



# College Place in Review

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2015

## Mayor's Message

### Quick Fact:

City Water Usage

**December 2014**  
11,895,000

**December 2013**  
12,690,000

**YTD 2014**  
429,267,000

**Total 2013**  
411,766,000

### Your City Representatives Mayor

Julie L. Scott

### Council Members

Melissa Williams  
Adam Keatts  
Marge Nyhagen  
Loren Peterson  
William Jenkins  
Larry Dickerson  
Bernie Yanke

### City Administrator

Patrick H. Reay

### The College Place Police Department

Sitting down to chat with College Place Police Chief Dennis Lepiane gives one the opportunity to get updated on several decades of department history and practice, and community changes – since he has been connected with the force since 1973, and is the longest serving police chief in Washington State. Lepiane describes that the nature and frequency of crime has changed in our community, and so have the requirements for training, intervention, and skill of the police department staff and officers.

“Take something like domestic violence,” describes Chief Lepiane, “when I started in the 70s, we once had around 30 calls for assistance at the same residence – there was no mandatory requirement for how that call was handled. Now we have very specific protocols, information packets, and advocates for families. The goal is to avoid any escalation and provide resources – whether or not an arrest is made.” Adds the Chief: “All of our officers have to be very well trained and well informed on how to specifically handle different calls for service.”

The CPPD is currently staffed with eight

officers (including two new officers just hired in the last quarter of 2014), five reserve officers, one sergeant and one detective, as well as the busy administrative team that supports all of them.

In 2014 the department had 3,732 calls for service (which averages over ten calls per day, but which of course never divides up that simply). The three overall categories that involved reports and arrests are thefts/burglaries, fraud, and assault. The Chief observes that, although the city has benefited in tax revenue from our big box retailers, College Place has also seen a sharp increase in reports of and arrests for shoplifting.

Other criminal activity that the police department deals with regularly are frauds associated with credit cards and cell phones. An increase in gang related activity in our entire area (and nationally as well) has also been noteworthy over the last two decades. Drug related problems have also been a steady issue, though methamphetamine use has declined lately while heroin is of significant concern. Citizens suffering with mental illnesses have also involve the police department to assist with behavioral and other issues.

**City Hall**  
**625 S. College Ave**  
**College Place, WA 99324**

**Phone Numbers:**

City Hall—529-1200  
Utilities—Ext. 11  
Building/Planning/Public  
Works/Engineering  
525-0510  
Fire Dept.  
529-6506  
Police —525-7778 or 7773  
Dispatch—527-1960

**Municipal Building Hours:**

Monday through Thursday  
8:00 a.m. To  
5:00 p.m.  
Friday  
8:00 a.m. to  
4:00 p.m.



College Place features large numbers of college-aged and elderly adults, and these two demographic groups account for two specific types of police investigation: fraud (the older population is statistically more likely to be the target of phone and mail fraud) and car prowls and stolen bicycles (many college students use bikes and/or store valuable items in their vehicles).

Chief Lepiane also has a fascinating collection of interesting and varied stories across his career – from the calls to find lost parakeets to the calls about neighbors involved in various activities. In 2014, one of the calls concerned the passing of fraudulent checks at a local retailer. The police department’s investigation resulted in the arrest of a string of forgers across several states who actually had printers and computers to create forged documents in the car parked outside the establishment.

Every police force also has to be prepared for very serious crime and multiple injuries and arrests – even as we all hope that we never have to encounter that in our city. The new high school will involve the police force more directly with students, staff and families, which involves more oversight and training.

The CPPD is working on a proposal for a school resource officer when the new high school is completed and fully operational; they will be working with the school district to make that possible.

Every time we see a patrol car we are reminded of the College Place police department motto to support Community Pride Protection and Dedication. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their service.

**CARS Project Update:**

There has been a slight delay in getting the College Avenue/Rose Street project bid process completed. “We found that our engineering estimate for the project was lower than the four bids received by more than we were comfortable awarding in early January,” says City Administrator Pat Reay.

So the next step is to modify the bid specifications enough to be in line with the project’s budget and the city’s available funding. “We know we can make it work, we just collected new information that forces some recalculation,” says Reay. “Thankfully the winter allows a bit of down time for these readjustments before prime construction time begins.”