

Emilie Swearingen
Mayor
David Heglar
Commissioner
Jim Dugan
Commissioner



Craig Bloszinsky
Mayor Pro Tem
Joseph Whitley
Commissioner
Nancy Avery
Town Clerk

Town of Kure Beach

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 17, 2016

RETIRED KURE BEACH POLICE CHIEF RECEIVES GOVERNOR'S ORDER OF THE LONG LEAF PINE AWARD

The Town of Kure Beach is very pleased and proud to announce that retired Police Chief Dennis Cooper was presented with the Governor's prestigious Order of the Long Leaf Pine award at the Town Council meeting on August 16, 2016. Steve Keen, Director of State Regional Operations for the Office of the Governor, and State Representative Ted Davis presented the award.

Chief Cooper retired June 30th after serving 24 years on the police force, with 20 of those years as chief. During his tenure, the town's population grew from 800 to over 2000 and the police force grew from 5 officers to 12 full time and 5-part time officers plus an administrative assistant.

Chief Cooper encouraged education, training, and community policing and Kure Beach Police Officers reflected the values he possessed. The Department saw the creation of a canine and special investigations unit. Kure Beach officers were the first to receive the latest tools and training in use of defibrillators, Crisis Intervention Team training, Taser use, and computer and cell phone forensics equipment. Chief Cooper's direction and oversight made the community safer and a better place to live. In 2015, Kure Beach police were the first in New Hanover County and one of the first in the state to obtain bodycams. Chief Cooper partnered with the Secret Service, ATF, F.B.I. and many other agencies to provide training and support to Kure Beach, something not available to small towns and many large cities.

Outside of police work, Chief Cooper was a great supporter of helping the community. He created a Senior Watch Program and assisted the hungry through the Kure Beach Blue Line. He reached those in need of food throughout the year and holidays; supported the Waccamaw Boys and Girls Homes through donations and created a fund that helps the homeless, indigent or unfortunate who are in need of food or gas money to get back home. He provided many a dollar from his own pocket also.

Chief Cooper helped his own officers in a very unique way. He cooked lunch and dinner for working officers on holidays and summer weekends, when area businesses were packed with tourists. This gave his officers the opportunity to relax, get out of the spotlight and catch their

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breath.

Chief Cooper has lived his life in an exemplary manner. He has sacrificed birthdays, holidays, anniversaries and family time to make Kure Beach a better place to live. His contributions to the people of Kure Beach are immeasurable. He has treated his officers like family, counseling them when needed, pushing them when they needed a push, and putting them in a position to succeed and grow.

The Town of Kure Beach sincerely thanks Chief Cooper for his lifetime of service to the citizens of Kure Beach and North Carolina.

For additional information, contact Mayor Emilie Swearingen at 910-620-0266.