

# Danner recall effort fizzles

## DA's foes vow that they will try again next year

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SANTA CRUZ — The drive to recall Art Danner has fallen short of making the ballot, but organizers said they'll start a new petition drive.

The Coalition to Recall Art Danner fell about 4,200 signatures short of the 14,200 required to put the issue on the ballot, organizer Bob Lamonica said yesterday. The deadline for turning in the signatures is Thursday.

"We'll have a renewed bid beginning in January," Lamonica said, adding that the current effort has "raised the consciousness" of the people about the drive.

The recall drive was prompted by the case of Catherine Gardner, the prosecutor Danner fired last year after she admitted snorting what she thought was cocaine. Gardner said she was forced into it by an abusive boyfriend.

The recall leaders criticized Danner over his decision to keep



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### Art Danner

Gardner on the payroll, without requiring her to work, for four months. Danner said he was trying to work out a settlement with Gardner; critics said he was trying

to keep the issue quiet during his re-election campaign in the spring of 1994.

The issue came before county supervisors, who took no action against Danner. Ed Frey, who lost the election to Danner, has a suit pending that seeks to make Danner repay the county for the time Gardner didn't work.

Even though it was apparent a month ago that the drive would not succeed, Lamonica said it was "important to keep pressing" until the end.

The point of the recall drive, Lamonica said, is "an abuse of power" by Danner on the Gardner case as well as other issues.

As he had earlier during the drive, Danner scoffed at the recall attempt this morning. "They'll fail again," he predicted. "They won't get as many signatures" as in the current drive.

"People rejected" the recall drive's message, said Danner, who said Lamonica and other recall leaders had axes to grind over the district

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attorney's handling of cases they were involved in.

Danner questioned how many of the 10,000 signatures were from people registered to vote in Santa Cruz County. He said he's heard reports that petition gatherers were unduly aggressive in trying to get people on the street to sign.

How aggressive the recall people were is "an extremely negotiable issue," Lamonica said. How said

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petition gatherers were sometimes aggressive because of the nature of the issue. Sometimes people would challenge them, Lamonica said, and "there were bound to be confrontations."

Lamonica said the second drive will "a much better chance of success" because recall organizers will be able to fine-tune their strategy. Lamonica said he doesn't expect any basic change in the approach.

About 15 people were regularly out gathering signatures, Lamonica said, and some 70 others gathered between 10 to 50 signatures and turned them in.

Lamonica said as many of half the people approached to sign petitions were unaware of the issues of even that there was a recall.