



Thomas E. Brown, Sheriff

NEWS RELEASE

DeKalb County Sheriff's Office
4415 Memorial Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30032

CONTACT: MIKKI JONES
Public Information Officer: 404-298-8105
Fax: 404-298-8034
Cellular: 404-456-7988

JANUARY 31, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEKALB'S CHIEF JAILER RETIRES AFTER 27 YEARS, ASSISTANT COMMANDER TAKES JAIL'S TOP JOB

DECATUR, Ga. – The DeKalb County's chief jailer, Dennis Cheatham, has retired after 27-years of service spanning the tenures of five sheriffs. Sheriff Thomas Brown has appointed a 23-year veteran jailer and former assistant commander, Major Wanda Collins, to fill the Jail Division's top post. She assumed command on January 1, 2008.

Cheatham began work as a jail detention officer in March 1979 and rose through the ranks to chief of jail operations.

"The DeKalb County Sheriff's Office allowed me a career, Cheatham said, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of what I feel [has become] the best Sheriff's Office in the state, if not the nation.

"When I came to the Sheriff's Office, to be honest, I was looking for a job. I had never really aspired to be in law enforcement, but once I was hired, met people in the business and learned just exactly what it means to be in law enforcement and a public servant, I just fell in love with it."

Cheatham said that he has had the opportunity to work with the best of the best who are dedicated to serving DeKalb's citizens, which is a job benefit, a reward, to be coveted.

"I have had the pleasure to work for five sheriffs," Cheatham added, "and would like to thank them all for allowing me the opportunity to serve. I especially would like to thank Sheriff Brown for his support and confidence in me. I feel I have gained through his leadership an ability to treat people like you would want to be treated. His dedication to being a public servant sets an example for all to follow and is unparalleled."

Like Cheatham, Collins began her career as a detention officer and, with her new appointment, has advanced to the top jail post. She reported for initial duty in 1984. She now has served as commander for a little more than one month.

"I am honored to have been selected and to bring to my new position the knowledge and experience that I have acquired over the years."

Collins, who is a certified jail manager, said she is not altogether new to the job of being in command because she has served in that capacity when others have taken vacation or other leave time.

###
