

Former Mayor of 'Tatzin City' honored at packed dinner



Photo Pippa Fisher

The 2019 Citizen of the Year Don Tatzin (center) poses with his wife Ellen Reintjes and Sen. Steve Glazer at a dinner to honor Tatzin March 22.

By Pippa Fisher

This year's Citizen of the Year, Don Tatzin, was honored at a dinner March 22 at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa in front of friends, family and dignitaries.

Emcee'd by Interim City Manager Niroop Srivatsa, the longtime public servant of "Tatzintown" (one of several monikers for Lafayette along with Tatzinville, coined by Srivatsa for the evening) received several proclamations

and honors.

District 2 Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Andersen found the perfect honor for the lawmaker who already has more proclamations than he could possibly ever display – a set of engraved kitchen utensils.

Now while creating his signature truffles, he will use a spatula inscribed "Don – always Smooths Things Over;" and a whisk inscribed with "Don – a Transportation Whisk Taker."

Strong participation in Springhill evacuation drill



Photo Jeff Heyman, City of Lafayette

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People were taking it seriously. Springhill resident Roni Melmed described a visceral reaction after the alert, as she got ready to evacuate. "My pulse was racing. This could actually happen here," she said.

Lafayette Chief of Police Ben Alldritt was very pleased with the level of community engagement and participation in the drill. "There are approximately 250 homes in the Springhill area and the number of participants was fantastic," he said. "I want to thank those that participated, getting up early on a Saturday morning, and supporting Police and Fire as we continue to evolve our evacuation plans."

Noting the number of volunteers who participated to make the drill successful, Alldritt thanked Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team, Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission, Contra Costa Sheriff's Office, Community Warning System, especially Livia Pop, OES & Search and Rescue, Reserve Deputies, Contra Costa County Fire, Moraga-Orinda Fire, Springhill residents and the

Springhill HOA and its board of directors and Lafayette City and Police Department staff. Surveys sent to residents and all drill volunteers following the exercise are currently being reviewed. Alldritt says they will use that feedback to improve.

"One of the big things out of this exercise was utilizing contra-flow traffic control as a method to evacuate people more quickly," says Alldritt. He points out the benefits of getting more residents engaged in registering for CWS, and understanding that this is the primary communications mechanism during emergencies, especially those that involve evacuation orders.

Paul Melmed said that he was very impressed with the dedication and expertise of the Lafayette Police Department and all the agencies involved. "It is so important to know that help will be out there in an actual emergency."

"Evacuating from our home in the early morning with emergency vehicles all up and down Springhill Road gave us a scary sense of what the folks in Sonoma and Paradise must have felt this past summer," said Paul Melmed.

Info: To register with the CWS for alerts residents should go to <http://www.cococws.us/>.



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