

Glenside Drive Sign Helps Ring in the New Year



Photo Cathy Tyson

Longtime Burton Valley homeowner Larry Cody is famous for his messages on the sign in front of his home on Glenside Drive. Just a few days before Jan. 1, he painted his wish for a happy new year to his neighbors. Cody's family has a long history in the area; many acres in what is now Burton Valley were purchased by his grandfather Augustine Lobo. Lobo crossed the Atlantic coming from Portugal, first landing in Boston to find work in a shoe factory.

Later, in the 1920s he came west, purchased the land, made improvements and planted pears and walnuts. The family eventually subdivided the land in the 1950s. Cody is well known in the neighborhood for his signs, changing them from time to time with the seasons or for holidays. Some of messages recollect fond memories of past loves or his affinity for race horses. On a recent Saturday he was heading out to Golden Gate Fields to try his luck. *C. Tyson*

Tatzin Takes the Helm as Mayor, Again

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Reflecting on the role of being mayor, Tatzin discussed the virtuous circle philosophy, a chain of events that reinforces itself through a feedback loop with positive results and how it is applicable to residents.

"Often we are the first level of contact people have with government," he said, explaining that the City Council is one of a number of components of the virtuous circle, that can create an environment of trust and respect, which strengthens the fabric of the community. Residents also contribute via a wide range of avenues, for example supporting their kids' education, or sports, which further benefits Lafayette and adds to its appeal, attracting new people. His role as mayor, he believes, is to support this circle, by being accessible, to listen, respond to citizens, and explain the decision-making process.

He shared a series of initiatives he'd like to address in the new year, that include a variety of civic concerns, for example working with the committee that is going to decide the future of two city-owned parcels, the old library building and a former medical office on Moraga Road.

Also on his agenda is encouraging residents to "think big," to find a real solution to Moraga Road congestion and downtown traffic. The incremental changes over the years haven't impacted the fundamental problem, in his opinion. Tatzin would like to "take this opportunity to step back and gather input to come up with a shared vision" for a plan that could address endless back-ups.

Tatzin anticipates the proposed Terraces project should be resolved in 2014, and he'll continue to work with

fire agencies to seek a solution to provide better fire and emergency response in Lafayette even though it's not a city responsibility. The new mayor has a unique perspective as a volunteer on the Contra Costa Local Area Formation Commission, also known as LAFCO. The organization oversees boundaries of towns, cities, and special districts, like water, sanitation, and especially relevant for Lafayette – fire protection.

As mayor five years ago for the official grand opening of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, he plans on a birthday celebration this fall along with a fundraising effort.

On a lighter note, as a dog owner, Tatzin would like to spearhead an event that focuses on pets. Planning is currently in the very preliminary stages for a furry friends party that could be called Dog-stravaganza or Bark in the Park. Possible features include a dog/owner look-a-like contest, perhaps a demonstration of canine search and rescue techniques, along with an education component.

In his free time, Tatzin logs endless laps in the Oakwood swimming pool. Results aren't yet in for 2013, but in 2012, Lafayette's mayor came in first in his age group with a staggering 1,524 miles for the U.S. Masters Swimming annual "Go the distance" fitness event.

That kind of dedication has served the citizens of Lafayette for almost 30 years. When asked if he was going to hang up his gavel when his term expires at the end of this year, he replied, "That's up to voters to decide." Tatzin plans to run again for City Council this November.

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