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Del Rey custodian retirement party

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He also taught a class to make monkey's fist knots before a shipboard field trip, chaperoned several field trips himself and built a custom catwalk for Cheryl Collins' sewing class fashion show.

After 40 years of set up and clean up, it will soon be time to lock up for the very last time. "Mr. Steve" retires June 30; it is likely Del Rey will feel his loss for years.

Orinda Union School District honored Eydam with a standing ovation in August when he was named their Classified Employee of the Year, but his school admirers have another name: they call him Emperor of Del Rey. "The kids think he's [the] principal," joked Kirsten Theurer, who also claims the title. "I can't say enough about him."

"He's like a celebrity," said former student Evan Barrie-Kivel, who with friend Brendan McFeely

now tower above the man McFeely calls "the nicest guy I know." Even neighborhood dogs knew to beat a path to the custodian's door for attention and affection. The accolades continue to pile up on a "Mr. Steve Del Rey" website.

Mr. Steve fans had a chance to say goodbye at Eydam's retirement party May 24 at Orinda Intermediate School. The party had to be held off site, Fuller explained, otherwise Mr. Steve would have set up and cleaned up himself. It was a pasta and pinball-themed party (Mr. Steve likes both) with a "dress like Mr. Steve" option. Even OUSD Superintendent Dr. Carolyn Seaton sported Eydam's trademark cargo shorts and district shirt.

"This is quite the overwhelming event," Eydam admitted. "The Del Rey community has been such a special part of my life for the past

38 years," he said. "I'm looking forward to coming back to Del Rey from time to time to attend school events and student performances," he promised. But Eydam admits he won't miss the sound of his 5 a.m. alarm clock or the extended length of his commute, which has tripled from its original half hour drive. His summer plans include visits to California landmarks and theme parks. A generous privately sourced goodbye check presented to Eydam raised enough to insure he can even take an all-expense paid first-time vacation to Disney World. Eydam often worked 12-hour days to insure after-hours and weekend events at Del Rey ran smoothly. "I don't know when he goes home," Fuller said.

Alas, the answer to that question comes from Eydam himself: "June 30."

Failed storm drain fee measure

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Some of the council members acknowledged that they collectively bore some responsibility for the results. Fritzky and Onoda said that faced by a series of emergencies the management of the town had been more reactive than proactive and that moving forward

it needed to be more strategic. Korpus noted that Battenberg was forward thinking and recommended that she would be tasked with developing a strategic plan for the town.

The mayor floated the idea of a two-year plan to advocate for a

more documented strategy for the storm drain system. Korpus and Onoda agreed that the town still has a backlog of storm drain repair that would cost the town millions of dollars and that by 2020 a new proposal could come to a ballot.

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