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SAN FERNANDO POLICE CHIEF ROBERT ORDELHEIDE RETIRES

City saw lowest crime rate during his watch; Lt. Tony Ruelas named successor

Police Chief Robert Ordelheide will retire July 30 after nearly three decades of carrying a badge.

Ordelheide made the announcement today after three years as police chief, a recent stint as city administrator, and 26 years with the San Fernando Police Department.

Ordelheide joined the force in 1984 and spent his first four years as a police officer. After that, he rose through the ranks holding every position and assignment from detective through captain before being selected police chief in 2007.

During his tenure, the city of San Fernando saw its lowest crime rate and the highest community approval rating for the police department, both of which continue today. According to Ordelheide, that success was cultivated from a switch in philosophy that focused on partnerships, problem solving, and increased operational efficiencies through strategic planning and individual accountability.

"I believe our officers are now seen as someone who can help people find solutions to their problem, rather than someone on the lookout for trouble," he said.

Lieutenant Tony Ruelas, who worked with Ordelheide for 24 years and will take over as police chief July 31, said Ordelheide brought police operations into the 21st century and in line with those of larger police agencies. Among his many accomplishments: the city's first special response team, using search and arrest warrants to cite property code violations, and a citywide surveillance system of real-time cameras.

Upon retiring, Ordelheide will continue to teach criminal justice courses at Los Angeles Valley College. He also hopes to spend more time with his grandchildren and giving back to the community and the law enforcement profession.

"This community values its public safety and supports it," said Ordelheide. "That's a mainstay that I'm sure will never change. I'm confident that Ruelas can carry on the tradition."

To speak with Ordelheide or Ruelas, call (818) 898-1201.

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Police Chief Robert Ordelheide