



# County of Sonoma

## State of California

Date: September 28, 2021

Item Number: 18

Resolution Number: 21-

☐ 4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution Of The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Sonoma, State Of California,  
Recognizing Chris Smith For His Outstanding Career In Journalism And His  
Many Years Of Service To The Community.**

**Whereas,** Chris Smith chronicled life in Sonoma County for more than 43 years as a reporter and columnist for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat; and

**Whereas,** he began his journalism career as a boy on a bike flinging copies of the Press Enterprise onto porches and sometimes through the windows of subscribers in his hometown of Riverside, California; and

**Whereas,** as an eighth-grader at Chemawa Junior High in Riverside, a friend urged him to sign up for a new journalism class, and Chris asked his buddy: “What is journalism?”; and

**Whereas,** Chris excelled in that class to the point that his teacher, Jeano Lotz, suggested he pursue it as a career; and

**Whereas,** a half-century after Ms. Lotz’s suggestion, the boy who didn’t know the definition of journalism was part of a newsroom staff that won the Pulitzer Prize – journalism’s highest honor – for its coverage of the destruction and aftermath of the fires that ravaged Sonoma County in 2017; and

**Whereas,** while his career led Chris to write about fires and earthquakes, crimes and parades, government meetings and neighborhood gatherings, his primary interest was never the institutions and events of his community, but the people who populate it; and

**Whereas,** Chris never heard a story he didn't think worthy of putting into print, and he elevated tales of lost wallets returned, unrequited loves connected, good deeds done, dearly departed eulogized, acts of kindness rewarded, loyal pets honored, serendipitous meetings consummated and all manner of daily human interaction into stories that wove the daily life of our community into a black-and-white tapestry that uplifted spirits and recognized common goodness amidst the maelstrom of daily news; and

**Whereas,** Chris gives himself to the community in many ways outside of the newspaper, from his longtime association with the dwindling ranks of Pearl Harbor survivors to his service as major domo to the Pasta King, the late Art Ibleto, to his frequent appearances as guest of honor or master of ceremonies to many dozens of organizations and fundraising events through the years; and

**Whereas,** Chris and his wife, Diane Peterson, are proud parents to Max – who was introduced to PD readers as a toddler and most recently appeared in his dad's column as a brand-new physical therapist working in Sonoma County – and are loyal companions to Maisie, the latest in a long line of Australian shepherds that Chris has spoiled shamelessly over time; and

**Whereas,** while Chris has retired from the newspaper, he is still active in the community and can be seen being walked by his dog every morning through the streets of his Bennett Valley neighborhood, stopping to chat with anyone because he believes everyone has a good story to tell.

**Now, therefore, be it resolved that** the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors hereby congratulates Chris Smith for an outstanding career in journalism and thanks him for his many years of service to our community.

**Supervisors:**

Gorin:	Rabbitt:	Coursey:	Gore:	Hopkins:
Ayes:	Noes:		Absent:	Abstain:

**So Ordered.**