

## ***Yountville State of the Town 2-5-19 (by Mayor John Dunbar)***

As I look back on this past year, I am compelled to do more than just list accomplishments and events typical of a State of the Town address.

I acknowledge, we certainly have a notable list of moments and memories to highlight.

We celebrated the retirement of beloved Chef Bob Hurley and thanked him for four decades of wonderful food and community service. We also peered through the darkened windows of his former restaurant to see what Chef Thomas Keller was up to as he created his newest culinary wonder, La Calenda.

We raised a toast to Chef Richard Reddington, who closed Redd Restaurant after 13 years, for serving some of the town's finest cuisine and for creating a vibrant bar scene that will be missed by locals and visitors alike.

We also bid farewell to one of our oldest and most successful businesses, Overland Sheepskin Company, which moved to downtown Napa after 28 years in Yountville.

We recognized the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bouchon Bistro.

We looked back on 50 years with the Agricultural Preserve that defines our valley.

We got used to Gateway Estates being renamed Bella Vista Park.

We stood by as the doors opened at the new RH Café and Gallery, as well as the rebranded Hotel Villagio and its new event facility called "The Social".

We cheered as the V Foundation Wine Celebration raised \$18 million for cancer research.

We added pickleball courts, a renovated tennis court and outdoor fitness equipment so local residents have even more ways to exercise and have fun.

We confirmed our annual Residents Bash is a hit – just ask our reigning Prom King and Queen!

We hopped on our bikes to "Rock the Ride" with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Congressman Mike Thompson and many others advocating to put a stop to gun violence.

We honored our first responders, and in particular our own Bob and Clara Tinsley, as Grand Marshalls of our Yountville Days Parade.

We unveiled the “Faces of Freedom” sculpture in Yountville Veterans Memorial Park to honor the generations of men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation.

We welcomed Fred Just as the new Administrator of the California Veterans Home in Yountville.

We passed a 1% hotel tax increase to generate money for housing and programs that will make living locally possible for more of our workforce, homeless veterans and others.

We shaped plans for the future of our community during a nearly-two year Envision Yountville General Plan update. We also talked a lot about cannabis.

We certified the unopposed elections of Vice Mayor Kerri Dorman, Councilmember Marita Dorenbecher and myself.

After listing all of these highlights, what stood out to me was how Yountville showed its strength and its heart in 2018.

We began the year still recovering physically and emotionally from the catastrophic wildfires of a few months earlier.

Then, on March 9, our community experienced loss due to a previously unimaginable act of violence. Three women, dedicated to serving veterans who needed their compassion and mental health expertise, lost their lives at the hands of someone they were determined to help.

It was a dark day for their families, friends, colleagues - for all of us.

However, during the hours, days, weeks and months that followed, the spirit of our community shined brightly.

People close to Christine, Jenn and Jennifer, as well as to the Pathway Home extended family, felt heartbreak that day, but what followed was an outpouring of support, compassion and a desire to continue the mission of these three brave women.

We gathered in celebration of their lives and to unify and offer comfort as a community.

As jarring as this experience was to our sense of security, no one could predict we would be shocked again only nine months later by another mass shooting, this time in Thousand Oaks.

We all wondered how could it be that one of our brightest and most talented, Alaina Housley, was among a dozen innocent people taken from their families and friends by yet another violent act.

Throughout these events that challenged our comfort and sense of peace, the binding thread was how we came together.

We came together after the wildfires to learn CPR and how to be self-sufficient in case of a disaster, where to go during a power outage and to have extra supplies on hand.

We also came together to grieve the loss of colleagues and friends and to commit as they did to the mission of helping others.

We joined in candlelight and vowed to add volume to the voice of a young woman who, in just a few years, had a profound and lasting impression on so many lives.

In all of this, we learned the best ways to support our neighbors when the lights are out, or when the streets are flooded, or when the air quality is unsafe. We learned how to lean on each other when we need to, and how this town bonds together in times of crisis as well as in times of joy.

With the help of all our residents and business partners, we continued to operate with a balanced budget, grew reserves, maintained our streets and infrastructure and provided a high level of municipal services.

Whether it's managing our daily operations or responding to unforeseen challenges or hardships, we proved we are better and more successful working together to protect ourselves, to serve each other and to keep Yountville the welcoming, safe and enjoyable town we get to call home.

Thank you.