

City Talk for Aug. 24, 2022
Police Department
Charles Husted, chief of Police

Parting thoughts

I am saddened to share my final City Talk column within the *Red Rock News*, but thankful for the opportunity to express some parting thoughts as I retire from my 34-year public safety career at the end of August. Policing has surely changed over the years, but certainly not at the accelerated pace we've experienced in the past few years. Thankfully, we have a progressive police organization in Sedona, staffed with talented and dedicated public servants who are not resistant to necessary change. For example, since arriving in Sedona in April 2019, we've launched a contemporary policy manual, began deploying body-worn cameras, enhanced our in-service training, focused our community oriented policing approach, improved our hiring selection process, pursued a facility remodel that will better serve our existing and future police department team members, and much more. Furthermore, there are additional positive change initiatives underway, such as raising our bar to achieve state accreditation, that will further support our ability to be the best law enforcement organization for our community.

Much of this important work and positive change has occurred while also navigating the intense challenges associated with an unprecedented pandemic. While this speaks to the excellence of your Sedona Police Department, we remain mindful of and attentive to the necessity of always striving to do better. This attention fuels our foundational motto, "Selfless Service For ALL."

A fundamental factor to fulfilling our objective in keeping our city safe is the broad level of community support and engagement we experience daily. The father of contemporary policing, Sir Robert Peel, stated that our relationship with the public is one which "gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police." We value the positive relationship that exists with our community and will never take your support for granted. Additionally, it's critical to remember that engaged communities are safer communities. Our collaborative partnerships are essential aspects of successful public safety in our great city. In other words, together we can continue to help ensure Sedona remains a safe and enjoyable place for all to enjoy.

In closing, I'd like to circle back to a point I made in my 2020 City Talk: I shared a lesson I learned from my mom in which she so wisely stated that "kindness begets kindness."

Two years later, I continue to be reminded every day that authentic kindness towards one another helps make our community healthier and more peaceful. Having the opportunity to serve a community where kindness and peace are valued has been a joy. I am thankful and honored to conclude my public safety career in service to our incredible community and in leadership of our gifted Sedona Police Department. I know that whoever steps in these Chief of Police shoes next will pick up where I left off, valuing the department's strong relationship with the community, commitment to continuous improvement and forward-looking community policing approach. I won't forget the unwavering support and the many friendships that have been forged during my time in Sedona. And thank you to everyone who helped create the perfect bookend to my career.