

# Novato police review party dustup involving supervisor's husband

By Gary Klien

POSTED: 02/01/10, 12:01 AM PST |

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Novato police are investigating allegations that a county supervisor's spouse pushed an event volunteer at the city's 50th birthday bash last weekend.

The volunteer called police Saturday night to allege that Bruce Arnold, the husband of Supervisor Judy Arnold, had pushed him at the "Paint the Town Red" event at the refurbished City Hall.

The volunteer, who was standing guard at a back door to prevent people from entering there, claimed Arnold pushed him to gain entry through the rear door. The volunteer guard, who was not injured, wanted police to document the incident.

Police were still reviewing the matter Monday and had not decided whether to send a report to the district attorney's office for possible charges, said Novato police Lt. Dave Jeffries.

Jeffries said police were sorting out "conflicting statements" about the incident.

"There's been no charging decision at this point," he said.

Such a push, if it occurred, might be classified as a misdemeanor battery.

In an interview Monday, Arnold denied touching the event volunteer. He said he and the supervisor came in through the back door because they thought it was a VIP entrance, and his wife was carrying a heavy framed resolution for the event.

"We were going into the event and the fellow followed us in," said Arnold, 63. "I told him the supervisor was here and delivering this resolution, and he didn't seem to know anything about the supervisor.

"I turned around to him and I said, 'If you don't stop bothering Judy, I'm going to have you arrested.' He just turned and walked away."

The civic birthday event, described on its Web site as "a celebration of our community, our people and the dynamic spirit of Novato," was held from 6 p.m. to midnight, with dinner and dancing tickets priced at \$50. The alleged incident involving the volunteer was reported shortly after 7 p.m.

"This is not a big deal," said Dietrich Stroeh, president of the event. "We're going to work it out. Everyone loves each other."

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