New chief probation officer takes charge

KINGMAN – Darrell Reeves brings a variety of expertise to his new position as Mohave County chief probation officer.

Reeves, who was with the Pima County Probation Department for 19 years, the last six as supervisor, has just completed his first week with the Mohave County Probation Department.

“I started work Tuesday, Oct. 11,” he said. “I have inherited a great staff including two great deputy chiefs, a great department and a really nice building. I report to a great court administrator (Kip Anderson) and presiding judge (Richard Weiss). Everything here is about as good as I could have hoped for.”

The remodeled Probation Department building serves the community well.

“I am lucky to be able to move into this building,” he said. “I understand what the department had before was not that great.”

Reeves was born and raised in Terre Haute, Ind.

“I left when I was 24 to join the United State Air Force,” he said. “I served 11 years of active duty, mostly as a logistics guy dealing with air passengers and cargo. I served in Japan, Tucson, Alaska and St. Louis, Mo.”

In 1992, Reeves finished his active duty and moved to Tucson to be in the 162nd Fighter Wing Air National Guard.

“I got a weekend position there and eventually got out of the service in 1998,” he said. “At that time I was a staff sergeant (E-6).”

In 1990, Reeves earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business and Management from the University of Maryland. He earned a Master’s Degree in 2000 and a Doctor of Education degree 2006, both in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University.

During his years following his military service, the new chief experienced pretty much every level of probation department employment.

“I started with the Pima County Probation Department as a $6.50-per-hour support staff,” he said. “That doesn’t seem like much, but I needed a job. I did that for a while and then moved up as a statistician doing restitution and probation fee reports. After a while I transitioned to probation support specialist, which was kind of like a surveillance officer. In 1994, I was promoted to line probation officer (PO). For the next dozen or so years I went from regular PO to senior PO. In 2006 I was promoted to probation supervisor.”

Due to his extensive experience, Reeves understands everything a
probation department does from the ground up.

“About 15 years ago I got involved with the training end of the business,” he said. “I have taught about 30 to 40 classes for the University of Phoenix and Pima Community College. I was the staff trainer for the Pima County Probation Department. I was selected by my chief to be the Field Division Master Trainer for Evidence Based Practices (EBP), which most probation departments are now utilizing. When the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) transitioned to the EBP Code, Pima was the first county to transition.”

Reeves, who is happily married with three children, has advice for young people. If they do not want to end up visiting the Mohave County Probation Department, teenagers should “listen to their parents. It is certainly hard for teens to see what is really in their best interest. But they should value their education because that is worth a lot more to them than they might think. They should try to get as much education as they can; pay attention to what is taught in the schools; become involved in the community; and learn what it is all about to be a good responsible citizen.”

For those youths, and adults, who make poor choices and end up in the criminal justice system, “understand that you will be held accountable,” Reeves said. “We will be fair but firm with you. I will also be fair to my staff and expect their appropriate behavior. On the other side, I would hope that a person coming into this system will treat us with respect. It is a two-way street. We will do everything we can to try and give each person who comes here a second chance at life. We will utilize all the resources we have to help them.

“But why come here at all if you don’t have to,” he said. Don’t break the law.

“Darrell brings a solid and well-rounded background to the position and we see his positive attitude and professional skills helping to enhance an already strong department,” Anderson said. “I do extend my thanks to Deputy Chiefs Alan Palomino and Elaine Grissom for their efforts in helping to oversee the operations of the department during the past 5 months.”

Reeves has already purchased a home in Kingman.

“I like Kingman very much,” he said. “Kingman is a pretty well-kept secret. Many people I know from Tucson and other areas of Arizona don’t understand what I have found here in just a few weeks. I grew up in a small town and I understand the area. People are friendly here.”

The purpose of a probation department isn’t always completely understood. “The public doesn’t know of all the good things we do on a daily basis,” he said. “We work to instill positive, long-term, pro-social, behavioral changes in people for the betterment of our communities. I believe my most important role is to support this department’s officers and to provide them with as good a work environment as I can.”