

City Council SJMW NOV 23, 1994

New council gets down to show business

Santa Cruz swearing-in is a gas

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The Santa Cruz City Council lacked only one thing Tuesday night: a cover charge. And maybe a gong.

Most cities simply swear in newly elected politicians and get right down to potholes and sewer rates. But Santa Cruz leaders lived up to their town's singular reputation Tuesday night, kicking off a new term with a folk song, Elvis impersonations and flatulence jokes.

By unanimous vote, the left-leaning council named Katherine Beiers, a retired University of California, Santa Cruz librarian, to be mayor.

The three top vote-getters in the Nov. 8 election also took their seats — schoolteacher Mary Beth Campbell, environmental attorney Celia

SANTA CRUZ COUNCIL FINAL RESULTS

☑ Celia Scott	10,186	18.8%
☑ Mary Beth Campbell	10,005	18.4%
☑ Scott Kennedy	9,834	18.1%
Phil Baer	4,348	8.0%
Simba Kenyatta	4,098	7.5%
Susanne Espinoza	4,020	7.4%
Bruce Gabriel	3,981	7.3%
Rodent	2,639	4.9%
Ed Davidson	2,282	4.2%
Jesse Stumpf	1,912	3.5%
Bill Williams	537	1.0%
Daniel Jalkut	279	0.5%
Write-ins	179	0.3%

Scott and former Mayor Scott Kennedy, who was elected to a second term. For the first time, a majority of the council is female.

In perhaps another first, one new officeholder, Scott, turned the chamber into a folk festival.

Moments after City Clerk Emma Solden finished administering the oath of office, Scott handed out sheet music to the crowd of 100. It contained the words to a seven-verse song she had written, "Dancing on the Brink of the World."

Before the audience had time to react, her husband, Peter Scott, produced a banjo. Other friends brandished a bass and acoustic guitars.

For 10 minutes, they sang the praises of the river, the Ohlone Indians and local flora and fauna while a few audience members gamely crooned and cynical

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Santa Cruz turns council session into jam session

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city department heads elbowed one another in the ribs.

Moments before the surprise jamboree, retiring Councilman Neal Coonerty, owner of Bookshop Santa Cruz, advised the new council members to follow the advice of Henry David Thoreau: "When a dog runs at you, whistle at him."

Coonerty gained international attention three years ago when he authored Santa Cruz's famous "looks law" — an ordinance banning discrimination in jobs and housing based on height, weight and, at first, characteristics such as blue hair, pierced noses and tattoos.

"As a public official at a time when politicians are as popular as a fart in an elevator, prepare to hear almost anything said about you," he said, smiling.

Outgoing Mayor Kennedy made an attempt at statesmanship, saying he had enjoyed being mayor and he hoped to continue work on pressing issues such as upgrading the low-income Beach Flats neighborhood.

But it was too late.

Moments after Councilman Mike Rotkin was named vice mayor, he curled his lip into a Memphis-like sneer and warbled: "In the words of the King, uuuuuuhhhh, thank you. Thankyouveramuch."