

GPD promotes four more

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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Hart looks out for fellow officers

Gallup Police Department Chief Phillip Hart promoted four officers in a formal ceremony held Aug. 26 at the El Morro Theatre at 207 W. Coal Ave.

Several dozen officers, family members, and friends gathered at the theater to honor the officers who have moved up in the ranks. The promotions come at a time when the police department is going through some senior departmental retirements.

“Each of these officers is deserving,” Hart said. “They’ve earned the respect of everyone in the community, most of all their fellow officers.”

Hart said at least one of the promoted officers has already begun serving in the new position, and the others are moving into their new assignments as the promotions take effect through the ranks.

Hart told the officers and their families that their jobs and lives will change with the promotions and the additional responsibilities that accompany them, but he’s confident the officers will rise to the challenges.

A pin was attached to each officer by a family member.

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Franklin Boyd

Boyd was promoted from captain to deputy police chief, second in command at the department.

Boyd, who hails from Ft. Defiance, Ariz., was acting police chief for about eight months prior to the arrival of Hart. He was promoted to captain about four months before former Gallup Police Chief Robert Cron's retirement earlier this year.

"This isn't about me," Boyd said after receiving the promotion. "This is about the other people here with me. They're going to command the future."

Mark Spencer

Spencer was promoted from patrolman to sergeant.

"It's something that I'm very thankful for," Spencer said, noting that he'll now be with the day shift as a result of the promotion. "Today is a special day."

A 12-year veteran originally from Red Rock, Spencer has worked in the detective division for a number of years.

Francie Martinez

Martinez, who attended the police academy with Spencer, was promoted from patrolman to lieutenant. Martinez is a career Gallup officer.

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Edwin Yazzie

Yazzie was promoted from lieutenant to captain. Hart noted that Yazzie has filled almost all police roles at the department while in Gallup — from narcotics to patrol to the detective division. Most recently, he oversees the K-9 unit.

Gallup City Councilor Linda Garcia, a retired municipal legal clerk and one of a few council members who attended the promotional ceremony, said, “I’ve worked with each of them over the years. They are very deserving of the honor.”

Mayor Jackie McKinney said Hart, who was hired at the end of June, is off to a good start.

“The department has seen its share of retirements and vacancies this year alone,” McKinney said. “The new chief has things moving in the right direction.”

Cron and former deputy police chief John Allen retired within months of one another.

The most recent promotions at the GPD were Nicola Martinez, Anthony Seciwa, and Terrance Peyketewa, each to the rank of sergeant.

Marinda Spencer, public information officer with the GPD, said there will likely be more promotions within the next few months.

***By Bernie Dotson
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