Christopher D’orazio Aaron Hadley Jared Loesing Kristopher Pedroza Aaron Urlaub

## Promotions – New Hires

<b>Promotions</b>	
<b>Ezra Boone</b> Dispatch to Patrol Officer	
<b>New Hires</b>	
<b>Austin Andrews</b> Patrol Officer	<b>Sheridyn Rupp</b> Patrol Officer
<b>Vincent Meno</b> Patrol Officer	<b>Sydney Titus</b> Patrol Officer
<b>Ronaldo Ruiz</b> Patrol Officer	<b>Chad De Aguiar</b> Patrol Officer
<b>Jakob Rubash</b> Recruit	<b>Lydia Valencia</b> Communications Specialist