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## Supervisor Gayle Uilkema Announces Retirement

By Cathy Tyson



Gayle Uilkema at the annual Board Reorganization Lunch at the Lafayette Veterans' Memorial Building  
Photo Carol Yates

Communication System (EBRCSA). Their mission is to own and operate and maintain a state-of-the-art communications system for public agencies in Contra Costa County and Alameda County.

"It takes a tremendous amount of effort and cooperation to get off the ground - we're working on infrastructure and maintenance right now," said Uilkema.

Although retirement is still more than a year away, Uilkema plans to see more of her two grown daughters, one is a Deputy District Attorney and the other is a family practice physician in southern California, and of course, the grandchildren. Beyond that, "It's really premature at this point, still to be determined - but I don't have a huge bucket list," she said.

After serving as a Lafayette City Council Member from 1978 to 1997, with four years as Mayor, Gayle Uilkema, currently in her fourth term as a Contra Costa County Supervisor and Chair of the Board, recently announced her retirement. She'll continue to represent District 2 which encompasses Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda along with Danville, Alamo, San Ramon and the western portion of Walnut Creek until the end of her term in January 2013.

Having been in public office for over 33 years, she's ready for a change. "It's time," said the Supervisor, who wanted to decide on her own terms when it was time to retire. "There's an old saying - if you enjoy what you do... you'll never work another day in your life. I value public service so much...it's something I've always been drawn to."

"I chose this time of Thanksgiving to announce my retirement because I'm so grateful and want to give thanks for the opportunity to hold the public trust all these years." She added, "I've had a career full of wonderful experiences." After her term ends, she's not exactly sure what the future holds, and plans to use the next fourteen months to figure it out.

Prior to her years of public service, Uilkema was an Adjunct Professor in the field of Public Administration and has taught graduate school at Cal State East Bay, JFK University and UC Berkeley.

The biggest change she's seen in public life aside from what she calls "the current financial distress" is regional emergency preparedness. She recalls that after September 11 everyone recognized the real need for a regional system to meet the needs of the public in an emergency. "I remember years ago when I was a teacher - emergency planning was the first thing to go," said Uilkema. Primarily funded with federal grants, Uilkema serves on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Regional Interoperable

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[back](#)

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