

State of the Town of Yountville (Mayor John F. Dunbar – Feb. 2, 2016)

Congratulations, we turned the big 5-0!

In 2015, we celebrated Yountville's 50th anniversary of incorporation and did so in fine style, honoring the colorful history and accomplishments that define our community's past and present, and setting the stage for an equally impressive future.

Our official anniversary was in February and was marked by a re-creation of the Town's signature "Y" photo made up of about 300 locals in the midtown intersection of Washington and Yount streets, but our birthday celebration extended throughout much of the year.

It included remembering our pioneer heritage with the permanent display in front of our Community Hall of two grindstones from George Yount's Mill.

A long-discussed art project to honor our community moved closer to reality thanks to the efforts of our Yountville Arts Commission and residents to have a mural painted on the wall of the California Drive underpass.

The highlight of the year, without debate, was our Town-hosted 50th Anniversary Bash. More than 600 residents were treated to fine food and wine from our local chefs and winery partners, live entertainment and dancing. Everyone came together to share with friends and neighbors the joys of living in Yountville.

Much was accomplished last year. Several significant town streets were resurfaced, which elevated the quality of our streets to the highest level in Napa County. Sidewalks were built, new street light poles were installed and converted to LED lighting, and the town started the long process of replacing old, rotting wooden street name posts with new, more readable posts.

The Town formed the resident-member Go Green Team to champion environmental efforts. Results followed quickly, as residents and businesses collectively worked to reduce water consumption by more than 20%.

I signed a letter representing the Town Council's commitment to the international Compact of Mayors, setting standards for a Climate Action Plan and strategies to reduce energy use and conserve water.

Speaking of water, the Town completed its five-year, \$4.2 million Recycled Water Expansion Project, which allows us to recycle close to 90% of our wastewater, with a goal of 100% in the near future.

Progress has been made with flood mitigation at several locations along Hopper Creek. One of the most visible is on Finnell Road, where new bypass pipes are being construction to divert significant amounts of water from Hopper Creek to reduce the risk of flooding downstream.

The Town took steps to make housing more affordable through State and federal residential grant programs.

The Council reaffirmed its commitment to protecting our neighborhoods from short term rental activity with stricter zoning rules and by issuing subpoenas to two major online booking services in order to identify property owners who break the law.

The Town also is investing significantly in our community parks. Renovations are underway to improve and update Yountville Community Park, Oak Circle Park and Veterans Memorial Park to provide safer, more accessible and more versatile spaces. All Town parks and public opens spaces were designated as tobacco free.

Yountville's Arts Commission had a busy year as well. New sculptures were installed along our Art Walk. The Yountville Reads literary program remained popular, various artists were profiled in the Community Center's Gallery and April's Art, Sip & Stroll drew a record crowd last year.

Meanwhile, Yountville continues to be recognized as one of the finest locations in the world. *Saveur Magazine* recognized Yountville as its second most "splurge-worthy" destination, behind only Paris, France, and ahead of third-place New York City. *Conde Nast Magazine* ranked four of our 11 hotel properties in the top 30 in Northern California, and *Trip Advisor* listed the Bardessono Hotel & Spa as its No. 2 lodging property in the United States.

Every year brings change to our business community, and 2015 was no exception. Yountville Fitness Center closed its doors after two decades of serving locals and hotel guests.

Shortly after the Bardessono Hotel & Spa sold for \$84 million in June, The Vintage Estate ownership announced plans to sell its property, which includes Villagio, Vintage Inn and V Marketplace. The estimated street value of those 23 acres of lodging, restaurant and retail space approached \$200 million, and a sale is anticipated by spring.

RH Gallery broke ground on its new lifestyle showcase project at the north end of town. Stewart Cellars' wine tasting room, café and bookstore progressed toward a summer opening.

In the middle of town, The French Laundry continued its extensive kitchen and office remodel, but service continued uninterrupted at the Michelin three-star restaurant.

At the south end, K Laz Collection opened at Piazza Quercia. Just north along Washington Street, a new limited service restaurant, Protea, began renovations with a target date for opening within the next couple months.

Cornerstone Cellars relocated to the rear of the Whistle Stop Center and will be replaced on the street frontage by Jean-Charles Boisset's JCB Tasting Salon and Atelier by JCB.

Napa Style launched a rebranding and renovation of its space, expecting to reopen by early spring.

Change also came to the Town Council in May, when former Vice Mayor Lewis Chilton resigned and announced his family was relocating to Southern California. Jeff Durham, who had served on the Zoning & Design Review Board and the Parks & Recreation Commission, was appointed to fill Chilton's unexpired term.

Michael Cobden and Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley joined our team as Town Attorney in April. More recently, we welcomed Maria Ojeda as our new Finance Director, Larry Handcock as our Public Works Muni Operations Supervisor and Sergeant John Crawford joined our team representing the Napa County Sheriff's Department.

What remains noteworthy as we review 2015 is that the Town sustained a balanced budget with continued investment in fund reserves. As evidence, the Town again earned recognition from the Government Finance Officers Association for fiscal responsibility and management.

Our goals and project list are robust for 2016. Yountville's Town Council and staff remain dedicated to serving our residents and supporting our businesses with our community's best interest as our guide.

It's important that we don't lose sight of how much effort is required to achieve and maintain the quality of life we cherish here. As residents step aside after years of volunteerism and public service, friends and neighbors need to step forward and bring with them new energy, ideas and commitment to our community.

Several projects will present opportunities for locals to be engaged in 2016. We are asking residents to complete a citizen satisfaction survey, so we hear directly from our community members what they like and where we can improve our service delivery.

We are developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and we continue work to update our 1992 General Plan.

We should ask ourselves what role each of us can play to ensure during Yountville's next 50 years we achieve our goals and create memories like those we celebrated in 2015 and like those that define Yountville as the "Heart of the Napa Valley".

Thank you.