



November 9, 2010

NEW OCSO SHERIFF LARRY ASHLEY SWORN-IN

Newly elected Okaloosa County Sheriff Larry Ashley was sworn-in Monday afternoon during a ceremony at the Northwest Florida Fairgrounds. Ashley becomes the first Okaloosa Sheriff elected from within the agency's ranks, having started at the OCSO in 1990 and risen to Chief Deputy under former Sheriff Ed Spooner.

Sheriff Ashley says he will focus on numerous goals, to include maintaining the Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation first achieved in July, consolidating communications to save taxpayers money, and implementing physical fitness standards for sworn officers.

The title Chief Deputy has been eliminated and replaced with Undersheriff. The new Undersheriff is former Special Agent in Charge for Eglin Air Force Base's Office of Special Investigations, Don Adams. Undersheriff Adams is also a former Okaloosa County Deputy.

As part of his reorganization, Ashley has effectively eliminated one Major position and boosted the number of Captains from five to six. In announcing his new Command Staff, Ashley noted that every sworn member has started as a road patrol deputy for the OCSO and has a deep-rooted commitment to the local area with vast local experience and knowledge: Along with Undersheriff Adams, sworn members of the Command Staff are:

Major Greg Gaddis – Director of Operations

Major J.D. Peacock- Director of Administration

Captain Arnold Brown – Chief of Investigations

Capt. Paul Brown – North District Patrol Division

Capt. Ken LaPee- Central District Patrol Division

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Captain Ted Pecot – East District Patrol Division

Captain Tony Wasden – Special Operations Division

Captain Arnold Brown – Investigations Division

Captain Ron Gay – Professional Standards Division

Lt. Charlie Nix – Special Operations Division

Lt. Mike Card – Drug Task Force

Steve Hurm – Head of Legal Services

Capt. Terry Watkins – Sheriff's Posse

Sheriff Ashley says he wants the agency to focus on its common mission of serving the public through unity of purpose, an emphasis on acting with honesty and fairness, being accountable and transparent, and demonstrating respect for both citizens and the privilege of enforcing the law.

“I look forward to working alongside the men and women of the OCSO who share the concept of teamwork and unity to accomplish that mission,” said Sheriff Ashley. “My decisions on realignment and reorganization of this agency are made in what I believe to be the best interests of the Sheriff's Office in moving forward in a positive direction with a shared vision. We need people on our team who I can count on to be willing participants in implementing the public safety initiatives I feel are important to our families, our neighbors, our citizens and visitors alike.”

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