

Published March 8th, 2017

Smooth transition as Keeter retires, Steve Salomon takes over

By Sora O'Doherty



Orinda Vice Mayor Amy Worth, Mayor Eve Phillips and city council members Dean Orr and Inga Miller say goodbye to Janet Keeter, holding the bouquet. Photo Sora O'Doherty

maintenance building, the Wilder Quarry House, new playing fields at Wilder and Pine Grove, and the senior affordable apartments at Monteverde. They lauded her professionalism and knowledge, her communication skills, her dedication and her positive attitude. They admitted that they will miss living vicariously through Keeter's tales of helicopter skiing, Tough Mudder contests, mountain biking and skiing the toughest slopes.

Keeter had actually postponed her retirement somewhat to allow for the smooth transition to Interim City Manager Steve Salomon. He was hired last December, before the sinkhole became the predominant issue in Orinda. However Salomon said that Keeter made sure he was up to date by sending him pictures and emails before he started, and then staying on to overlap with him by a few days to make sure he was comfortable.

But the situation doesn't phase Salomon, a retired city manager and experienced interim city manager, who says, "When you've been at this as long as I have, you've faced lots of things that are big challenges." He did add that this one is difficult because there are lots of regulatory agencies involved with creeks, added to a second set of agencies involved in potential reimbursement.

The city has contracted with Peckham & Associates in Sacramento, to recruit a permanent city manager. Salomon assumes he'll be in Orinda until July or August. He lives in Brentwood, which is not such a long commute, but puts him into commuter traffic. He tries to avoid it by adjusting his hours.

Where will he go next? Just maybe, he says, he'll really retire.

Tears and tissues, proclamations and praise were in evidence as longtime Orinda City Manager Janet Keeter retired.

Feted at a reception at The Quarry House at Wilder on Feb. 16, Keeter heard kind words about her 12 years as city manager from many, including former mayor, now State Sen. Steve Glazer, who spoke of Keeter's dedication to staff and her incredible skill to treat everyone with even-handed neutrality. Glazer presented Keeter with a proclamation on behalf of the California Senate and the Assembly (Assembly Member Catharine Baker was unable to attend) as a token of the many great memories that Keeter leaves behind her. "You'll always be a part of the Orinda family," Glazer avowed, adding, "I'm proposing that we name a sinkhole after you!"

At the city council meeting on Feb. 21, the council also sang Keeter's praises and presented her with yellow roses and a proclamation of its own. In it the council recognized Keeter's major contributions to Orinda, including the new city hall, the new public works

Reach the reporter at: sora@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA