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By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader

At the beginning of this month, two members of the Liberal Police Department took another step up the ladder of furthering their respective careers. According to Chief of Police Al Sill, two officers have proven themselves worthy to be referred to as Captain Jason Ott and Captain Dave Odle.

When Sill took over as Chief of Police, he put in place several goals to better the department and in turn, better the community. Those goals are as follows:

Community Goals:

- o Reduce crime and the fear of crime

- o Improve the quality of life in neighborhoods
- o Improve the community and police partnerships

Organizational Goals:

- o Develop and encourage personnel

- o Improve accountability

In Sill's opinion, both officers took the goals seriously and have dedicated themselves to meeting all the particular goals.

“Both Captain Ott and Captain Odle have a strong commitment to the police department and they have a great understanding of the philosophies that I have set forth in what we are trying to achieve,”

Sill said. “When I took this office over, I laid out a strategic plan that outlines specific goals, and I think they have a strong commitment toward those goals.

“They have an understanding of what we are trying to achieve with those goals,” he added. “I think they work very hard at trying to come up with strategies and implement new approaches.”

Capt. Dave Odle has been with the Liberal Police Department for 12 years. He feels that his promotion will further educate him about the administrative side of the department.

“Coming into this is going to be an interesting transition for me, because I have always been more on the operations side,” Odle said.

“Now, I am starting to see things more on the administrative side of it. It is a neat experience for me, because I am really starting to see how the department works on a day-to-day basis.

“I am starting to see the big picture now,” he added. “That is actually really a good thing for me – it is a side of the department I have never dealt with before. You can see how everything comes together, things don’t just happen – people make things happen.”

Odle credits his positive attitude and willingness to learn from his fellow officers for his promotion.

“You have got to keep a good attitude with this job, if you let it get you down and have a bad day, that will shoot you in the foot,” he said. “Try to keep it positive and it makes your life go a

lot better.

“And watch everybody around you,” he explained. “See what is working for them and what is not working for them and learn from their mistakes and then change what you need to do to point you in the right direction.”

Ott, an officer for nine years, feels that although becoming a captain is quite a challenge, it is a challenge he is happy to take on.

“It is definitely an intimidating challenge, but I feel like it is something I can definitely do,” Ott said. “It’s definitely an honor to be named captain.”

Ott feels that the fact that he has gone through the ranks and he has paid his dues made him a good candidate for the position.

“I started out as a patrol officer here at the police department after graduating college,” he said. “Then I became a detective, then detective sergeant.

“I left the police department for a short time and went and ran the drug task force for the district attorney’s office for the panhandle of Oklahoma” he continued. “I ran that task force for about 8 months or so and then felt like it was a better thing for me to come back to the police department, so I did. They brought me back in and assigned me to the investigative division as sergeant of special crimes. Then shortly after Al became chief, I was promoted to investigations lieutenant, and I did that until recently.”

Chief Sill said he is proud of his new captains and feels they will continue to be an asset to the Liberal Police Department.

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