



Thank you to the Council and Mayor Sharon Konopa December 2020
From Rebecca Bond

On behalf of the Albany Visitors Association, thank you for the opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation to the council members stepping down this year. And what a year.

Bill Coburn having served multiple (3) terms on council- your ongoing efforts to look at all sides of an issue have helped broaden the vision of the council, Rich Kellum, often playing devil's advocate – I think sometimes just to see what might happen- but ultimately, you've helped us to focus on the facts and the things that are really important, and Mike Sykes, we've so appreciated our candid conversations with direct discussions, clear goals and purpose. We agree, the community is only as good as we make it.

You all know too well that representing Albany as an elected official is not easy. It can be incredibly frustrating. Making the best decisions possible with the information at hand, limited resources, and sometimes strong feelings.

It requires a person who cares enough to walk into a room - loaded with conflicting opinions and heightened emotions - to come out with the best decision possible under the circumstances, and then to face community members on both sides of that decision.

Serving the community of Albany is just that: a service. Thank you for answering the call to serve. We appreciate the time you've all given to Albany with your honest intentions to make us better.

Mayor Sharon Konopa, you've represented Albany well as the first female mayor in a line of 54 mayors before you- starting with J.C. Powell in (1865)

Serving for 12 years tied the record with previous Mayor Chuck McLaran. And with 12 years on council before that you have served enough time to grow three generations of Christmas trees. Tis the season. We love the traditions you've helped to start, like lighting our community tree.

As mayor, you've served with equity and grace, at times under incredible pressure and scrutiny. As a leader you're the first to volunteer, leading by example. You've offered a welcoming smile and message to our visitors, made tough budget decisions, solicited volunteers, donors and sponsors, brought community members together to recognize the outstanding, celebrate victories and mourn losses, and you've even coordinated homemade refreshments for 1,000 of our closest friends during our Annual Christmas Parlour Tours.

I've had the pleasure of working with you my entire career here in Albany. I'm particularly proud of the sash behind me that says Votes for Women. It was presented in good company with you, Marilyn Wimer, and Sentaor Mae Yih

in 2012 during the 100-year celebration of Oregon women's right to vote, honoring the women of our past and blazing a path for women of the future to step up and make a positive difference in our political world. We knew someday our roles would evolve and relationships would change but we also know our friendship will continue.

Working with someone so dedicated to the Albany community makes the rest of us better. You serve as an inspiration, and more importantly an invitation for others to stand up and serve as well. You've raised the bar, and we know you are not done yet. Thank you.

