

The Right Thing to Do

It seems that the New Year always brings change. We resolve to lose a little weight or take a long vacation. Yep, the New Year is a great time to change our ways.

Before we can put those changes in motion, many of us will celebrate New Year's Eve. Please be sure to designate a sober driver this year. Our officers have seen the results of drunk driving and are passionate about removing intoxicated drivers from our roadways. Please, don't drink—or use drugs—and drive. Designate a sober driver and get everyone home safely so you can start working on those New Year's resolutions.

At UPD, 2016 brings a big change to our department: after 30 years of dedicated police service, Captain Trent Taylor is retiring.

Trent began his career in Eureka in 1985, but by February 1986, he had moved to the City of Ukiah and joined our police force. Within a few years, Trent's peers recognized him for his exceptional service and named him Officer of the Year in 1989; and then in 2015, Trent received one of our highest awards: the department's Medal for Meritorious Service.

During his career, Trent worked as an officer, field training officer, special agent, district attorney investigator, patrol sergeant, operations captain and administrative captain for the department. Trent also served as our reserve officer program coordinator, cadet program supervisor, and taught law enforcement courses at Mendocino College for many years.

Mayor Doug Crane recently said, "In my eleven years serving on the Ukiah City Council I have become more aware of Trent Taylor's exceptional and substantial contributions to the Ukiah Police Department and the community. I strongly suspect he'll continue to make insightful and significant contributions to our community for years to come."

I, too, suspect Trent's contributions to our community will last for years to come. During the last eleven years, along with his regular police duties, Trent volunteered countless hours working at the Ukiah Community Center, Ukiah Food Bank and the Ford Street Project.

Trent served as the president of the board for the Community Center and Food Bank. He worked tirelessly to recruit other community board members and find a chief executive officer for these non-profit enterprises. Trent's efforts led to a new roof for the Community Center, expanded operations, and food for thousands of Ukiah residents and families.

Trent was also instrumental in helping to combine the operations of these three organizations. Today the Community Center, Food Bank and Ford Street Project benefit from a combined board of directors, which makes them much more cost efficient.

With Trent's help, these great organizations have expanded drug and alcohol rehabilitation services for the Ukiah community, helped people sign up for back-to-work training programs, and provided short- and long-term homeless services for individuals and families in Mendocino County.

When I wanted to tell others about the great work Trent accomplished, he would say that he didn't volunteer for fame or notoriety; he volunteered because it was "the right thing to do."

Ford Street Project CEO Jacque Williams recently told me, "Captain Taylor never backs away from a challenge and he is not afraid to roll up his sleeves to make Ukiah a better place. Without Trent's vision and leadership to make these non-profits operationally profitable, they would no longer be open. Captain Taylor's efforts have led to food for families, people finding ways to seek employment, and rehabilitation for people addicted to dangerous drugs or alcohol. Trent's work is truly extraordinary."

Our department and our community is a better place because of Trent's contributions and his desire to serve Ukiah. On behalf of our entire department and our community: we thank you Trent for your leadership, vision and dedicated service. We are extremely grateful for your contributions and your desire to always do the right thing.

As always, our mission at UPD is simple: to make Ukiah as safe as possible. If you have suggestions on how we can improve please feel free to call me. If you would like to know more about crime in your neighborhood, you can sign up for telephone, cell phone and email notifications by clicking the Nixle button on our website: www.ukiahpolice.com.