



Oxford's City Corner

July 2021

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Police Chief Coley Retires from the City of Oxford



2021 marked another milestone as the City of Oxford says goodbye to another dedicated employee. Chief of Police Al Coley announced his retirement in June 2021 and while we are sad to see him go, we are elated to celebrate his service, not only with the City but his entire law enforcement and military career.

His admiration for the law enforcement field began as a young boy living in Winston-Salem, NC, with his mother and father. He remembers seeing the sharply dressed Troopers and their shiny, black, and silver cars drive up and down the highway; he couldn't help but wonder what they were doing. From a young age, his curiosity grew as he had numerous pleasant experiences with officers. However, not quite ready to take that path, Coley enlisted in the U.S. Army straight out of high school. The Army took Coley around the United States and even stationed him in South Korea. Around his second year, as he was stationed at Fort Polk in

Louisiana, Coley began to think about where his path was heading. After having a discussion with his lifelong mentor and hero, his father, he left the military in August 1986 and began school for the NC State Highway Patrol in October 1986.

Coley worked for the State Highway Patrol for over 26 years, before retiring. His responsibilities saw him as a Field Training Officer, a trained Accident Reconstructionist, a Defensive Tactics Sergeant for the State of North Carolina, and the Major over Field Operations. While Coley retired, he did not stay this way long. After advice from his father, Coley decided to pursue a career as a Municipal Chief of Police. He finished his education completing his Associate's Degree from Guilford Technical Community College, his Bachelor's at Gardner-Webb University, and his Master's at North Carolina State University. From there, Chief Coley became employed with the Sharpsburg Police Department. Chief Coley did not remain their long, as the opportunity to apply for the City of Oxford Chief of Police came and he decided to try his hand.

Chief Coley moved to the Oxford area and officially became Chief of the Oxford Police Department in September of 2013. He saw the City of Oxford as the perfect place for him and his family because of the beautiful City and the smaller department. As a Chief, he was a member of the North Carolina Chief of Police Association, the North Carolina Police Executives Association, and the Internal Affairs Association. As a police officer, Chief Coley stressed the importance of believing in something bigger than yourself, especially if working within law enforcement. He stated that while working in this field you will find yourself faced with numerous situations that will test you and things you cannot un-see; therefore, it is important to have something getting you through.

While Chief Coley is looking forward to his retirement, he and his family do not suspect he will sit still long. Retirement will be a new beginning for him and he's looking forward to spending more time with his family and getting back to his volunteer work, especially with Habitat with Humanity and the Boys and Girls Club. His last message to the citizens of Oxford, "You have a police department who cares about you. Don't let the media change that. "We cannot thank you enough for service and dedication throughout the years Chief Coley. Congratulations on your retirement!"

Employee of the Month: Antwan Rice, Code Enforcement



CONGRATULATIONS to Code Enforcement Officer, Antwan Rice, for being selected as the July Employee of the Month, for the City of Oxford. Antwan came to the City, in May of 2017, where he works alongside the Planning Director, Cheryl Hart, in the Planning Department. His responsibilities consist of the enforcement of City codes & ordinances, managing minimum housing requirements, public nuisance concerns, and beautification efforts. In working in the area of Code Enforcement, Antwan has obtained certification as a Housing Code Official and successfully completed the Law and Administration course for Code Enforcement. Professional memberships include North Carolina Zoning Code Officials, North Carolina Minimum Housing Code Officials, and Association of Floodplain Administrators. He considers his parents to be his lifelong mentors as they have taught him to "work hard for what you want" his entire life. When asked if he would go back in time to redo anything he stated no, as most things happen for a reason. To the citizens of Oxford, he leaves this message, "We are on the same side, let's work together to resolve issues for the betterment of the City." Congratulations Antwan! Thank you for all of your hard work!



Staying Safe This July 4th Holiday

The July 4th holiday is quickly approaching! Lake views and barbeques are just around the corner and the customary fireworks show is always a great ending. However, hot, dry, humid weather makes the use of fireworks dangerous. How can you stay safe this holiday?

The only safe way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a professional show, however, if you're not able to attend, then it's crucial to note fireworks are not safe in the hands of consumers. On average, 243 people go to the emergency room every day around the month of the July 4th Holiday, but more than 19,500 reported fires are started by fireworks annually (NFPA, 2018). Half of the fireworks injuries seen were localized at the extremities: hands, fingers, legs, and around one-third of the injuries were to the eye or other parts of the head. Children ages ranging from 10-14 had the highest rate of injury, with more than one-third of the victims of fireworks injuries under the age of 15. Lastly, sparklers account for roughly one-quarter of emergency room fireworks-related injuries.

While the use of fireworks can be dangerous, according to North Carolina Law only those over the age of 16 can purchase consumer fireworks, which include: sparklers, fountains, smoke devices, snake & glow worms, trick noisemakers (i.e. party poppers), strong poppers/snappers, and toy pistol caps. Those specifically prohibited include explosives/aerial fireworks, roman candles, and rockets or similar devices (North Carolina General Statutes §14-410).

So, while we want everyone to have a fun, relaxing, and safe July 4th holiday, please use the best judgment and these safety tips, provided by the National Fire Protection Association:

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks;
- Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them;
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishaps;
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly; and
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.

SAVE THE DATE!! The 15th Annual Hot Sauce Contest & Festival is quickly approaching! Are you wanting to volunteer, be a vendor, or enter the contest? Then send in your applications now! Contact us at 919-603-1100!



Financial Assistance for City Residents

The City of Oxford has received \$900,000 from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division to provide emergency financial assistance to residents of the City who have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Assistance will help City residents who are behind on rent, mortgage, and utilities since the statewide shutdowns that started in March 2020. The funding provided is by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) signed into law in 2020.

The program may cover up to six months of rent and utilities starting after March 20, 2020. Late rents and utilities prior to that date are NOT eligible. The program can also cover existing fees and surcharges allowed under North Carolina Law. Applicants must be behind on their rent when they apply for the program. To learn more about this program please visit the City of Oxford website or call 919-603-1102/1117.

July 2021

- July 2nd: Cruz-In 2 Oxford, 5:00 pm
- July 5th: City of Oxford offices closed in observance of July 4th Holiday
- July 6th: Board of Commissioners Agenda Meeting, 5:30 pm
- July 12th: Zoning Board of Adjustment Meeting, 7:00 pm
- July 13th: Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting, 7:00 pm
- July 15th: Bike Rodeo, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- July 16th: Friday Night Flix featuring Night At the Museum, 7:00 pm
- July 19th: Adult Coed Kickball Season Begins
- July 19th: Summer Storybook Stroll: If you Take A Mouse To School Begins
- July 23rd: Music on Main, 6:00 pm
- July 24th: 275th Granville County Celebration

LOVE LOCAL



We cannot thank everyone enough for their participation in the June Love Local game! Make sure to bring your game board to Oxford City Hall, 300 Williamsboro St., Oxford, NC 27565, by July 6th! If you have any questions, please give us a call at 919-603-1100.

ALL MEETINGS HELD IN THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

If not fully vaccinated, social distancing & wearing masks do apply.

Board of Commissioner's Meetings: Agenda meeting—The 1st Monday before the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30; Regular meeting—2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00.

For more information contact the City Clerks office at 919-603-1105.

Jackie Sergent, Mayor

M. Alan Thornton, City Manager

Cynthia Bowen, City Clerk