

MARTIN:

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more than 15 years before becoming a reserve officer. Once he did, however, he knew he wanted to be a full-time cop. After launching his new career, Martin said he began looking for ways to "move up the ranks" while taking advantage of every opportunity to train and get more experience.

"There's many avenues you can go," he said. "You typically need to spend probably three to five years in patrol, learning all the ins and outs. From there, you can usually start at looking at collateral duties: detective, firearms instructor, field training officer, those kinds of things."

During his 11 years on the force, Martin trained to become certified as a firearms instructor and a field training officer. He said on-going training is required to maintain the collateral certifications, as well as the certification as an officer through the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

According to information from the DPSST, an officer can be certified at several different levels based on years of experience, training hours, college credits and other requirements: basic, intermediate, advanced, supervisory, management and executive. Officers who have attained higher levels of college education are required to complete fewer hours of training to achieve each certification level.

Martin said he could probably earn his advanced certification but may need a few more college credits.

As an officer, Martin said he has seen enough interesting things happen that he could probably write a book, but he still enjoys being an officer.

"I can't see myself doing anything else at this point,"



SEAN HART PHOTO

Patrol Sgt. Kelly Parsons stands outside of Hermiston Police Department. His stepfather, who had a long career in law enforcement, introduced him to the job.

he said. "I think it's a noble profession, and it has to be done. I see people at their worst 90 percent of the time, but to help those who can't stand up for themselves is what this job is all about."

Martin's colleague, HPD patrol Sgt. Kelly Parsons said he still enjoys his career after more than 23 years as an officer, but it can be difficult.

"At times, it's one of the most discouraging careers you can be in because of everything that you see, but then you'll walk into a situation where you'll see things that will restore your faith in humanity," he said. "You deal with a myriad of different situations and stresses and traumas. If you're not prepared for it, if you don't understand the dynamic and how it can affect you psychologically, it will take its toll. It will change you as a person.

"But it's been good to me," Parson's added. "It's really provided me with an opportunity to do some things personally, and it's always been a good way to provide for my family."

Parsons said his stepfather worked for the Washington State Patrol for 33 years, which is where he began in 1988.

In 1994, he went to work as an officer for the city of Walla Walla, where he sought career advancement opportunities. He became involved in

traffic enforcement and specific impaired driver enforcement and was certified as an instructor. He taught classes at the state level in Washington and also taught at a national level.

Parsons started at HPD four and a half years ago and was promoted to sergeant two years ago.

"I provide supervision for the officers that are working the road," he said of his duties as sergeant. "I help them with the day-to-day decisions where they might not be 100

percent sure what they should do in regards to maybe a process or procedure. I approve reports. I answer calls. I do pretty much everything that a regular police officer does, just with the added bonus of being the supervisor."

Parsons earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in May 2014 and began working on a master's degree in management, which he plans to complete in February 2016. He said he is always

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— Chris Martin

Hermiston police officer

thinking about achieving the next step in his law enforcement career.

"I've always been one to push myself: What else can I do? What's my next level of achievement?" he said. "Now that I've gotten to the spot of being a sergeant, the next logical step would be to look for an executive management spot, which, hopefully, by the time I get my time and grade here, I'll be ready for the next step."

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a Committee of the Hermiston Senior Center

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livingwaterfoursquare.org

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Phone 567-7678
Rev. Ed Baker - Rev. Nina Baker
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Worship.....11:00 am
Evening Service.....7:00 pm
Wednesday Service.....7:00 pm
"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."
1 Pet. 5:7

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OFFICE.....567-5812

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567-9497
Nursery provided for all services
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6:00 pm
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Youth.....6:00 pm
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