

'George Hostetter Day' proclaimed in Fresno to honor longtime reporter

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With heartfelt sentiment, the Fresno City Council recognized Thursday as "George Hostetter Day" to mark the reporter's retirement from The Bee after 28 years, much of it spent covering City Hall.

Hostetter ends his Bee tenure on Friday. He began working full time at the newspaper in 1987 as a sports reporter, then moved to covering business before taking over the Fresno city government beat.

The proclamation declaring George Hostetter Day was not on the council's agenda – a violation of the state law that requires public notice of meeting topics, but a step that Council Member Clint Olivier said was needed to keep the honor a surprise.

To present the proclamation, the seven council members, Mayor Ashley Swearingin, City Manager Bruce Rudd and city spokesman Mark Standriff walked from their seats and stood at the front of the council dais around Hostetter. Each spent several minutes thanking him for his work, which they said involved holding city leaders accountable by reporting their actions and decisions while being fair in the coverage.

[Read George Hostetter's blogs at www.fresnobee.com/city-beat](http://www.fresnobee.com/city-beat)

Hostetter is known also for his City Beat blog on www.fresnobee.com and its often long entries. Rudd joked that whenever Hostetter posted a new blog item, city staff would comment it was time "to pack a lunch" given how long it took to read the lengthy pieces. "I've gained a few pounds over the years packing a lunch," Rudd said.

Swearingin thanked Hostetter for his dedication to the city, which she said was symbolized by his daily walks from The Bee to City Hall so he could literally see Fresno from the ground up. Once she leaves office after next year, Swearingin said she will remember working with the council on the issues of the day, as well as being assisted by her staff. "And I will remember George" because his stories will fill her scrapbook, she said.

As a going-away gift, Standriff gave Hostetter several boxes of Kit Kat bars, his favorite candy.

Hostetter remarked that he was privileged to have had the chance to cover the city, and that Fresno was the perfect microcosm of American society, with all its ills, problems, strengths and potential.

While he was born in Lindsay, Hostetter made a point to say "I am proud to be a Fresnan."