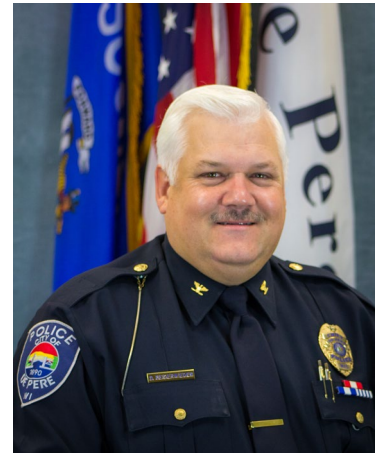




Retirement & Reflections: Police Chief Derek Beiderwieden

We are sending a warm congratulations and profound thanks to Derek Beiderwieden, who will be serving his final day as De Pere Police Chief today (12/22/21) following nearly two decades of service and dedication to our community -- and roughly 37 years of total police work overall. Derek's path to working in law enforcement was an admittedly unexpected one (see below in our Q&A), but we are grateful his fateful choices led to this line of work and to De Pere, Wisconsin. Our City's safety and quality of life has benefitted greatly from his years of leadership and service.

Please join us in wishing Derek a happy retirement, and, with that, here are some parting thoughts, in Derek's own words:



• What was your reason/inspiration for choosing this career path?

I started in De Pere on June 2, 2002. I had applied for the position just 3 months after the September 11, 2001 attacks. With my ending date of December 22, 2021, it puts me at 19.6 years as chief. I started in the City of Perry, MI in the fall of 1984 as a reserve officer. I had to purchase my own uniforms, gear, bullet resistant vest and weapon. I had a passion to become a police officer. On March 11, 1985, I became a Lansing, MI police officer and was with them in various ranks and jobs until I came to De Pere. Looking back a bit, I had studied graphic arts in college and needed one elective class to fulfill the degree requirements. One day I was walking to my car on campus and was curious about what the interior of a campus building looked like. It was an old high school previously before becoming part of the campus. Imagine the old terrazzo floors and stairs as you entered the building. I had never been in this building before and just randomly entered to do a look-see. I meandered to the second floor of the building I had never been in before and walked down a long hallway to a T-intersected hallway. At the end of that long hallway was a rack of brochures and I thought maybe here is where I will find a silly class to take to round out my art degree. The first brochure I picked up was CJ-101, Introduction to Law Enforcement. Perfect. I enrolled in the class and I was hooked. I ended up changing majors and had to take all the core law enforcement classes. It was like starting over. I use my training in the arts to help me see things a little differently, like looking at the shadow or space around an object rather than the object itself. I helped me as an accident (car crash) reconstructionist in seeing the whole picture and how it all related and not just a single piece of evidence.

So, you see, the path to being a police officer and ultimately a police chief may have been perhaps chosen for me. A strange set of circumstances aligned that afternoon on my walk across campus to go to my car for me to be a police officer. Once hooked, I was hooked for life.

• **What are your most memorable moment(s), favorite things or fondest memories serving in De Pere?**

I would say that working with a great set of people is my most favorite thing or fondest memory. There is a highly dedicated staff, not only in the police department, but at all levels of the organization and in all departments. It is rare to find someone not dedicated to furthering the city goals or trying to provide excellent customer service. We're not all perfect as some hold us out to be. We're flawed and error-prone just like the rest of the world, but what sets the police and city staff apart is the amount of honor and pride they have in what they do and to do things right. That is what has kept me around for almost 20 years – the people.

• **Any other overall thoughts on your career or items you'd like to touch?**

I have spent 37 years volunteering to take guff from all levels of society, and I wouldn't change it for the world because for each bit of guff I had endured, there was ten times more joy in serving the others. When I was in boy scouts I learned some very powerful and important lessons about cheerful service to others along with honesty, dedication, ethics and a certain profound spirituality. Those qualities led me to this job through my curiosity as mentioned before. I just didn't know during those impressionable years that I would be dedicated to serving others for my whole life.

Throughout my career I have done my best. It may not have been good enough, but I did my best nonetheless. I have had the opportunity to save lives, rescue people from dangerous situations, been shot at three times and arrested countless individuals for bad things, yet I wonder what has happened to those lives I touched. I hope that in having those contacts with the children, families, individuals and criminals I have influenced them in some positive way.

Last, here is a short summary of Derek's career highlights, accomplishments, and involvement (there's much more than we have room to provide). We're grateful for these contributions, and, once more, say thank you, good luck, and best wishes, Chief!

Derek Beiderwieden undertook his duties as De Pere's Chief of Police on June 3, 2002. Chief Beiderwieden received a Bachelor of Science degree with high honors in Business Administration from Davenport University, Lansing, Michigan. He also earned an Associate Degree in Business Administration, with a law enforcement emphasis, from the Lansing Community College.

His more than 37 years of career experience includes: promotions to sergeant, executive lieutenant and chief, extensive knowledge of police field training and program administration, motorcycle operations as an officer and trainer, patrol operations, community services, community policing, record keeping, budgeting, traffic crash investigations, and internal affairs investigations.

His professional memberships include the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association and the Wisconsin Police Executive Group. He has served the State of Wisconsin through two Department of Justice committees as an appointee: the TIME committee (regulates use of statewide law enforcement computer systems), and the investigations committee (develops, regulates and changes curriculum on investigations training for police academies and advanced training sites). Chief Beiderwieden served the Brown County Chiefs of Police Association in the capacities as the president and vice president for over 17 years of the 19 years of his membership, and served as a board member for the Brown County Drug task Force, Brown County Crime Prevention Funding Board, and Crime Prevention Foundation of Brown County. He has also served as the volunteer chairperson for the Bay Lakes Council, Boy Scouts of America – Exploring Division, and in president and vice president roles within the De Pere Lions Club.

NOTE: With Beiderwieden’s retirement, De Pere’s new Police Chief will be Jeremy Muraski. For information on this selection and background on Muraski, please view this previous press release:

https://www.deperewi.gov/egov/documents/1636116488_44747.pdf

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