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Selection of New Mayor and Vice Mayor Caps Lighthearted Year-End Council Meeting

By Victor Ryerson



The Orinda City Council and staff smile with members of WomenSing at the Dec. 1 council meeting. Photo Ohlen Alexander

and vice mayor for the one-year term that started that evening. Following tradition, Vice Mayor Victoria Smith was selected as the new mayor by the other council members. Council Member Eve Phillips, the most recently elected member, was chosen to be the new vice mayor. (See the article on page A7; Smith will be highlighted in the Dec. 30 issue.)

Before that last bit of city business was accomplished, however, there were awards, proclamations, plaques, certificates, flowers and encomia bestowed on many of those in attendance. Kicking off the celebration, Orr presented the 2016 Mayor's Award for Excellence to the city's Public Works and Engineering Services Department. Department head Chuck Swanson responded with thanks and a slide show of his employees doing the work for which they were being recognized.

Then there was a ceremony to recognize former mayor and council member, now State Senator Steve Glazer's service to the city. Orr spoke about Glazer's many contributions to the city: roads, drains, the Monteverde project, and so on. A plaque was presented to him, and each council member offered remarks. Then Orr presented a gift (that's where the wine came in), and so did each council member. Then Council Member Worth presented a bouquet for Glazer's wife on behalf of the council to recognize the sacrifices she had made to enable him to be there. Then Glazer paid homage to City Manager Janet Keeter. And so it went.

Next, Mayor Orr received his own proclamation and expressions of appreciation for his service. His family also received flowers for their sacrifices from the grateful council, and each council member individually expressed appreciation. Glazer spoke, and presented Orr with a certificate from the California State Senate honoring his service, as well as a gift. Then Orr said a few words recognizing Glazer, the city's management and employees, and all of those in the community.

At the end of the evening there was no way anyone didn't feel good.

To witness the wine giving, see the women, listen to the song, and hear the encomia, you can find the video with a couple of mouse clicks on www.cityoforinda.org.

No doubt about it: The Dec. 1 Orinda City Council Meeting was a love fest. Fulfilling outgoing Mayor Dean Orr's promise at the outset that it would be a "fun packed agenda," there were wine, women and song, not to mention flowers and lots of loving praise for those who have served the city over the years.

The wine came in the form of gifts to those honored during the course of evening. But it was the women and song that set the tone for the events that followed. Receiving a proclamation from the council on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, WomenSing - which started in 1969 as the Orinda Women's Chorale - treated the council members and audience to a beautiful a capella performance at the beginning of the meeting. "If we would start every meeting with a song, perhaps we would be in a better spot," quipped Orr.

The most serious business conducted at the meeting was the selection of the city's new mayor



The Orinda City Council, Public Works and Engineering Services Department staff Photos Ohlen Alexander



Steve Glazer and Dean Orr

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