



## Stephanie Harlan Capitola City Council 2014

1- Please tell us why you are interested in reaching out to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community.

**ANSWER:** I am interested in reaching out to all groups in Capitola and the community at large. This is a very small town, and it is very important that we encourage everyone to be more involved in shaping their community. We just finished the General Plan process, and had very little public participation. We will be re-writing the zoning ordinances this year, and these will implement the policies of the General Plan. It is extremely important that we develop sustainable progressive policies for the City into the future.

2- Why do you want the endorsement of The GLBT Alliance, Santa Cruz County's grassroots progressive gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender political organization?

**ANSWER:** Your organization is an important part of our County and I would be proud to have your endorsement.

3- Please tell us about your history with the LGBT community, and your awareness of issues specific to our community.

a - Have you had any opportunities to address LGBT issues in the course of your community service or professional life to date (i.e., have you helped formulate corporate non-discrimination standards, worked on the board of a non-profit that developed a LGBT outreach program, etc.)?

If so, please tell us about this work.

**ANSWER:** I have had gay and lesbian friends since college and I have certainly been aware of potential and real discrimination in areas such as housing, employment, medical care. I have served on the City Council for 24 years and the Planning Commission for 4 years, and have tried to be aware of issues specific to the GLBT community in my work there. Capitola has a Harassment Policy which discusses discrimination, various forms of harassment, the FEEUC's Guidelines, reporting procedures, harassment investigations, etc. I will check to see if we have done any updates since it was written in 2002. It is time to look at it again!

b - The queer community is diverse, and we work to represent all elements of it. In support of that objective, we'd like to ask, specifically, whether you are familiar, at any level, with the issues faced, specifically, by the bisexual and transgender communities.

If so, what influence would this have on your decisions as an elected official?

If not, what steps will you take to become familiar with the issues, needs and concerns of these communities?

**ANSWER:** As a nurse, I am aware of some medical and social issues of the bisexual and transgender communities. If there is anything I can do as a councilmember to address issues of concern, I would be happy to do so.

c - As documented in the The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute publication, "Bisexual health: An introduction and model practices for HIV/STI prevention programming" (2007), which is available for download at the URL below, in many cases bisexual people face even greater health risks and obstacles to accessing effective health care and health information than their peers in the queer community, including higher levels of self-harm, suicide attempts and

thoughts of suicide. What specific steps would you take to address the issues raised in this report, and elsewhere, that are specific to bisexuals, including "biphobia" and lack of service provider awareness of bisexuality?

[http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/bi\\_health\\_5\\_07\\_b.pdf](http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/bi_health_5_07_b.pdf)

**ANSWER:** I would be happy to work with the medical community to address these issues. I would be interested in working with a group to organize a conference around these issues. This would provide an opportunity as part of the Continuing Education requirements nurses and doctors have to renew their license. I will continue to be a staunch supporter of the community groups, including the Human Care Alliance, which provide such important services. I support expanding these services. The baby boomers are going to create a huge population with special needs for services, and we need to start planning now.

A summary of the top ten health issues for the bisexual community, sourced from the above report, can be found here:

[http://brown.edu/Student\\_Services/Health\\_Services/Health\\_Education/lgbtq\\_health/bisexual\\_health/health\\_concerns\\_for\\_bisexuals.php](http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Health_Services/Health_Education/lgbtq_health/bisexual_health/health_concerns_for_bisexuals.php)

4 - Many adults, in and outside of the queer community, express their sexuality in a variety of ways, many of which are not well understood by the general public or the service provider community, and often subject to severe social stigma; this frequently leads to poor health outcomes for the individuals in question and / or complications when interacting with the legal system and social services providers.

What do you know about "alternative" sexualities aka Leather/BSDM/Fetish (often collectively referred to as "kink") and their associated communities? Are you willing to learn more about them and engage in dialogue with people from your community who express their sexuality in this manner, in order to ensure that these constituents are better served by the agencies and institutions that you will be overseeing?

The Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance, which "works to advance the recognition of sexual, gender, and family diversity" and "to affirm sexual freedom as a fundamental human right" addresses these issues as part of their larger agenda of supporting "sexual freedom." Their web site is at <http://www.woodhullalliance.org/>  
<<http://www.woodhullalliance.org/%E2%80%8E>>

The National Coalition for Sexual Freedom (NCSF) has an introduction to SM that outlines the governing principles followed by responsible individuals and organizations within these communities:

<https://ncsfreedom.org/key-programs/education-outreach/education-outreach-program-page.html> **ANSWER: I don't** know very much about this, but I would be happy to discuss this with you.

I would be very happy to meet with individuals and groups to understand their needs and address these needs.

5 - Many adults, in and outside of the queer community, participate in relationships that do not fit the traditional two-partner model, and in doing so, are subject to discrimination in housing, insurance coverage and access to health care, immigration, custody and parental rights.

What do you know about these "alternative" relationship structures, often referred to by those participating in them as the practice of "polyamory" (defined as "the practice, desire, or acceptance of having more than one intimate relationship at a time with the knowledge and consent of everyone involved"), the people who participate in them, and the communities that have formed around them? Are you willing to learn more about how these types of relationship structures work, and engage in dialogue with people who participate in them, in order to ensure that these constituents are better served by the agencies and institutions you will be overseeing?

**ANSWER: I** don't know much about alternative relationship structures but am certainly willing to learn more about them.

You can find out more about these types of families, and the issues they face, on the Family Matters Project website (sponsored by the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance) at <http://www.familymattersproject.org>, which is "dedicated to advancing, respecting and protecting the fundamental human right to family by eliminating discrimination based on family structure and relationship choices."

6 - Have there been any LGBT people who've had a significant impact on your life as role models, inspirations, mentors, friends, etc.?

If so, please tell us a little bit about how they've influenced you.

**ANSWER: Very** dear gay friends, David Midkiff and Charlie Hughes, who I met during the Recall Liddicoat campaign in 1978, have been an important part of my life. We worked with the groups that elected Bob Garcia to City Council in 1978, and then Phil Baldwin and Ed Borovatz for Supervisor, and then on their recall campaigns, then Gary Patton for Supervisor, Jane Weed, Bruce Van Allen, John Laird, Mardi Wormhoudt, and the other progressive people. They lived in Capitola Village and we carpooled to the meetings. They also helped me in my first campaign in 1984. We became fast and true friends.

Others who are role models for me are John Laird, Sheila Kuehl, and John Vasconcellos. I think Sheila is the most brilliant female public speaker I have ever heard. We both spoke at a California Nurses' Association conference on the same program. What an experience! Mary Bryant, owner/publisher of The Mid County Post, helped me tremendously in my early years on the City Council. She allowed me to write a column, and it gave me access to our residents, since the paper was delivered to each home. She allowed other elected women to write columns also, and it benefitted us greatly. Mary also helped me because she covered issues that I cared about very much. Her paper was the only source of in-depth information about what was going on at the City Council meetings. The Sentinel just had short articles, but Mary did comprehensive in-depth articles. This allowed the community to know more about what was happening, and hopefully, participate more.

7- Please describe your philosophy for working with under-represented communities of which you are not a member and, specifically, how this will manifest itself in your tenure in office.

**ANSWER: I** have and will continue to meet with and work with minority communities of which **I am not a member**, with honesty and respect for other cultural and personal ways of life.

8 - Please tell us what you know about current City-operated or funded programs which impact the LGBT community, and what suggestions, if any, you have for improvements.

**ANSWER: We** do not have any city operated programs, but we do fund community groups.

9 - Local non-profits that serve the LGBT community, along with other non-profits, have experienced considerable cuts in funding from all sources over the past couple of years.

As a member of the City Council, where would you place funding for health and human services on your priority list?

**ANSWER:** I support increasing the funding of our community groups. The needs increase every year.

10 - Will you insist that the City not associate with organizations - such as the Boy Scouts and The Salvation Army - that have clearly stated their intent to discriminate against LGBT people, supporting, instead, such inclusive organizations as Girl Scouts or Big Brothers/Big Sisters or Goodwill?

**ANSWER:** I will do whatever I can. We actually did work with the Salvation Army years ago to help them get grants to re-model their apartment complex on Bay Avenue, which needed it badly. They operated it for many years, and it was a wonderful senior community with many very close friendships. They sold it to a non-profit housing company, which continues to operate the senior affordable housing complex today with a very long waiting list.

11 - Will you ensure that medical insurance for City employees covers complete health care for gender reassignment surgery and medical care for transgender employees and family?

**ANSWER:** I will look into this. Our employees can choose their policy, depending on their own particular individual or family needs.

12 – If elected, do you intend to take a leadership role with respect to LGBT youth in your city, working to ensure that all schools are safe for all students? If yes, please cite a concrete example of how you would do so.

In particular, did you support AB 1266 (text here: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml>), which guarantees equal access to all school programs and facilities for students in accordance with their expressed gender identity?

**ANSWER:** Capitola has 1 school, New Brighton Middle School. I am a former school teacher, and I certainly will do anything I can, working with the school board, to make sure schools are safe for all students. I support AB 1266.

13 – If elected, do you intend to take a leadership role with respect to rights and services for LGBT elders in your city?

If yes, please cite a concrete example of how you would do so.

**ANSWER:** As a senior, I am happy to work on this issue. Services for all seniors is going to be a huge need in our communities soon, and we need to start planning for it now.

14 - What would you do to support HIV education and services for at-risk communities in your city? Specifically, do you support syringe exchange in an effort to stop the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases and will you work to keep the program based on best practices and evidence-based research? Do you support safe needle drop-boxes in public areas, such as parks or bus depots? Will you support the syringe exchange program if it encounters interference? Do you support training for your police department around needle exchange?

**ANSWER:** Needle exchange programs have a proven success record. I support them. Our police department does have training in this field.

15 - Do you support marriage equality, and did you do so publicly? Are you aware of a nation-wide movement to create "religious exemptions" to marriage equality and other nondiscrimination laws (e.g.: AB 2237 - text here: [http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab\\_2201-2250/ab\\_2237\\_bill\\_20140221\\_introduced.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab_2201-2250/ab_2237_bill_20140221_introduced.html))? Do you have a position on such exemptions?

**ANSWER:** I support marriage equality and will fight discrimination however I can. Religious exemptions are excuses for discrimination and are dishonest and immoral.

16 - Have you in the past, and will you in the future, attend LGBT events, such as LGBT Pride, Queer Youth Leadership Awards, or the BAYMEC dinner?

If you have not attended, why not?

**ANSWER:** I work the 3PM-11:30PM shift, so am unable to attend some events, but go to as many as I can.

17 - If you receive The GLBT Alliance's endorsement, will you display it in your campaign literature?

**ANSWER:** Of course.

18 - Have you received endorsements which you think might be of interest to the LGBT community?

**ANSWER:** I am working on my endorsement list and it will be available soon.

19- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

**ANSWER:** Thank you to all the individuals in the Santa Cruz County GLBT community that are working on these very important issues in our community, state, and nation. We have come a long way, but there is so much more work to be done. I am there with you always.