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Dynamic Husband and Wife Team Earn Citizens of the Year in Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher



Dick and Robin Holt, Lafayette Citizens of the Year. Photo Pippa Fisher

This year Lafayette is going with the ultimate volunteering partnership in its selection for Citizens of the Year as it recognizes the long list of volunteer works done by husband and wife team, Dick and Robin Holt.

The couple first moved into Lafayette in 1975 with three small children while Dick Holt was stationed with the Navy in Alameda. They were attracted to Lafayette by the good schools and, says Robin Holt, in part because the area reminded them of Carmel, where they came from, especially given all the opportunities for outdoor activity and music.

Robin became involved with the PTA at Vallecito Elementary School almost immediately through friends while her husband was still on active duty. She was PTA President at Happy Valley Elementary School after the two elementary schools merged in 1983.

They continued their involvement with schools as their three children progressed from elementary through Stanley and Acalanes High School from 1976-1990.

Additionally Robin, a keen gardener, was president of the Happy Valley Garden Club. The work of this organization is responsible for several areas of beautification around the community, especially the walkways and for donations to the community gardens.

She and her husband have been very involved on the board of the Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center with Robin serving a stint as president from 2010 to 2012. Ellen Reintjes, current president of the LL&LC, says of Robin that she was instrumental in establishing strong and positive working relationships among the several library partners in this unique physical and organizational structure.

"Following her presidency, Robin continued with the Friends Board and has taken on new responsibilities that facilitate celebrating our volunteers and assisting the Library Foundation with fundraising events. In all these roles, Robin has impressed me with her creativity, diplomacy, and positive attitude," Reintjes said.

Both Holts can still be spotted from time to time working as substitutes in the bookshop. Reintjes says "They are the kind of people who pitch in to make things happen and are often among the first to respond to requests for volunteers for special Friends and Library events."

In fact Robin says she is most proud of her contribution to the library, which she notes is an incredible community resource.

Dick Holt retired from the Navy in 1981, but, never one to sit around, he soon became busy, serving on the Lafayette Planning Commission for more than 26 years, from 1983 to 2010.

He has served as president of the Lafayette Rotary and on the Las Trampas board as well as on the board of the Lafayette Community Foundation for six years.

He still serves on the Environmental Task Force. He was co-chair of the Senior Symposium for three years and was, according to the current President of the LCF, Cheryl Noll, "One of the pillars of the Senior Symposium."

Noll says of the couple, "His wife, Robin, was with him every step of the way, volunteering along side of him at LCF events and functions. LCF has missed Dick's role as "the conscience of the community" on its board of directors since he stepped off a year ago." Noll continues, "Dick and Robin deserve this recognition!"

For the last eight years he has volunteered as a driver for the Senior Helpline and also works for Meals on Wheels.

However, he says he is proudest of his work establishing the Concert at the Res 23 years ago, still

supported today by the Rotary Club.

Dick is a musician who plays guitar and appreciates Lafayette's incredible music programs and local talent. It was largely due to him through his work at the Rotary and in collaboration with the Community Foundation that a permanent stage was erected at the Lafayette Reservoir three years ago.

This dynamic duo, ever modest about their long list of volunteering in the community, was selected for the award from a field of 15 nominees this year. They will be celebrated at the Citizen of the Year dinner on Friday, March 24 at the Lafayette Hotel and Spa. Registration can be found online at the Chamber of Commerce website, www.lafayettechamber.org.

Dick Holt says that the quality of service in Lafayette is great. His wife continued, "We have met fabulous people." She says that there is so much diversity of backgrounds and service here in Lafayette. Through volunteering, she says, "We have learned so much, had so much fun - so many joyful moments."

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