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This past year Novato lost a great community advocate and volunteer, Hank Barner. He is the posthumous selection for my 2016 Look Who's Getting It Done Award.

I met Hank when I started my first term as your County Supervisor. He was the District 5 appointee on the Marin County Planning Commission, a position he studiously and thoughtfully held for eight years. While our relationship started off on a rough note, we soon became great friends and he proved to be a tremendous repository of information and knowledge on both Novato and County issues.

Hank lived in Novato's unincorporated area of Black Point and was very active in the neighborhood, serving for 30 years as President of the Black Point Improvement Club. His vast knowledge on County policies and codes, land-use processes, and environmental issues made him a force to be reckoned with during project proposals and permitting issues – while at the same time these qualities made him a tremendous asset to the community in helping maintain the character and quality of life in Black Point.

One of the most notable community efforts Hank was active in was the Stonetree Golf Course and residential development, which ultimately began construction in 2000-2001. Hank was not supportive of the original development proposal and was instrumental in garnering community pressure and in negotiations with the developer that led to a compromised end result that was acceptable to both the neighbors and the developer: the number of houses was reduced from 238 to 53, three trees were planted for every one removed, reclaimed water was required to be used on the golf course, only one housing unit per 2 acres, a 64-acre wildlife preserve was created, and all was done without bond or assessment districts and at no cost to local taxpayers or residents. Once the compromises were agreed to, Hank became invaluable in helping get broad-based community support for the project.

In 2008, the 64-acre preserve that was created as part of the StoneTree development changed hands from a conservancy group to the County of Marin Parks Department. In 2009, Hank approached me to rename the preserve after Vince Mulroy, who was part of the StoneTree development team who worked closely with Hank to develop the above-mentioned compromise. This was a perfect example of the type of man Hank was. He did not let differences mar his relationships; he was a collaborator and a team builder.

If you find yourself in the Vince Mulroy Memorial Woodland and Wildlife Preserve, you will find a bench there with a plaque that reads: "Hank Barner's Bench, a special place to celebrate the land he helped save." A perfect tribute to remain in a community Hank loved.

I think all of those who have worked with Hank share an enormous respect for him. He was always impartial, fair, thoughtful, civil and intellectually honest.

Rest in Peace Hank. Your tireless commitment and effort to maintain the beautiful community of Black Point and that of greater Novato will not be forgotten.

Looking ahead to 2017, you may have heard my comments at our first Board meeting of the year regarding my support for a one year pilot implementation of AB 1421, commonly referred to as Laura's Law. Laura's Law permits counties to provide the option of court-ordered Assisted Outpatient Treatment for individuals suffering with serious mental illness. Our County Health Department

presented to our Board of Supervisors about the possibility of implementing Laura's Law last February. At that time staff did not find sufficient evidence that involuntary outpatient programs are more effective than voluntary programs. Our Board accepted the recommendation and asked for quarterly updates on the expansion of the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. After a year of receiving updates on our enhanced mental health services, I am pleased and impressed with the work we've accomplished. While I know we've reached more residents with our voluntary, expanded services, I feel we owe it to the families to explore every option possible to assist those suffering from mental illness. I am suggesting a one year pilot implementation of the program because Laura's Law has very strict eligibility criteria which an individual must meet to be served, and after one year I would like to evaluate if this involuntary program is effective in Marin. The Board of Supervisors will consider this matter later this winter.

As always, my door is open to you. You can reach me at: (415) 473-7331 or [jarnold@marincounty.org](mailto:jarnold@marincounty.org).