









Galvin accepts job as Albuquerque police chief

BY ROBIN ERB
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Chief Gerald Galvin, who in less than four years transformed Toledo's police department, yesterday accepted the chief's post in the much-larger Albuquerque, N.M., police department.

He plans to take the \$101,500 position by June 1. The move gives the California native a \$17,500 pay raise and puts him closer to his family.

Mayor Carty Finkbeiner has set up a five-member committee to look for a new chief. The members are Tom Kovacik, the city's chief operation officer/safety director; Fire Chief Mike Bell, Lucas County Sheriff James Telb; Marcia Serio, director of the city's human resources department, and Dennis Morgan, executive director of the Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority.

An interim chief has not been named, but the mayor said he intends to name one before Chief

Galvin's last day. The chief said he likely will leave Toledo in late May.

Names of possible permanent replacements are being bounced around, including those of the department's three deputy chiefs - Nate Ford, Mike Navarre, and Michael Schroeder - several captains and lieutenants, and others.

Chief Galvin said it is very difficult to leave Toledo.

"I hope people understand that

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Galvin

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"I'm not running from anything in Toledo," he said yesterday during a phone interview from Albuquerque. "The job there has been the most difficult job, the most challenging job, and the most frustrating job. But it's also the best job I've ever had."

Chief Galvin came to Toledo in July, 1994, from the 225-member Vallejo, Calif., police department.

Albuquerque Mayor Jim Baca, who was elected in October, announced the decision to hire Chief Galvin during a news conference. The city's acting police chief, who was a close contender for the post, will be Chief Galvin's deputy chief.

Chief Galvin said he will make a recommendation to Mayor Finkbeiner about his successor. He declined to elaborate.

Some members of the department suggested the possibility of the return of former Deputy Chief James Wiegand, who was acting chief but was passed over when Chief Galvin arrived.

In January, Chief Wiegand left the department to become chief of the Bowling Green State University police department.

"I'm not going to rule out anything at this point," he said yesterday. "It's premature for me to say I'm not interested, but it's also premature for me to say I am



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Chief Galvin says he will likely leave Toledo in late May. He came here in July, 1994, from the Vallejo, Calif., police department.

interested."

D. Michael Collins, president of the Toledo Police Patrolman's Association, said he "probably" will apply for the post.

"I believe I'm a qualified candidate," he said. Community policing really is beat integrity and "good traditional police work," he said. "I embrace the concept that is more far-reaching than a buzzword."

In many ways, Chief Galvin's transition to Albuquerque echoes his move to Toledo in 1994 after a nationwide search by Mr. Finkbeiner.

In June, he will join an administration of a newly elected mayor whose candidacy focused on community policing and who bypassed a police department insider for the chief's job.

Chief Galvin came to Toledo - as he will go to Albuquerque - promising to make changes despite inevitable resistance.

In Albuquerque, the department has opened some substations in its move toward community policing, Mayor Baca said.

"But those changes are mostly mechanical. I'm not sure if we've changed the culture," he said.

In Toledo nearly four years ago, Chief Galvin immediately tackled the logistics of decentralization. Six months after he arrived, the Scott Park district station reopened in central Toledo, followed by a new Northwest district station in West Toledo and a handful of neighborhood offices.

In downtown, the chief renovated the long-neglected headquarters - from buying new furniture and reassigning office space to ordering state-of-the-art police equipment and computers. He armed officers with new guns and updated the vehicle fleet.

Yesterday, Sgt. J.P. Smith, who coordinated many of the renovations, walked through the building pointing out new paint, new carpet, new furniture, and new windows. Until four years ago, Sergeant Smith said, the aging building was literally falling apart.

"The joke used to be that getting new carpet meant getting matching duct tape to hold it together," he said. "Galvin had the guts to come in here, spend the money, and fix this building," he said.

Perhaps Chief Galvin's most visi-

ble legacy was officers he placed on motorcycles, bicycles, and horses.

Some initially complained that the moves spread the department already short on manpower - too thin. But yesterday, even his most vocal detractors credited him with placing the approximately two dozen officers in Toledo's schools.

"He came in with some progressive ideas, and that was one of his better ones," Mr. Collins said.

Added Ron Korsog, president of the Toledo Police Command Officers Association: "You had to give him credit for some things."

Still, many officers complained privately that changes happened too suddenly. A few dubbed the chief "The Great Galvini."

Fragmenting police units, especially the detective bureau, broke critical communication and hampered investigations, they said.

In February, it seemed that Mr. Finkbeiner, too, had lost some patience with the chief. Chief Galvin asked for a police class in the 1998 budget, but Mr. Finkbeiner argued that the chief was overspending police funds.

"The chief has been known to want his cake and eat it, too," Mr. Finkbeiner said.

In their most high-profile dispute, the patrolman's union took Chief Galvin to court over his plan to split two-officer cars into one-officer cars. Officers argued that the move threatened their safety. The issue is still tied up in court.

Mayor names deputy chief Galvin fill-in

BY ROBIN ERB
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A 20-year Toledo police veteran has been named the department's interim chief while Mayor Carty Finkbeiner searches for a new chief.

Deputy Chief Mike Navarre, 47, will replace Chief Gerald Galvin May 15.

Chief Galvin has accepted the chief's post of the larger Albuquerque, N.M., police department.

Mr. Finkbeiner said he expects to find a permanent replacement within 90 days of Chief Galvin's departure.

Chief Navarre, who heads the department's administrative services bureau, is on vacation this week and could not be reached for comment.

He has not said whether he will apply for the permanent post.

He was hired in 1977, rose through the ranks, and was named deputy chief in 1994.

He oversees the personnel, fiscal affairs, training, public affairs, and inspection offices.

His father, James, is a retired Toledo police captain,

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Deputy

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and his brother, Danny, is one of the department's detectives.

Mr. Finkbeiner said he will look nationwide for someone "with character and integrity" who "is a team player" to replace Chief Galvin.

Equally important, though, is that the new chief carry on Chief Galvin's moves toward community policing, Mr. Finkbeiner said.

Mr. Finkbeiner said he prefers to hire within Toledo's ranks and will consider the department's three deputy chiefs and any other officer who is interested.

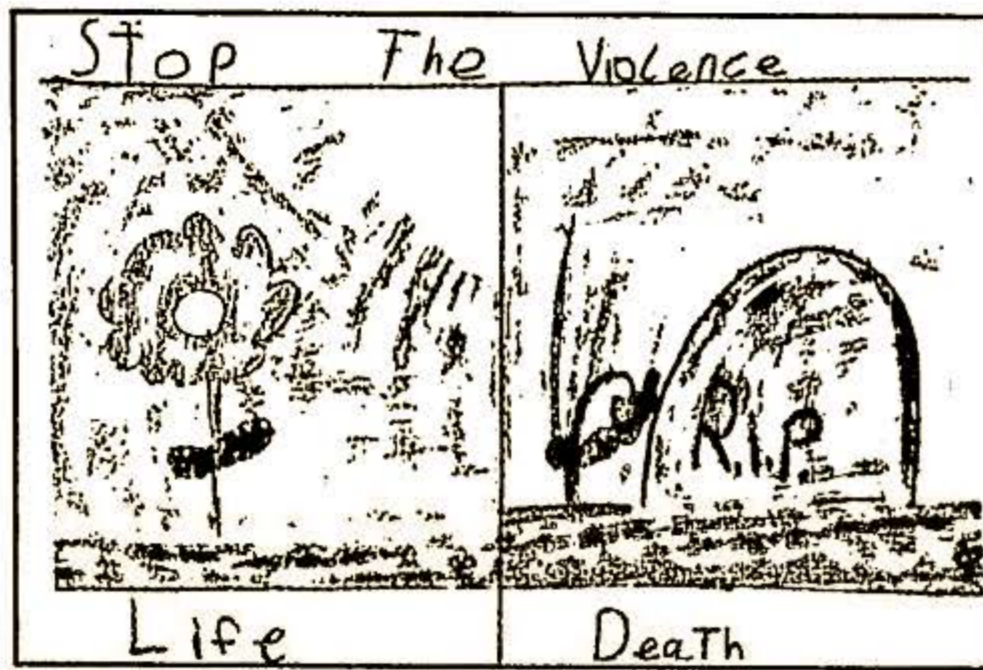
The department's two other deputy chiefs, Nate Ford, 48, and Mike Schroeder, 50, also have not said whether they will apply for the chief's post.

"There's more than a single qualified candidate in Toledo," Mr. Finkbeiner said.

But so far, only one person has announced he will apply for the position.

D. Michael Collins, of the Toledo Police Patrolman's Association, said that his years as the union's president have given him the experience and the insight to run the department.

A poster by Ben Voss that was sent to the police chief's office is symbolic of how classmates of 10-year-old Deontre Hicks have been trying to deal with the senseless violence that claimed his life.



BLADE PHOTO BY DON SIMMONS

Police Chief Gerald Galvin talks with the pupils in Karen Packard's classroom at Sherman Elementary School.

4th graders quiz police chief

They want answers about friend's slaying, guns, and gangs

BY ROBIN ERB
BLADE STAFF WRITER

They wanted to know why their friend's murderer hasn't been caught.

They wanted to be told the killer wouldn't kill again.

They are fourth graders and they grilled Toledo police Chief Gerald Galvin yesterday with impossible questions about life and death, about guns and gangs.

Their pointed questions were because someone pulled out a rifle in the early morning darkness March 7 and

fired on a classmate's Austin Street home. Deontre Hicks, 10, had been sleeping on the living room couch.

Described as a rambunctious, friendly honor-roll student who worried about violence in his neighborhood, he died almost immediately after a bullet hit him in the head.

"They weren't after your classmate," Chief Galvin told the Sherman Elementary School fourth graders.

"He was an absolute innocent person sleeping on the couch."

While police have been frustrated by a lack of solid leads in the case,

Deontre's classmates have written letters and colored posters to memorialize him. They're asking President Clinton, U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur, and Chief Galvin to put a stop to violence, teacher Karen Packard said.

In a poster sent to the chief's office, a colorful tree with outstretched branches represented life. Next to it was a similar picture of the tree.

It was starkly crayoned with black and gray and brown.

Yesterday, the youngsters were

after more than grief counseling. They demanded answers.

They interrogated the chief about suspects and evidence. Could the gunman get the death penalty? Was it a drive-by shooting?

"What happens if they kill someone again and you can't find them?" Kenneth Harris asked.

They wanted answers to the clearly impossible.

"Why do we have people with guns?" Ben Voss wanted to know.

"Ain't guns supposed to protect people?" Amanda Chegar asked, glancing at the chief's handgun.

"Why do people join gangs?" Reggie Boughton asked.

"Is it true that when you catch [Deontre's killer], he might get out of jail?" Raymond Johnson wondered.

The chief tried to answer each of the student's questions with carefully worded responses.

Then Tabetha Knop raised her hand. She looked at the chief, and almost apologetically explained: she still didn't understand.

Why did Deontre have to die?

The chief paused several seconds, began a sentence, stepped back, and paused again.

"No one knew Deontre was there and they were not going to shoot at him," he said. "They just shot at the house, without knowing who was in the house."

Indeed, there's a possibility, the chief conceded to the youngsters, that the case will never be solved.