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people or things you should know

Bob Carden

By Kimberly Horg-Webb
Special to {Talk

NAME:

Bob Carden

QUICK FACTS:

Hometown: Exeter; Visalia Police Chief, activist, golfer, fisherman, musician and motorcyclist.

WHY YOU SHOULD KNOW HIM:

Growing up as a minister's son gave him the values he uses today. Police Chief Bob Carden is a down-to-earth person who believes everyone should be treated equally.

He has been in law enforcement since 1973. Carden was first exposed to law enforcement in Exeter, when he was going to school. Exeter officers invited him to join the cadet program and there was no looking back after that.

He served in the Air Force and then



Bob Carden

obtained his bachelor of science degree in criminology, a master's degree in management and trained to become an officer at the Kern County Police Academy in Bakersfield.

Carden worked as a police sergeant in Visalia from 1980-1990. He then moved to Lemoore to be a commander and then a

police chief from 1994 to 1997. From there he moved to Marysville, Wash. The chief position in Washington gave him good exposure, because he ran the local jail. Carden moved back to Visalia three years ago for the opportunity to become Visalia's chief of police.

"Visalia is a wonderful community," he says. "The folks here really have a sense of community that is not found in other cities."

Carden is not satisfied with the status

quo. He believes people need to challenge themselves to move forward and that there needs to be a collaborative effort to solve problems. More can get accomplished, he says, if people combine resources and work together.

Carden stays in the loop by going out on patrol with officers. He wears his uniform even though he doesn't have to, because he wants people to feel like they can approach him.

Carden has been married to Debbie for 35 years. He has two sons who are both in the Air Force.

In his spare time, Carden rides his Ultra-Classic Harley motorcycle with the Blue Nights, a group of officers and their spouses. Last year he rode to Montana, and this year the group is riding all the way to Canada.

After Carden retires, he would like to teach other officers what he has learned throughout the years. He says this way he can stay in law enforcement after he

retires.

"I love my job," he says. "It is rewarding as a chief to make a difference in the community and to prevent someone from becoming a victim."

WHAT OTHERS SAY:

Steve Phillips, Visalia City Police Sergeant and Public Information Officer has been with the Visalia Police Department for 12 years but says things really turned around since Carden came on board. The Chief makes a pro-active effort that has changed the department, especially on gang-related crimes.

"He is a very hard-working man who goes far and above his line of duty. He is a wonderful example of someone in city government that earns every penny he makes," Phillips says.

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