

Civitas Award Presentation – Annie Bonk

(A few years ago, some neighbors felt it was time to recognize one particular person for his tireless contributions to I'On. So a special recognition award was created in 2003 to recognize William Hamilton, called the Civitas Award - **for outstanding Community Service making I'On a better place to live** – that's what the plaque says. We've now given out five of these awards. And it's time to do it again.)

Volunteerism is alive and well in I'On and it's a key part of what makes this place tick. It takes good people willing to put serious sweat equity into our community that makes this such a special place to live – and that comes in all shapes and sizes. We just recognized our tallest Civitas recipient, now I'd like to introduce our shortest! This next person, has given so much time & energy, in so many ways, and for so long, the time is right to formally recognize and audibly appreciate her.

Annie Bonk is an institution in I'On. It's perfectly clear, I'On wouldn't be what it is today without Annie's many touches sprinkled throughout. She's part of the fabric of this place, and her impact shows up in many ways, based on some distinctive qualities and traits Annie exemplifies:

First of all, **Annie is the queen of detail.** Her many years contributing to the Finance Committee for the HOA is the best example of this. She dutifully attended the many Finance committee meetings, and the board meetings, and the budget planning meetings, and reviewed the books and all the bills in between. Tireless service and many contributions. As long as Annie was involved in the day-to-day operations of I'On, every nickel was guarded with great care, and spent only with a strong rationale and after much rigor. She questioned water bills, light bills, and repair bills and if something smelled funny, you could count on Annie chasing it down until she understood and accepted the explanation. Nothing would slip by Annie's watchful eye. Kinda like that old ad about Inspector #12 for Jockey underwear! And we all knew that if an expense or a proposed budget passed the Annie-sniff test, well, it was good enough for the rest of us. This past year, she applied her financial energies to serve as Treasurer of BizNet, and brought a new level of rigor to that community organization's finances, too. She's pinched hit for the Artist's group to help managing finances for our events, helped track expenses for the I'On at 10 book, invoiced and COLLECTED for BizNet ads in the directory this year, and is just willing to share her skills with folks who appreciate what she can do for them. Like the Energizer bunny, she keeps on giving.

Secondly, Annie is **persistent.** Based on her strong financial background working in the Banking industry, she applied that experience to help a fledgling I'On HOA grow from wearing baby slippers into some proper grown up Keds! (White, of course.) We all know growing pains, and goodness knows we've had our share. But thanks in large part to Annie's dogged determination, the Board established a reserve fund as soon as it was possible, carving out sufficient funds to get us started, helping guide the first capital reserve study the HOA commissioned, and then once it got some traction, she did the fundamental work to help set up

an investment program so those reserve funds were working for us all the while. Beyond that, she researched a slew of local banks to identify one that was going to best meet our day-to-day operational needs. It's not glamorous work, it's not particularly fun work – it's hard work, but important work, and Annie slogged along making sure the finances were in good order, and that our monies and support institutions were working hardest for us. And for that we're grateful.

Next, Annie believes in **helping people come together** – she does this for their Yacht Club (I think she hosted ___ people yesterday for dinner, like she does every year), and lucky for us, she does this for I'On, too. She's been the engine behind the monthly Potlucks for as many years as I can remember, starting way back when it was mostly the Pi'oneers from Eastlake. (Dare I put an apostrophe in "Pioneers?") Annie's potlucks moved to the Boathouse for a long while, and eventually migrated to the Creek Club, where they continue today. And every neighbor is always welcomed. Annie's behind the scenes, calmly and matter-of-factly organizing, recruiting others' to take their turn to host. This past year, she's arranged food and beverages for BizNet's regular meetings. Same thing with the Supper Circles. For at least 5 years, a bevy of new and sometime unlikely connections are made by forming new dinner groups, that Annie, and for a long while, Ina Nau, orchestrated.

Speaking of Ina brings me to the next point. Annie finds a special way of **blurring the lines between friends and family**. If you're a friend, Annie treats you like family. If you're family, you're treated like a friend. And if you're family of a friend, like my mother, well you get the full Monty! She just has a way of inviting you in to feel welcome and comfortable and an integral part of our "community family". Now if you're a squirrel, that's a different story!.. Right Ed?

Seriously, though, if you're a friend, and in a time of need, **Annie makes time for you**. We've suffered some unfortunate losses in our community – sudden deaths, another not so sudden, some debilitating accidents, or serious surgeries – but Annie's quietly been there, like a steady dock in rough waters, something to hang onto, when you need a friend you can count on to take care of you and your family. Annie reaches out and takes care of care of food, takes care of things - things that others don't usually think about. **She thinks things through**, and so has made things easier for a lot of people who needed clarity in thinking at times when it was hard to think at all. From all of them, and the rest of us who know what an impact you have had, thank you Annie.

And this Civitas Award is also for all the other little things she's done that add up – from picking up litter on her regular walks, to helping stuff envelopes for membership drives, to distributing the monthly newsletter door to door - when we still could!, proofreading What's Going I'On flyers when asked, selling tickets for events, being an appreciative member of the audience at events, hosting Symphony fund raising dinners at her home, donating little soaps, shampoos and pop tabs to the Ronald McDonald House (not to mention their sizeable financial support!), making sandwiches for the Habitat workers, serving on the Boathouse Committee, storing the I'On Xmas decorations in their garage for so many years – rent-free!, donating firewood to the Community Stew, and not being afraid to laugh at herself and having others laugh with her – I'm of course speaking there of Annie's role as a founding member of the Precision Drill Team, even

letting us practice each year in her garage! And of course, we all need to thank Barry for sharing Annie with the rest of us all these years.

So Annie would you be so kind as to come up and accept your Civitas award....?!