

# Lynn Robinson takes seat as mayor

Outgoing mayor feted for seeing city through tough year

By J.M. BROWN

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SANTA CRUZ — Lynn Robinson, a seven-year member of the City Council who has served as a public safety watchdog for more than a decade, took her seat as the city's new mayor Tuesday.

In true Santa Cruz style, at Robinson's request, Santa Cruz singer

Alan Heit began the meeting with an acoustic version of John Lennon's "Imagine." Robinson invited another vocalist to begin last year's mayoral switch with "What the World Needs Now," demonstrating what she hoped would be a positive year ahead.

The council's top seat changes each year and, traditionally, the top two vote-getters in previous elec-

tions serve as mayors. The council voted Nov. 26 to appoint Robinson as mayor and Councilman Don Lane as vice mayor.

Robinson, a landscape designer elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, is the 11th woman to serve as mayor in the city's history. Robinson, a co-founder of Santa Cruz

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Incoming Santa Cruz Mayor Lynn Robinson, right, takes the oath of office from City Clerk Bren Lehr during Tuesday's City Council meeting.

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## MAYOR

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Neighbors, has long monitored the Homeless Services Center and the impacts of transience on the city, which has some nonprofit leaders and advocates for the homeless uneasy about her agenda.

"My focus is to keep Santa Cruz safe and clean," she told a packed audience on what was her late father's birthday.

Robinson, 58, noted recent findings from a public safety task force assembled by outgoing Mayor Hilary Bryant that noted high property crime rates, rampant drug addiction, discarded drug needles, a strong gang culture and alcohol-fueled violence.

Robinson said she would announce more details in January about a program called "Come Clean with the Mayor" to organize regular community cleanups on the levee, railroad tracks and other spots known for camp-

## AT A GLANCE

LYNN ROBINSON

**WHO:** Incoming mayor of Santa Cruz

**AGE:** 58

**BACKGROUND:** Elected to City Council in 2006, re-elected in 2010. Co-founder of Santa Cruz Neighbors and resident for 30-plus years.

**OCCUPATION:** Self-employed landscape designer

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor of arts degree in studio arts, UC Santa Cruz

**FAMILY:** Husband of 29 years, John; children Lindsey, 27, and Conrad, 25

sites and refuse.

"If we don't step up, then we get what we tolerate," Robinson said.

Robinson and Bryant are part of a growing tradition of UCSC graduates taking on the role as mayor.

Bryant, who oversaw the city during one of its dark-

est periods, thanked fellow council members, city staff and residents who helped get Santa Cruz through the aftermath of the Feb. 26 killings of Sgt. Loran "Butch" Baker and detective Elizabeth Butler. Bryant also sought to comfort and calm mounting concern over discarded needles and illegal encampments.

"We are a stronger community today," Bryant said. "We have gone through an immense challenge. We are going to be better for all the things we faced this year."

Bryant, 42, whose safety task force recently made 72 recommendations, said, "There are a lot of really good things happening in this city and many things you can feel proud of. We are really working the best we can for this community."

Lane, also a UCSC graduate, a longtime advocate for maintaining services for the homeless, said he and Robinson have a good working relationship despite past disagreements about issues involving the homeless.

The 57-year-old nonprofit

administrator said it makes sense Robinson would focus on keeping the community clean, saying "those are the issues we have seen her work on for several years. Lynn wants to be positive in what she's doing and if she just stays in that positive spirit, she'll do well."

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