

Capitola has new police chief

By BOB SMITH

Robert L. Allen, 43, and a deputy chief of the San Jose police department, is Capitola's new police chief.

Allen was picked by the city council last Saturday following lengthy interviews by the council and a five member screening panel. Four finalists were chosen for the interviews by management consultant Richard Hughes, who was hired by the city for the talent search.

Expected to start work in the first week of April, Allen succeeds former chief Marty Bergthold, who was removed from his post and assigned as the city's public relations officer.

Bergthold remains on sick leave, City Manager Max Kludt said this week. The 51-year-old former chief was hospitalized last week for a gall bladder operation, Kludt said.

Allen, his wife Dona, and two of his three daughters now live in the Morgan Hill area. The oldest daughter, Tava Mott, now lives in Aptos.

Tari is a junior at Live Oak High School in Morgan Hill, and Tami is a sophomore at the same school.

Allen joined the San Jose police department in October, 1956, and was appointed deputy chief in March, 1974. In that position, he commanded the department's administrative, field operations and investigative divisions.

Through the Ford Foundation, he was selected a Harvard Fellow in criminal justice in 1973-74. While at Harvard, he completed the academic requirements for a master's degree on police administration.

Allen is retiring from the San Jose police department because of a hearing loss.

Allen was granted a \$1,631 per month disability pension by the San Jose Police and Firemen's Retirement Board on Feb. 22 because of a 70 percent loss of hearing in his right ear.

"A hearing deficiency in my right ear makes me monaural," he said Tuesday. "The San Jose police department endured it for some time, but Chief McNamara decided not to accept it.

"Capitola doesn't believe the hearing problem was crucial," Allen added.

Allen said the San Jose department's concern was about his ability to function in the field, taking charge of a situation. He says he did so many times without problem.

Although Allen will be receiving a pension from San Jose, he says there is no conflict in working for Capitola. The two cities are on different retirement and disability systems.

"There is pretty widespread concern on the problem of 'double dipping,' but it is naive. The two funding sources are unrelated.

"I'm not taking an earlier retirement," Allen maintains. "I was in the system for 21 years."

As a disabled officer, Allen said he has three alternatives:

"I could never work again — a very unattractive situation.

"I could endure the criticism.

"I could reject the salary from Capitola or my retirement. That would be a disservice to my family."

Allen staves off the criticism levied at people in this situation, saying: "Capitola can look at it as not being able to offer pay that would attract candidates who can draw \$10,000-\$15,000 more

elsewhere."

Allen was a runner-up for the San Diego police chief's job. And he was, until chosen by Capitola, a candidate for the Seattle, Wash. police chief's job.

"Capitola was my first choice because of family pressures.

"They like this part of California," Allen said the Los Angeles area, the San Joaquin Valley and Seattle were not attractive living places for his

family.

Allen and his wife are now looking for a home in the mid-county area. He will be flying back east next week to speak at a three-day symposium sponsored by the FBI.

His salary, until the council reviews the city's budget in June, will remain at \$24,216 a year — the same salary presently paid to Bergthold as the city's public affairs officer.

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