

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Beautz named county board chairwoman

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SANTA CRUZ — Supervisor Jan Beautz has been handed the gavel of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.

Beautz's unanimous selection marks the end of decades-long tradition in which the board 3-2 liberal majority has kept the post among themselves.

"It's been a long time since someone from the First District sat in this seat," Beautz observed.

Beautz, a first-term supervisor who represents Live Oak and most of the Summit area, shares the growth-management and strong environmental ethics of the board majority, said outgoing Chairman Fred Keeley.

Keeley also said Beautz's selection indicates that the 3-2 split, with which liberals have controlled the board since 1981, is no longer relevant.

Supervisor Gary Patton, who nominated Beautz, lauded the one-time outsider and fellow attorney as "hard-working," while Keeley called her an "authentic citizen politician."

She is also a leading county Republican, who has recently been pegged by Gov. Pete Wilson to sit on the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Beautz's duties as chairwoman



Jan Beautz
Gets gavel, and visibility

include presiding over the meetings and setting the agendas, and representing the board's position in correspondence.

But the position will also give her the advantage of high visibility during an election year during which she, Keeley and Supervisor Robley Levy are seeking re-election. Keeley, Levy and Patton are considered the three liberals on the board.