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SWARTZ CREEK NEWS

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Lifelong law enforcer takes police chief post

Staff report

MUNDY TWP. — After 34 years with the Northville police, James Petres hired on as an analyst/planner with Novi police last year.

He soon found he wasn't cut out for a desk job.

"He couldn't not be a cop," said Sue Petres, his wife of 24 years. "It's in his blood."

James Petres, 55, soon will don a police uniform again. Selected from a pool of 52 applicants to become Mundy Township's new police chief, he couldn't be happier about his career's new direction.

"I look forward to coming up there and being part of a good department," said Petres, who served as Northville's police chief for eight years.

He probably will assume his new role in September after he has negotiated an employment contract and given notice to Novi, he said.

The search for a replacement for longtime Police Chief Dave Guigear, who retired to make a successful bid for township treasurer in November, took about six months. The Township Board hired a search firm to winnow the pool down to a handful of finalists.

The candidates participated in exercises to gauge their responses to a variety of crime scenarios.

When the dust settled, two candidates were left standing: Petres and Kenneth Morgan of the Alpena police. After interviews with the Township Board, Petres prevailed.

"I definitely think he was the best choice between the finalists," said

Township Trustee Robert Neumann.

His experience and education were key. Petres, who grew up in Livonia, joined the Northville Police Department in 1971. His duties in Novi included budget matters and grant applications.

The Petres and their two children lived in Northville for 20 years before moving to Canton two years ago. Now, they're house-hunting in Mundy Township.

"We drove through the township last weekend to get ideas of where to live," he said.

Petres plans to be the kind of chief who will be a familiar face to residents.

"I always enjoyed getting out on the street in Northville," he said. "I like being out in the community and being part of the community."

James Petres

- **Age:** 55
- **Background:** Grew up in Livonia, joined the Northville police in 1971 as a part-time dispatcher, working his way up to police officer and ultimately chief. Spent past year as an analyst/planner with the Novi Police Department.
- **Education:** Studied law enforcement at Schoolcraft Community College in Livonia, graduated from the Oakland Police Academy, earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Wayne State University and a master's degree in criminal justice at the University of Detroit. He also completed a program at the FBI Academy.
- **Family:** He and his wife, Sue, have two children.

