

Police Chief Ray Osborne's Speech at His Swearing-In Ceremony Wednesday at Darien Town Hall

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Date : March 16, 2017



Darien's new police chief, Ray Osborne, gave these comments Wednesday after he was sworn in as the town's 10th chief of police in Darien Town Hall:

[Darienite.com will publish a story about the event, but we wanted to publish the new chief's comments sooner. A few short phrases were not picked up in the recording made by Darienite.com, but we believed we have all the important statements. The event was recorded by Darien TV79, which likely has all the words.]

Before making a few comments, I would just like to take the opportunity to thank a few people.

First, I would like to thank the Darien Police Commission for the confidence they have shown in me for appointing me to be chief of the Darien Police Department. The chief's office comes with some awesome responsibilities, and thank you for the faith that you've shown me. [...]

Secondly, I would like to thank my good friend, Duane Lovello. Duane spent the last 35 years at the Darien Police Department and served his last 12 years as chief. Chief Lovello has truly brought the Darien Police Department into the 21st century and has left us in excellent shape, and that's going to make my transition a lot easier.

And thank you to everyone else who took the time out of your busy schedules to be here tonight, especially all the Darien PD retirees that I've worked with over the years. Your presence here means a lot. Thank you.

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Those of us in law enforcement know that no police officer can truly be successful without the support of their family. The hours, the odd shifts, the stress, the missed holidays and birthdays and everything else that goes with this job takes a huge toll on family life sometimes, and I'm so fortunate that I have such a great, supportive family.

Thanks to my son, Ray, who couldn't be here today — he's a Navy lieutenant who's on assignment in Norfolk, Va. — my daughters, Amanda and Christie, and of course my beautiful and wonderful wife, Susan, putting up with my schedule and [...] all of the events over the years [...] Thank you.

You should know that all my family played a huge role in my promotions. [...] I know that my [daughters] Amanda and Christie, who are here tonight, have very fond memories of reading the promotional test quiz books to me when they were about 9 and 10 years old, quizzing me on such topics as blood splatter recognition, methods of fingerprint processing and crime scene search techniques. I know that had a big influence on your life.

I would like to let the members of the Darien community who are here tonight know something about the Darien Police Department and our officers.

We have an excellent Police Department. [...] So many people that I have spoken to since I was named chief of police, both in the law enforcement community and outside as well have made such positive comments to me about the strong reputation of the Darien Police Department.

Please know that we are a highly respected agency within Fairfield County and throughout the state, of the law enforcement community, as well.

Our training, our level of service and our commitment to doing the right thing are second to none, and I am proud and happy to be part of this team. As chief, I pledge to do my best to keep that reputation intact. [...]

Serving as a police officer today means facing adversity and overcoming increasing challenges. We ask more of our officers on the street today than at any time in history. Policing is about much more than simply investigating crime and arresting those who do harm. It's providing counseling to families in distress. It's getting someone suffering from mental illness medical help, working out a civil dispute between neighbors, working with youth in various after-school programs.

We require officers to not only be experts in law enforcement, but also to have many of the same skills of a trained psychologist, a lawyer, a community organizer.

I know that all over Darien, officers put their uniform on every day because we're chosen to help people and give back to the community that we serve.

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We realize that there are some things that need to be done that are not always easy to do, and sometimes the work is not very pleasant, but we come to work every day. We're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we always try to treat people fairly and with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Please know that on my watch we are going to keep that level of service going and try to find ways to improve on it whenever we can.

One of the things that keeps me going in this job is knowing that the vast majority in this community really do support us, particularly when times are bad. During the past year or so, we've seen many tragedies occur involving police officers throughout the country, like the senseless act of violence that took place in Dallas, Texas, when five officers were gunned down one afternoon.

In the days that followed that incident, our residents here in Darien showed their support for local police by sending over lunches, pizzas, coffee, doughnuts — of course, doughnuts — and letters of support just to let us know we're appreciated. I myself was standing in line downtown to pay for lunch one day, shortly after that tragic incident when the cashier told me that the guy in front of me just paid for my meal and left before I could thank him. Thank you to that gentleman, if you're watching.

So whether it was homemade brownies or cookies wrapped up at the station, a warm handshake thanking an officer for their service, a handmade card from a class of first graders or simply a smile as you pass — it made a difference to us.

In closing, I have a message for the officers and the civilian staff at the department:

I need your help. No chief of police can be successful without the input of officers and staff members at every level of the agency. I want to hear your ideas, and I want you to be a part of the decision-making process in the years ahead as we identify future leaders of the Darien Police Department.

[To quote](#) author Jim Collins, "Great leadership at the top doesn't amount to much if you don't have exceptional leadership at the unit level. That's where great things can happen."

A great leader grows as things change, and things are surely changing in police work every single day. I would like to make a pledge to our residents and to the members of our business community: Please know that the Darien Police Department is committed to working with you to make this community a safe and secure place to live and to work, and that we will work hard to gain and maintain your trust.

Our mission statement reads:

The department is committed to pride and excellence by treating citizens with courtesy, professionalism, impartiality and respect.

I know I can rely on our officers to live by that message. [...]

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Thank you very much, and good night.