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## A Celebration of Mayors in Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson



The Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church performs with Lafayette Mayor Brandt Andersson Photo Erik Andersson

After a substantial number of accolades from his constituents, Lafayette's five-time Mayor Don Tatzin finished his term and welcomed former Vice Mayor Brandt Andersson to his new job as Mayor. Fellow City Council Members, along with friends and family, filled the new Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for the festivities at the December 14th City Council meeting that culminated with a choir performance that included Andersson. Carl Anduri was appointed Vice Mayor.

Having served a total of twenty-four years on the City Council, Tatzin has seen the city through thick and thin. Many in the audience came forward to point out what a wonderful job he's done this past year, especially with the completion of a project near and dear to Lafayette - the Library and Learning Center. Alternating between sincere praise and poking fun, Library Foundation members Gwen Lennox, Kathy Merchant, and Anne Grodin, along with Maeve Pessis of the Lafayette Homeowners Council, effusively congratulated him for a job well done while gently roasting him. For example, Marechal Duncan of the Lafayette Historical Society had everyone laughing when he commented, regarding the Mayor's longevity, "Our gift to Don Tatzin is that we'll put him in our archive."

Even incoming Mayor Brandt Anderson quipped about having to make remarks after Tatzin spoke, "It's tough to follow the 19th, 24th, 29th, 34th and 41st mayor." Fellow Council Members

commented that only now do their combined years of service equal the years Tatzin has put in.

Tatzin remarked that over the years he's always looked for the positive compromise - and that during his tenure this past year the city has completed a substantial amount of roadwork, had the library open and adopted the Parks and Recreation Facility Master Plan. He talked about a virtuous circle, building trust, being open and inclusive. "Think grandly and spend carefully," he advised. In 2009, "We learned that measurement is useful, and that construction takes time. This has been a successful and fun year."

City staff presented a gift, a plaque made out of teak with a granite inset - both materials from the exterior of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, and of course a gavel.

New Mayor Andersson said of his new position, "A good friend asked, 'Who in their right mind wants to be Mayor?'" He responded, "Your initial premise is probably faulty." Andersson sees the coming year as full of problems and opportunities, with the number one problem being street improvements. Opportunities include balancing the need to preserve open space against pressure for development and with the help of the Downtown Strategic Plan - making plans for the amenities that most want.

Hearty thanks were given to Andersson's family and city staff who, "Keep the city running and make it better every day for the people that live here. I also want to recognize colleagues...it's always a joy to come to these meetings."

Audience members were treated to a first in the Community Hall, Mayor Andersson is a member of the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church Chamber Choir. He penned new lyrics for two compositions and sang both songs with the choir, which made a special appearance. The very timely "Downtown Strategic Plan," highlighting Lafayette's current struggle with the Plan, was written by Hans Leo Hassler (1564- 1612) and "Money Worries" was written by Karl Heinrich Graun (1703 -1759). Both tunes had the packed house in stitches.

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