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To: Lakewood My Home <lakewoodmyhome@lakewoodmyhome.com>
Subject: [Lakewood My Home] John Arbeeny
Date: Wed, 20 Jun 2007 21:16:54 -0700

Lakewood Deputy Mayor John Arbeeny has asked that we forward the following letter to you about his decision not to run for the City Council in 2007:

Dear Friends:

By now many of you have probably heard that I decided not to run for re-election to Lakewood City Council in the upcoming election. Many have confided in me that I'd be a "shoo-in" for a second term. However, that's not a good enough reason to run for office.

Public office is about service and representation. It's not about homesteading, not an ego trip or even a contest to be won. It's about participating in and contributing to the political process by serving and representing our citizens. Personally it is about my willingness, dedication and motivation to continue serving and representing the people of Lakewood on the council with 100% of my ability for another 4 years: there are other things in my life besides politics.

I have served the United States for 21 years of military service, my community for 8 years: 4 years as a member of Lakewood CARES outside government and 4 years as a council member inside government. I think I have done my duty by any standard and it's time for others to have an opportunity to serve.

When I first got involved with Lakewood CARES, I was motivated politically by the fact that council members were running unopposed and representing only a small portion of Lakewood's population. This is certainly not what our Nation's founding fathers had in mind. That monolithic council defied the public's will and had to be challenged. We did that, rather successfully, and gave Lakewood a choice, eventually electing other voices to the council over the last 6 years. I think Lakewood has been the better for it.

For me, the city council was never a career move. On the list of things

of what and who I am, a council member is but a small part. Beware of those totally wrapped up in their own political identity, running for "their seat" as though they owned it, and resenting anyone with the audacity to dare run "against" them. With that kind of attitude it's all about them and their ego: not about the public, service or representation.

I guess I always had the idea in the back of my head of running for just one term as an object lesson to Lakewood and its City Council. However it really hit home to me when I was badly injured last year in a motorcycle accident. What if I had been killed? Council would have said some nice things about me, held a moment of silence and then opened nominations for my replacement and a new deputy mayor! So it was time for me to set an example, to open up an opportunity for others, to again push Lakewood politics in the right direction.

No one is indispensable, something I learned in the Army and 2 years of combat in Viet Nam. Regardless of who gets elected to what position, the sun will still rise, the seasons change and Lakewood will advance because ultimately our future resides in the hands of its 60,000 citizens, not just those 7 who sit on Council. I think this is the kind of government our country's founders envisioned. They trusted the wisdom of our people both as voters and as elected officials.

I want to thank all of my supporters for their work and kind words and my hat is off to those running for City Council this time around. If John Arbeeny has any legacy at all, I hope it is that I motivated others to take charge of our destiny and get involved politically in service to our City, representing our citizens.

John Arbeeny