

Scranton Chief Dave Elliott leads new era in police department

steve svetovich the paper

Scranton Police Chief Dave Elliott at 36 is already a seasoned veteran in the city police department as he heads a new era which will feature new headquarters.

"The future of the police department in Scranton looks great," he said. "The moral of police is at a very high level as we look forward to our new police headquarters."

Chief Elliott said the new police headquarters will be at South Washington Avenue near the Steamtown Mall and across from the Chamberlain building.

"The structure is up and the new building should be ready by September," said

the four-year Scranton police chief.

Chief Elliott said the new police building will cost over \$3-million. "The building will be funded through the city's capital improvement budget," he added.

Married six years to the former Katherine Gavin, the couple has two children: Gavin, 4, and Grace, 1. Chief Elliott is a graduate of the Lackawanna College Police Academy and attends the University of Scranton as a Criminal Justice major. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, Quantico, VA.

Chief Elliott said many changes have been made in the Scranton police depart-

ment in the past four years. The number of full-time police officers was reduced from 179 to 157 when he took over as chief. There are 20 clerical workers in the police department.

Chief Elliott said the number of overtime hours has been reduced significantly saving the city over \$400,000 in overtime pay in three years, including a savings of \$336,598 in Elliott's first year as police chief.

"We have also implemented a K-9 Unit that includes three dogs and three handlers, one on each shift. They are used for tracking and narcotics detection.

"Our Crime Prevention program now teaches the

DARE program in Catholic schools. This had never been done before. We started the GREAT program in the public schools. It's federally funded through the ATF and new in the Scranton school district. It's a year-round program which includes a summer program for at risk children.

"We've implemented a Scuba Dive team for water rescue and evidence recovery.

"We also started National Night Out in Scranton and received national recognition two years in a row.

"We have a certified Bomb Unit with two certified technicians covering nine counties.

"We began a Citizen's Police Academy which is funded through a state grant. We're excited about that.

"We started saturation patrols throughout the city attacking high crime areas.

We've replaced old weapons and all of our officers have received new weapons.

"We now have lap top computers in all the police patrol cars. The police officers can now do all their paper work on the lap tops in the patrol cars. It saves time. We have a lot more technology now with computers and we're in the process of getting cameras in all the police vehicles.

"Advanced technology and the new police headquarters will benefit the police department tremendously. We are much more involved in crime prevention and the moral is high. It will be a much better working environment."

Chief Elliott said satisfaction in his job is coming a lot easier these days. "I get a lot of satisfaction in watching what the officers are doing on a daily basis. Watching

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