

24-vote margin puts Harlan on City Council

By BOB SMITH

A margin of 24 votes: The end of one political career in Capitola and the beginning of a new one.

Capitola Mayor Ron Graves was unseated last Tuesday by city voters from the city council seat he had held for four terms.

Graves was the longest serving member of any city council in Santa Cruz County, and one of the senior elected officials in the county.

Replacing him on the five member council is environmental activist and registered nurse Stephanie Harlan, an 11-year city resident, community activist and member of the Sierra Club's executive board.

The top vote-getter in the four-way race was three-term city

councilman Michael Routh. Routh tallied 975 votes, or 28 percent of the votes cast. Harlan received 902 votes (26 percent), Graves, 878 votes (25 percent) and Russell E. Gross, the 23-year-old co-owner of Soquel Meats, 669 votes (19 percent).

Proposals by the City Council to make the offices of city clerk and city treasurer appointive instead of elected were also rejected by the voters.

Dep. City Clerk Pam Greeninger, running unopposed for the city clerk position, was elected.

Although Ms. Harlan polled strongly throughout the city, she received overwhelming support from Depot Hill and the Capitola Village area, as evidenced in the results shown in the City

Hall precinct which includes both areas.

She outpolled frontrunner Routh 3-2 there. Routh's stronghold is the West Hill — Jewel Box areas of the city, which vote at the Tradewinds mobile home park. Routh and Graves campaigned together, sending out joint election flyers to city voters. But Routh wasn't able to carry Graves at Tradewinds, with the former mayor slipping behind Routh by 30 votes — the margin of defeat for Graves in



Photo by Bob Smith

City councilwoman Stephanie Harlan (left), City Clerk Pam Greeninger and Mayor Michael Routh took the oath of office Thursday night following their election victories.

the entire election.

Ms. Harlan was strong the area north of Capitola Road between Soquel Creek and 41st Avenue — a mixed residential area with a mobile home parks, apartment houses, senior citizen complexes and single family housing stretching from one end of the economic scale to the other.

That was also the area that Russell Gross did very well, coming in second behind Ms. Harlan.

Votes in the other precincts

generally followed the general election results.

The election split the city council. Councilman Dennis Beltram openly supported Harlan's candidacy. Jerry Clarke and Bob Bucher quietly backed the candidacies of Routh and Graves.

Beltram saw the election results as a victory for his views.

Contending that the council has alienated many city residents, Beltram said he hopes "for a more positive relationship between the council the citizens; a new relationship between the council and the residents.

"People were clearly ready for a change," Beltram added, referring to Graves' defeat. And the strong showing by Gross is an indication of how strong the feeling for change is. He didn't have a history in the community and spent very little money (less than \$700 compared to the nearly \$3000 for each of the other three). "That shows what a strong desire for change there was. If he (Gross) had not been running, I think Stephanie would have been the top vote getter."

Beltram said the council can continue to function "without personality conflicts" and members can "work in a harmonious fashion."

Both Routh and Harlan seemed ready, in the post-election victory flush, to forgive and forget.

"I don't think I will have any trouble with Stephanie," Routh said. "The election results were not a rejection of the council's policies. I just think the community wanted to see a woman on the council."

The one question in Routh's mind is where does Harlan

REFERENCE

GREEN SHEET
April 18, 1984

	TOTAL	Trade-winds	First Bapt.	Nob Hill	City Hall	Cliff-wd. A	Cliff-wd. B	Absn. votes
City Council								
S. Harlan.....	902	150	165	61	224	132	188	18
R. Graves.....	878	193	119	60	143	139	168	56
Russ. Gross	669	102	141	52	119	121	102	32
M. Routh.....	975	223	133	70	158	157	177	57
City Clerk								
P. Greeninger ..	1,394	256	233	101	257	236	230	81
Write-ins	16	5	3	1	3	1	2	1
Appoint City Treasurer								
Yes	782	153	124	46	148	124	137	50
No	939	175	163	81	176	152	140	52
Appoint City Clerk								
Yes	823	153	133	47	156	136	145	53
No	903	173	155	79	167	142	135	52

stand on using a 4.65 acre site on McGregor Drive the city is now buying, as a shuttle bus parking lot.

"I hope she supports the parking plan. I think she'll support the village plan but I don't know where she'll stand on McGregor Drive because of her connections with the Sierra Club.

Harlan called the controversy over the McGregor Drive purchase "a misconception."

"The conservation committee of the Sierra Club is concerned (about the environmental impacts of a parking lot on the site), but they are supportive of having a beach shuttle bus lot somewhere in the city."

She said her victory was indicative of "broad based support, supportive of change and diversity and of having a woman on the council.

"After they met me and heard why my ideas were, they were ready to support a candidate with these goals."

Any changes she might advocate in the city government will come slowly, she said. "As a brand-new councilmember, I have a lot to learn."

Graves was philosophical

Tuesday night about his defeat, telling reporters: "The voters of Capitola have decided that they don't need Ron Graves anymore. I enjoyed serving them and I think I did a good job. My real concern is seeing that the projects started in the last two years come to fruition"

In an instant analysis of his defeat, Graves said the difference between his campaign and that of Harlan was "her ability to get out the vote. I really believe she ran an excellent campaign. She didn't take a

stand on any issue. She said it was time for a change and we will now see what these changes will be in the next four years.

"I had to run on my record. There were no major issues in the race," Graves said.

Graves said he probably won't run again for public office, but he's available for any job the city wants him to undertake.

"I still take any position offered. I still have a lot to offer Capitola and believe it is a lot better place because of what I've done," Graves said.