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Bobby Ray Hill—Tiburon’s Trash Man for 28 Years—Retires

Bobby Ray Hill, Mill Valley Refuse Service’s longest tenured employee, has retired after 44 years of picking up Mill Valley and Tiburon garbage.

Bobby was born in Monroe, Louisiana in 1946. He left home when he was 18 years old because “I could only earn four dollars a day there,” and came to California, joining a brother and sister who were already living here. He worked for Hunt’s Cannery in Hayward for two years before joining MVRS in November of 1965.

For the next 16 years, Bobby worked on “Route 6” in Mill Valley, which covered most of the city’s hilly streets. He then took over the commercial route in Tiburon and has been a well-known fixture on that route for the past 28 years. He was easily recognized by Main Street merchants who were up early enough to see him empty the garbage containers on their street six days a week for the past three decades.

Bobby had a special fondness for the old Sweden House bakery, where he used to enjoy a warm Danish pastry every morning. Of course, waiting next door was the infamously narrow alleyway where Sam’s Café piles garbage bags and boxes starting from the street entrance and reaching down the length of the building at the peak of summertime business. When asked if he hated picking up the garbage there, Bobby said in his characteristically easy-going manner that it never bothered him, though “it always took longer to pick up Sam’s than any other customer.”

Bobby said he didn’t think much had changed in Tiburon over the years—unless you count his memory of the railroad tracks that ran through the area where the condos at Point Tiburon are now located!

One would think that age was the primary reason for Bobby’s decision to finally retire, but as anyone could tell by watching him work, he is still in remarkably good shape. Actually, he said, after all these years in the Teamsters Union, he realized his pension was so good “I can make more money now by *not* working so hard!”

Bobby has two daughters and seven grandchildren. He plans to do a little traveling back south where he grew up, but also plans to return to work at MVRS as an independent contractor servicing trucks on a part time basis.

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