

NATIONAL Women's HISTORY MONTH

BETH COLTRAIN: To Protect and Serve

By KYRA RUIVO
Enterprise & Weekly Herald

After only being on the Police Department for 10 years, one Martin County native has advanced fast in her career. Captain Beth Coltrain of the Williamston Police Department began her career in law enforcement approximately a decade ago. In that time frame she started as a police officer in 2006. In 2008, she was promoted to detective and after her field training she became Detective Corporal. In 2009 she was promoted again to Detective Sergeant and in 2010 to Detective Lieutenant. The last time she was promoted was in 2013 to police Captain.

“When I was a child, I knew I wanted to grow up and help people, but I didn’t know what that would entail,” Coltrain said.

At a time in her life when Coltrain knew she needed a stable job, Martin Community College was offering BLET (Basic Law Enforcement Training) and Coltrain decided to enroll.

Coltrain said when she started working as an officer; she knew she wanted to become a detective.

“Once I reached that goal, I kept setting higher goals for myself,” Coltrain said.

Being a woman on the police force was not difficult for Coltrain, she said she was immediately accepted and treated like one of the force. She said both in the office and on the streets, she was never discriminated against for being a female police officer. She worked hard through her ranks, and hard work has helped her reach her goals.

“I have a tremendous amount of law enforcement training and experience,” Coltrain said. “I



Coltrain

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received my Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate in 2012. That is something that is difficult to attain, especially with only six years in law enforcement.”

Including her certificate, in the time frame since Coltrain began working for the Williamston Police Department, she has received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. She went back to school in 2008 and received her Bachelor's of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Mount Olive University and in 2010 she graduated with her Master's Degree in Justice Administration from Methodist University.

“I truly enjoy helping people and seeing families get closure once a case is solved,” Coltrain said. “I like the challenge of trying to figure out who committed a crime and proving it and seeing the case through the court system.”

Even though Coltrain loves her job and she is glad to be helping people, she said the worst part of the job is that it takes time away from her family.

“The job is very demanding. This department is family oriented but there have been times I've been called out on Christmas Eve and had to be away from my son.”

Coltrain is married to Eric Coltrain with two sons, who are 11 years old and five months old. She has had a lot of family support in her career over the years.

Coltrain said many of the cases she has worked on have been high crime cases and some have taken years to solve, but it is always satisfying once a case is solved.

Last year, Coltrain, along with others in the Williamston Police De-

partment received special recognition from the Federal Bureau Investigation for assisting them with a case in New York where a man had murdered people, and the town of Williamston was involved in the case.

“I like working with other agencies and pulling all the different pieces together to prove a case,” she said.

Coltrain encourages girls who want to be in law enforcement and help people to study hard and go to college.

“Stay focused on your goals, make the right choices and don't succumb to peer pressure. Keep training and keep setting goals and achieving them,” Coltrain said.

Coltrain has been an asset to the Williamston Police Department and others recognize her hard work in the force and the town.

“We appreciate everything she does here and we can't wait to see how her career progresses,” said Travis Cowan, Williamston Police Chief.

Coltrain said she is not sure what the future holds, but she is going to continue training and see where it takes her.

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