

THANK YOU!

May 20, 2013

Gary Waldeck, Mayor
26739 W Fremont Road
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

COPY

Dear Gary,

This is somewhat late, but I want to thank you for taking the time out of your busy day to come to the brunch at Ginger's home. She is a gracious hostess and, as you could tell, I was surprised to receive from you the beautifully written proclamation and plaque. So please thank the town council for me – and thank Deborah Padovan, too. My daughter Vicki arranged the event with Deborah and my wife, Rita. It was also a pleasure to have my daughter Donna and her husband there. Ed Wasson, one of our original Hills neighbors, was there too, as well as Robin Welch and my old friend from grammar school in San Jose, George Coles.

Looking back, when I moved to the hills more than sixty years ago few people were living there. It was mostly open land. But I liked the area and the mild climate, so in 1950 bought a slightly sloping acre on Oneonta Drive for \$3,200. Then I talked to Joe Eichler in Palo Alto, who agreed to have one of his contractors build a house on the lot for \$14,000. It's hard to believe today, but making payments on the mortgage was not easy.

Gary, it was one man who had the idea of forming a town, our neighbor Bill Simrell. In 1954, he walked down the hill and said, "Rex, we should have our own town." That led to our forming the Los Altos Hills Incorporation Committee, chaired by Bill. The central incorporation concept: 1) One acre minimum zoning. 2) No commercial enterprise. My job was to draw the town boundaries and determine probable population, income, expenses and tax rate. I estimated the town's population to be 1,167, total assessed valuation to be \$5,700,000, and gave the committee four tax rate options. They chose the next-to-lowest tax rate (28 cents per \$100 assessed valuation) worrying that anything higher would not be accepted.

After a year's work we created a town, actually a city, since California does not recognize "towns". There was debate about the naming the town, since the name Los Altos Hills ("*the high hills*") is somewhat redundant, but that's the name we chose.

Here's wishing the best to you and everyone in town.



Rex Gardiner

cc: Rita Gardiner, Vicki Gardiner Taylor, Ginger Summit, Deborah Padovan, Ed Wasson, Robin Welch, Donna Gagne, George Coles, Itze Couperus.