

Hawks

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everyone's support, we can make Humboldt an even better place to live."

When 1997 rolled around, Hawks found herself being challenged again as she was seeking a third term as mayor. Challengers Allen Barker and Mike Barker were seeking to unseat the incumbent.

Just like the two elections prior, Hawks was once again in a runoff election, this time against Allen Barker. Barker came close to winning the November election outright, receiving 46-percent of the vote, while Hawks finished second with 33-percent.

In the runoff, Barker continued the momentum with a win, defeating Hawks 1,783 to 862.

Even though Hawks lost her bid for a third term, she had already made her mark as Humboldt first female mayor.

So why did Hawks seek the mayor's job in the first place? According to her children, Mike Hawks and Lisa Phillips, working as the secretary under several mayors, she saw that changes were needed, especially the city's finances.

Hawks was born in 1927. After graduating from Gibson High School, Hawks attended Women's Business College in Nashville in the mid 1940s before returning to the area.

After college, Hawks took a job with Senter Insurance. From there, she moved to Couch Motor Company where she met the love of her life. Clyde "June Bug" Hawks was the parts manager for the dealership. For a short stint, Hawks worked for

Jack Ray Insurance Agency before accepting a position at city hall as the mayor's secretary.

"She worked under mayors Dan Scott, Earnest Griggs, Tom McCaslin, Marlon Hawks and Jess Pritchard," son Mike recalled. "She worked from the mid 60s until retirement."

Once she became mayor, her knowledge of how the city ran and the finances, were right up her alley.

"She loved Humboldt," daughter Lisa said. "That generation took pride in community and did their part—friends, relationships, being accountable to each other."

Mike said the city budget and finances were always her main goals. And she had an open door policy, he noted.

"She's very honest," Lisa said of her mother. "Her integrity was off the chain. She took her job seriously."

Son Mike said she had good people running each city department. She let them manage and operate on their own. Of course, as mayor she kept a keen eye on their budgets. The department heads would come to her when there were problems or if the city needed to make purchases, Mike added.

"She would encourage the staff to do their jobs and not need to be micro-managed," Mike said of his mother's way of running city hall. "She made each department accountable for their budgets. She didn't have an agenda. She came to work on time and left on time each day and expected that from the staff."

"She was friends with all parts of town," daughter Lisa added.

After four years as mayor, Hawks

was thrown back into the fire. A horrific dozer accident took the life of school board member Ronnie Thompson in June of 2000. Mayor Barker talked with Hawks about filling Thompson's seat on the school board and she accepted.

Less than two months of the tragedy, Hawks attended her first meeting as a school board member in

August of 2000.

During that time, husband June Bug became deathly sick and passed away in 2001. Hawks did not seek to be elected to the school board position.

Hawks passed away on February 20, 2003 and left behind a legacy that no other person can ever claim, Humboldt's first female mayor.



The children of the late Martha Hawks, Mike Hawks and Lisa Phillips



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