2018 Election

I ask for your Prayers and Vote on June 5th

Vote GARRY MARCHMAN
COMMISSIONER PLACE 2

30 Years Management Experience
Awarded Conservation District
Elected Official of the Year
Community Leadership Award from Governor Kay Ivy
Endorsed by the Local Farmer Federation

• Proven Conservative Christian Leader
• Retired Military
• Combat Veteran
• Farmer

Paid Political Advertisement by Gary Marchman 14073 Hwy 157, Vinemont, AL 35179
Competent Lawyers, Law Enforcement, Cullman’s Republican Party and others who know me, know they can always count on me to be fair and honest. They also know that I will use my more than 30 years of experience to continue being a judge Cullman County is proud of.
I ask for your prayers, support and vote on June 5th.
Cullman County Commission Associate Commissioner Place 2

Garry Marchman

Age: 55
Family: Wife, Bobbie Marchman; 2 children
Email: gmarchman@co.cullman.al.us
Facebook: facebook.com/garry.marchman

Incumbent Garry Marchman is looking to retain his seat as one of Cullman County’s two associate county commissioners when he faces a challenge from fellow Republican Andy Coffey in next week’s party primary.

Marchman, who serves as the Place 2 (West Side) associate commissioner, is finishing out his first four-year term in office. He cites his work with other local leaders in recruiting new industries, and the jobs they bring, as a highlight of the work he’s done during his first term.

At a recent candidate forum, he also addressed the county’s ongoing struggle to keep up maintenance on its extensive road network — one of the state’s largest county-maintained road systems — by acknowledging that funding remains the limiting factor in keeping pace with the deteriorating effects of Mother Nature.

“We can know all you need to know about fixing a road, and if you don’t have the money, you can’t fix that road,” he said. Local legislators and a handful of concerned residents continue to float ideas to find new sources of funding for the county’s annual road budget. But until local officials and the legislative delegation can find consensus and execute such a plan, it’s difficult to please all the residents who use or live along county roads, he said.

“You can’t ask for more money to fix roads until you’re spending money the way you need to spend it. What we’ve got to have is a good, firm plan and go forward with that plan.”

The only commission seat on the ballot this election cycle, the Place 2 spot represents one of two associate commissioner positions under the county’s three-commissioner form of government. The two associate commissioners serve staggered terms alongside a commission chairman.

Andy Coffey

Age: 63
Family: Wife, Kathy, 3 children
Email: andycoffey3@gmail.com
Occupation: Retired, U.S. Army

Andy Coffey is seeking to unseat incumbent Garry Marchman next week as the Republican Party’s nominee for the Place 2 seat (West Side) on the Cullman County Commission.

Coffey spent his career with the Cullman County Road Department, giving him 27 years’ worth of up-close exposure to the county apparatus most connected with the good will of many local voters. During the last few years of his tenure with the road department, Coffey served as a district supervisor.

Coffey has campaigned on the pledge to make positive changes, saying he did not enter the commission race with any antipathy toward Marchman or other commissioners, and that he simply feels he is well qualified to take on the job.

At a recent candidate forum, Coffey said Cullman’s extensive rural road network — among the largest county-maintained road systems in Alabama — faces a tough future as road bases deteriorate at a rate faster than the commission can upgrade or replace them.

In addition, he said he believes the commission can do a better job of assuring quality work that lasts, saving the county on funds that can go toward paving more miles of road.

“Tha’s a waste of money,” he said. “I think we can do a better job and save money by doing it right the first time.”

The only commission seat on the ballot this election cycle, the Place 2 spot represents one of two associate commissioner positions under the county’s three-commissioner form of government. The two associate commissioners serve staggered terms alongside a commission chairman.
Alabama House District 12
Corey Harbison

Home: Good Hope
Email: corey_harbison@yahoo.com
Political website address: coreyharbison.com
Occupation: city manager

When the Alabama Legislature returns to work in 2019, Corey Harbison is eyeing several issues that will be heavy on the agenda for lawmakers. The General Fund, the topic of constant discussion among legislators, is burdened by funding mechanisms that allow little room for financing some of the state’s most pressing needs, said Harbison, who is seeking to return for a second term in the Alabama House of Representatives.

“We have a problem budgeting for state agencies. We should be having each agency starting at zero and show why they need the dollars and how they will be spent,” Harbison said.

Instead, the General Fund Committee, which Harbison is not a member, bases agencies’ funding off of the previous year. In many cases, he said, those agencies are spending money that is not needed near the end of the budget year, because they don’t want to lose dollars in the next funding cycle.

As a former mayor having served as a deputy, Harbison said the rising problem with mental health care and drugs deserve more attention, but with clear answers.

“I believe the drug problem and mental health issue go hand in hand,” Harbison said.

Harbison said the complexity in the issue that someone who is picked up on a mental health order and tests positive for drugs is turned away.

With an evaluation system that doesn’t automatically drop someone because of testing positive for drugs, Harbison said direction and effective treatment could be provided in both cases.

Harbison also said he supports and looks to law enforcement working with schools and the community to continue improving safety for students and teachers. He said law enforcement officials locally are always studying, working with schools, churches and businesses to have meaningful safety plans in place.

‘I enjoy public service. I decided at a very young age that I wanted to get involved and make a difference in my community. I feel I have the skills and ability to make Cullman a better of a place to live. As your state Representative, I fully support and appreciate local law enforcement leaders like Sheriff Matt Gentry and their efforts to protect and serve our community.’

Funding for infrastructure -- roads and bridges -- has long been contentious in Alabama. Harbison said the head of the Alabama Department of Transportation holds a cabinet position and reports directly to the governor.

“The Legislature certainly gas input, but that department answers directly to the governor. We need more control in the Legislature and I think you would then see more accomplished for our roads,” Harbison said.

On June 5,
Re-elect
Corey Harbison
Alabama House of Representatives, District 12

Pd. Pol. Adv by Corey Harbison, PO Box 472, Cullman, AL 35056
Alabama House District 12
Alex J. Chaney

**Home:** Good Hope  
**Email:** ajchaneylaw@gmail.com  
**Occupation:** Attorney at Law  
**Political Party:** Republican  
**Public office sought:** Alabama House of Representatives District 12

Efficient government and support for small businesses are high on Alex Chaney’s platform in his quest for the District 12 seat in the Alabama House of Representatives.

As vice-president of the Cullman County Republican Party, Chaney said he is deeply conservative and said state government has become top-heavy and bureaucratic.

“I am for smaller and more efficient government,” Chaney said. “Looking at how the public’s money is spent would allow us to maximize budget and make better use of the money we have.”

Chaney also supports the continued recruiting of new companies to Cullman and the state, but he said small businesses that have long been invested in the community need to be protected and given incentives that continue to make them viable.

He also said small farmers that drive the local and state economies also should be supported.

Chaney said he does not support new taxes, but if there is interest by local residents he would consider those proposals and ensure voters have the opportunity to decide the issue.

He also said lawmakers have failed to address the issues surrounding the mental health crisis.

“Cullman families are suffering. As a practicing attorney, I have seen firsthand how mental illness is impacting us locally. Those suffering from mental illness are filling our county jails, prisons, and our cemeteries,” Chaney said.

Local suicides and mental illness-related assaults, standoffs and homicides are at an all-time high, he said, adding that several terrorist threats have been made at local schools because of the lack of mental health services for adolescents.

“I am committed to the conservative Christian values of this community. Protection of the unborn, strong national defense, border security, smaller government and the right to bear arms.”

While the Legislature should be taking action on mental health, Chaney said the Cullman area cannot wait. He said he will work to develop more local services for mental health.

Infrastructure issues are related to inaction in the Legislature and how money is spent in Alabama, Chaney said.

Chaney said he suspects too much money is going to something other than roads and bridges, which creates a public safety problem and will slow economic growth.

School safety, Chaney said should include discussions and planning that involves school officials, school boards, parents and law enforcement.

Alex will be there for you...  
Listen to your concerns regarding our community, our families, and our way of life. He understands that it’s his job to take those issues back to Montgomery and get results.

On June 5th

✔️ VOTE  
ALEX J. CHANEY  
ALABAMA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
DISTRICT 12

Paid Political Advertising by Alex. Chaney, P.O.Box 1052, Cullman, AL 35056
Paul Bussman

Age: 61
Incumbent: Alabama State Senate, District 4
Occupation: Dentist/State Senator, Cullman

Paul Bussman is currently finishing out his second consecutive term as the Cullman area’s representative in the Alabama Senate. A self-described conservative Republican first elected to office in 2010, Bussman faces challenger Garlan Gudger in the party primary race this June 5. The primary winner will face no Democratic opposition in the general election.

Covering portions of Cullman, Winston, Lawrence, and Marion Counties, Bussman represents the Alabama Senate’s 4th District. With a combined population of more than 130,000 people, the mostly rural and suburban district has a unique set of needs, as well as significant diversity from one area within the district to the next, Bussman recently told the Times.

“The counties in District 4 vary a great deal,” he said. “Each county has its individual identity and way of life. Some counties are doing very well economically while others struggle at times.

“Different forms of government are found across the district. One county requires citizens to vote on any local legislation. Another county commission does not have a full-time commission chairman and the chairman changes every nine months. One county has a very strong healthcare system, and the other counties have rural hospitals that are barely getting by,” adding that he had worked with local leaders in Haleyville to avert a hospital closure in the Marion County city.

At times at odds with party leadership at the state level, Bussman has gone his own way when other Republicans have pressured him on bloc votes with which he disagreed. He left a position of leadership within the Republican caucus in 2016 after conflicting with party leaders over how a lottery bill was passed and sent to the House of Representatives.

As the state struggles to find long-term sources of revenue in the face of a number of mounting public costs, Bussman maintains a staunch opposition to raising taxes as a solution.

“My job is to study budgets and clearly understand how the government spends money,” he said. “I take that responsibility very seriously and do not see the need to take more money out of our citizens’ pockets through additional property taxes or any other tax.”

Solving an ongoing funding and treatment gap in health and mental health care, along with ethics reform, prison funding, economic and jobs growth, curbing drug abuse and reforming the funding of public education are other key points of Bussman’s platform.

Finding legislative solutions that provide a sustainable long-term framework is one of Bussman’s biggest goals as an Alabama senator.

“Each county has very different needs, and because I travel my district routinely, I understand those differences,” he said.

Garlan Gudger

Age: 43
Candidate: Alabama State Senate, District 4
Occupation: Owner of Southern Accents Architectural Antiques

Cullman businessman Garlan Gudger is challenging two-term incumbent Paul Bussman for the Republican nomination as the District 4 candidate in the Alabama Senate.

Gudger, owner of Southern Accents Architectural Antiques in Cullman, was born and raised in Cullman County, and currently serves as president of the Cullman City Council. As an elected leader in north Alabama, Gudger said he has observed the shared needs of the communities that make up District 4, and has learned from listening to their people and leadership.

“From my extensive campaigning in the four counties, and listening to the people in those communities, I have learned they all have different issues and concerns,” Gudger told the Times.

“No two families are alike, and the same holds true for each county, city, town, community and neighborhood. My task is to listen to their concerns and issues. That knowledge will guide me to make decisions and vote in Montgomery in the manner that best represents them. Understanding we have differences and listening is the way to find out how to truly help.”

Gudger takes a populist approach to any suggestion that tax increases are a way of securing new revenues for public coffers. “We need to be smarter on whom and what we tax,” he explained.

“We are one of the few states that taxes food. Let’s eliminate that and put that money back into the economy, while at the same time reforming how the state gives out tax credits to certain entities.

“I am against corporate cronyism, especially special tax credits and carve-outs that been on the books for decades without the necessary oversight. Give the money back to the people as a whole — instead of the connected few.”

Enriching educational opportunities, especially for those seeking essential skills to help them enter an increasingly sophisticated and diversifying local workforce, is one of Gudger’s chief concerns for government.

“As a business owner, I know how much a good workforce matters, and it starts with our education system,” he said.

“We must provide the training opportunities for those in the workforce to take on new challenges in order to better him or herself. Our primary goal needs to be to provide our children with a better life than we had. For higher wages, I simply feel we need to provide people with the opportunity to grow professionally, which will translate into higher pay.”

Gudger said the Alabama legislature must find reliable long-term solutions to funding problems that affect not only education, but courts, law enforcement, and health and mental health care.
Cullman County Probate Judge

Tammy Brown

Age: 54  
Home: Simcoo  
Email: tammyhbrown@att.net  
Phone: 256-531-8347  
Political website address:  
Public office held: Probate Judge  
Community organization: Lioness Club  
Education: Vinemont High School, Wallace State Community College  
Church Membership: Non-denominational  

The Probate Judge's office is rewarding in all and every phase of the office. I first began working in the office in 1987 in the driver license. Then as time went I learned and worked in recording, probate court and elections. Selling license is a part of the office but I quickly learned that there is a lot more to the office. Throughout my working years in the office and being elected as Probate Judge in 2012, I have to the best of my ability made sure that every person or family that needed the probate office was treated in a professional manner.

Brown said the probate judge office carries a wide range of duties under the Code Of Alabama, which includes mental health commitments, adoptions, conservatorships, guardianships, estates and wills, condemnations, and governing elections.

Brown was elected Cullman County Probate Judge in 2012 and is currently completing her first six-year term in office. She continues probate court training at the University of Alabama Law Institute, and has completed and been awarded the Certificate for the Probate Judges Law Course.

“I am very proud of the hard work of my employees as we have managed this huge case load increase with approximately the same number of employees as the probate office had 15 to 20 years ago,” Brown said.

She noted the probate court was involved in 391 adoptions in the past five years, averaging 78 per year, providing children with homes.

The services provided by the office, including elections every two-evened years and involving 51 precincts, takes planning and management, She said she made some changes upon election to help with the many duties the employees perform.

Carol Berry

Age: 51  
Home: City of Cullman  
Email: votecarolberry@gmail.com  
Phone: 256-708-6550  
Political website address: elect Carol Berry on Facebook  
Public office held: Probate Judge  
Community organization: Civic or community organization  

Efficiency in the probate judge office, along with mounting concerns about mental health care are among Carol Berry’s platforms for the election. With 23 years in the accounting field, including nine in a partnership with her mother, Berry wants to resolve delays in court hearings, proposing morning and afternoon sessions to alleviate the wait.

As the founder of a nonprofit organization that raised more than $100,000 for community needs, Berry also stresses the importance of the probate judge being accessible to the public and maintain a good relationship with other officials.

“There’s no way for us to address the concerns of our community without knowing their needs. We must be accessible,” Berry said.

Berry has experience in budgeting, management and collaborating with others, and for a decade has been involved in advocating for the rights of the mentally ill.

Pledging to streamline procedures in the probate office, she also said training and leadership through her experience in business management would make the workflow more effective for the public.

Aside from the daily efficiency of the probate office, Berry said mental health is one of the most issues facing the role of the probate judge.

Noting that Cullman County’s reported suicides doubled from 2016 to 2017, Berry said the probate judge needs to be a leader in bringing the community together to address the problem.

I am running for Probate Judge because Cullman needs a leader that can make tough decisions while being fair. I believe I can make the office more efficient and effective while serving our community. Probate court handles things that affect our everyday life. A ‘caring court’ is what you should expect and I can bring that to the people in Cullman County. I am committed to the community and dedicated to progress.”

“The state has taken its hands off of mental health in Alabama, and we must address from a local level the crisis that we now find ourselves in,” Berry said in a recent interview.

Cullman County suicides were reported at 15 in 2016, and 30 in 2017. 

Berry said educational efforts need to be part of the solution to suicides, but she also said health services at the local level, to offset what the state doesn’t provide, will make a difference.
Success stories and helping families. I get motivated by two generation-old philosophies. One, there are three kinds of people: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and, those who wonder what happened. Second, always walk the walk before talking the talk. As your Probate Judge for the last five years and since this election season began, I have applied these philosophies to every aspect of my office by keeping all probate cases, mental health commitments, and adoptions handled efficiently. In running my office it has kept me from spending as much time as I would have liked visiting with many of you. So while some have been talking the talk, my staff and I have continued to produce results with more than 3,000 successful cases completed during our first five years of service. That is our way of walking the walk!

★ Philosophies to live by
★ Results driven
★ Committed to excellence

RE-ELECT

TAMMY BROWN
PROBATE JUDGE

Paid political advertisement by Tammy Brown, P.O. Box 177, Cullman, Alabama 35056.
Cullman County Circuit Judge, Place 2

Martha Evans Williams

**Home:** City of Cullman  
**Contact:** martha@williams4judge.com. Facebook: Martha Williams  
**Occupation:** Currently Cullman County Circuit Judge, Place 2  
**Family:** Husband, Bill McCartney; daughter and son-in-law, Lucy Lavender & Dr. Rich Desruisseau.  
**Affiliations:** Republican, Past President and Board Member Good Samaritan Health Clinic and Daystar House Shelter for Women and Children; Charter Member Cullman County Children's Policy Council; Founding Member Quiet Place, supervised visitation center; Member Cullman County Community Corrections Board; Member Mental Health Task-force; charter member Cullman City Schools Foundation.  
**Education:** Cullman High School; BA in Economics from Samford University; Juris Doctorate from University of Alabama School of Law.  
**Church membership:** Member Grace Episcopal Church – Lay Eucharistic Minister, Altar Guild, Arnold Street Band, Lay Reader, Cursillo Lay Rector, and various other ministries.

Incumbent Circuit Judge Martha Williams is well aware of the challenges courts face with reduced funding, but through experience, cooperation and assistance from the Legislature she believes the system will continue to effectively serve the community.

With five and a half years as judge, one of the greatest challenges she has seen is the impact of prison overcrowding and sentencing guidelines on the court.

She said it is not uncommon to sentence someone to seven years in prison and receive a notice from the Parole Board within a few months that that person has either been paroled or is being considered for parole.

Alabama prisons are overcrowded throughout the state and the Legislature has not reached an agreement on how to relieve the situation. She said the lack of funding for prisons and the sentencing guidelines need to be addressed in the Legislature.

“What is lacking is truth in sentencing and I hope our representatives will address this critical issues in the next session,” Williams said.

Meanwhile, Cullman County has two circuit judges, two district judges and four judicial assistants. Williams said the circuit clerk has lost half of her staff during the cutbacks.

Williams and her opponent, Hasting, have battled in the campaign over bail in criminal cases. She said her opponent has contended she set bail too low, yet, he and his co-counsel have sued her, the other judges, the circuit clerk and sheriff in federal court claiming that their bail amounts are too high.

“This is not a political issue. This is a community safety issue. As for me, I will follow the law. I will look at each case and determine what is appropriate and authorized under the law. My primary considerations will always be community safety and fairness,” Williams said.

Before winning the previous circuit judge race, Williams worked seven years in the District Attorney Office, prosecuting felony offenses involving child victims. She continues to serve on the Cullman County Children’s Policy Council, the Board of Directors for Cullman County Community Corrections, and a newly-formed task force to address mental health Issues in the community.

The experience as a prosecutor, 20 years of private law practice and more than five years as a circuit judge are the experience factors Williams has campaigned on during the election.

Melvin Hasting

**Home:** Pleasant Grove community  
**Contact:** mhaasting@hiwaay.net. Facebook: MelvinHasting@electmelvinhasting  
**Occupation:** Attorney for 16 years  
**Family:** Wife, Shea Baker Hasting; sons, Landon Ballew, Spencer, Brody

Melvin Hasting’s quest for the Place 2 circuit judge seat comes with 16 years of practicing law, and a personal experience from being a victim.

“Not only do I have extensive trial experience in the 16 years of practicing law, but I also have experience in the disappointment and frustration of being a victim of crime that has not received compensation and justice from the criminals who have taken my property,” Hasting said.

Hasting said one of the most important responsibilities of a circuit court judge are handling criminal trials and the supervision of those convicted of serious felonies such as murder, robbery, burglary, sex and drug offenses. He said he will assure residents of Cullman County that violent criminals and career criminals will be incarcerated when justice so requires them to be.

“I take pride in raising my family in a relatively safe Cullman County, and I want to ensure that my family’s future in Cullman County will be a future of safety and security,” Hasting said.

Hasting said his law experience covers litigation of various legal issues and has made him see the importance of hearing both sides heard in all cases prior to making any ruling in a case.

Hasting said the decision in Cullman County Circuit Court to have one one judge handle the entire criminal caseload has caused a challenge for the court concerning the effective and efficient use of jurors. He said cases are being delayed too long because of the practice in place.

As judge, Hasting said would take the initiative to contact attorneys prior to each jury week and having pre-trial dockets to determine the order of trials. Another solution, he said, is to not limit any one jury week for just criminal cases, to also include civil jury cases which are prepared for trial in the event that the criminal cases on the docket are all settled.

Hasting has sparred with Williams throughout the campaign, including bail for suspects.

The Constitution requires bail to be set in all criminal cases except for capital murder, Hasting said.

The purpose of bail, he said, is two-fold: one being the protection and safety of the community and the other is to ensure the appearance of the accused at trial. Seriousness of the criminal charges is to be considered when setting bail. With capital murder being the most serious criminal charge, he said he will not grant bail in those cases. While protecting the constitutional rights of those accused of crimes is important, the primary consideration in setting bail should be the protection of the community, he said.
Scott Stadthagen

*Family:* Wife, Amy Peck Stadthagen; son, Collins  
*Facebook:* facebook.com/scottstadthagen4D9  
*Contact:* scottstadthagen.com/home  
*Church membership:* Hartselle First Baptist Church  
*Occupation:* Owner Hagen Homes Inc.

Scott Stadthagen kicked off his campaign to replace District 9 Rep. Ed Henry nearly a year ago, promoting a pro-business background and support for schools as the foundation of the future.

Across District 9, school systems are the foundation the communities, Stadthagen said. “We need to make sure they are treated as such,” he said.

Through staying involved in local communities, Stadthagen said his goal is to ensure that the people of District 9 are represented in Montgomery so that the area can capitalize on economic development, improved infrastructure, and continued education excellence.

He also said there is a shortage of skilled workers for manufacturing jobs that are opening up in the area, and while school systems are doing a better job in workforce development, that can be improved.

“I think it’s important for us to grab ahold of this and go ahead full throttle,” he said.

Stadthagen does not favor tax increases.

“I think we’re taxed enough,” he said. “But I also know our infrastructure is struggling. We have to find a way to find the funding for our infrastructure.”

Stadthagen said too much of the state budget is already earmarked, and going through the budget to cut any wasteful spending could be an alternative to a tax, but if a tax increase does come up, it should be up to the residents of the state to decide.

James Bowling

*Family:* Wife, Kimberly; daughter, Adalynn; son, Ezra.  
*Facebook:* facebook.com/JustinMorrowDistrict9  
*Contact:* justinmorrowfordistrict9.com  
*Education:* Falkville High School; alumni of Athens State University with a BA in political science and marketing  
*Occupation:* Business development

Falkville graduate Justin Morrow is pushing stronger schools to building economic opportunities in his run for the District 9 seat in the Alabama House of Representatives.

Morrow said he is committed to providing teachers and schools with the best tools to care for and educate students, which, he said, will lead to better jobs in the region.

Among Morrow’s political positions are working to protect “God-given rights,” including the Second Amendment and the rights of the unborn.

Morrow said protecting children from those who want to exploit them is a priority in his campaign, including the assurance that law enforcement agencies have the adequate funds and resources necessary to do their jobs.

Morrow said he would like to see more partnerships between schools, business councils and local businesses to teach students valuable skills that they can take into the workforce.

“Let’s look for other routes,” he said.
Cullman County School Board - Fairview/Parkside

Michael Knop

Age: 53
Family: Wife: Audrey Knop; seven children; foster parent

Education: Fairview High School, UAB
Occupation: Engineer, Marshall County, 23 years

Keeping the school system financially secure is a priority, but Knop also said spending should focus directly on improving the classroom experiences for students.

“I want to make sure teachers have the resources needed to provide the best education for students,” he said.

Working county government, Knop said he is accustomed to using money wisely where goals and projects are concerned.

“I would like to see high expectations for our students so that they have the best opportunities when they graduate,” Knop said.

Shane Rusk

Age: 36
Family: Wife, Jasmine Hipp Rusk
Education: Studied at Wallace State Community College; Business Management, Athens State University; Fairview High School

Rusk wants to see public education provide more emphasis on non-college track careers that teach technical and trade skills, which would open doors to higher-paying jobs in the manufacturing realm.

For the system’s budget, Rusk said he would like to see a top-to-bottom audit that would figure out exactly where the money is going and create ways to generate additional money for the students’ education.

“Our kids are falling further and further behind,” he said.

William ‘Bill’ Ballew

Age: 43
Family: Wife, Krysta Meacham Ballew; daughter, student at Fairview
Education: UNA, bachelor’s degree in history; University of Alabama, master’s degree in educational leadership; Ed.S. degree in educational leadership
Occupation: 18 years as an educator, coach, administrator
Facebook: WilliamBallewforCBOEDistrict2Seat
Email: ballew1975@gmail.com

As a career educator, William “Bill” Ballew brings the perspective of working directly with teachers and students in his race for Place 2 on the Cullman County Board of Education.

Ballew said he will emphasize safety to make sure the students are secure in the classroom.

“The only thing that trumps learning is the safety of our kids,” he said. “And I want to make sure that we are doing everything that we can do as a school system and as school board members to return your kid back to you the same way that you dropped them off or sent them to school.”

Ballew said as a board member he wants to ensure budgets are student-centered and distributed equally among the schools to make sure Fairview and Parkside get their fair shares.

He has also pledged to be a team player with the superintendent and other school board members while taking into consideration the needs of students and the community.

My vision for the Cullman County Board of Education is to learn to think outside the box when making decisions be it in general or the really tough decisions,” he said. “We have got to start by asking the questions such as ‘Why can’t we do this?’ or ‘Why can’t this be done.’

Successful school systems, he said, find ways to over challenges and obstacles.
Cullman County Board of Education/District 7

Jason Speegle

Age: 45
Contact: jspeegle@ccboe.org
Family: Wife, Rita Hafer Speegle; 2 children
Education: Studied at University of Alabama in Huntsville; Good Hope High School
Home: Trimble community
Occupation: Mesco Building Solutions; Serves on Cullman County Board of Ed

Kerry Neighbors

Age: 38
Contact: facebook.com/kerry.neighbors.92
Family: Married to Angela Neighbors, 3 children
Candidate: Cullman County Board of Education, District 7/ Good Hope
Education: Good Hope High School
Occupation: Eva Bank, Cullman County Association of Realtors

Jason Speegle is seeking a third term on the Cullman County Board of Education and has witnessed the school system struggling financially to maintaining a state-required reserve emergency fund.

During his two terms on the board, Speegle said the school system has been able to perform more maintenance on existing buildings to improve their functionality and safety.

With a half-cent sales tax approved by voters several years ago, Speegle said the money has helped in many areas but the age of the buildings and size of the school system makes it difficult to operate beyond some of the fundamental needs.

Looking forward to the June 5 election, Speegle said the knowledge and experience of serving two terms will be valuable in pushing the school system forward educationally and in managing spending and policies.

He said managing available funds is important in anticipation of circumstances that could cause the state to prorate the budget.

Speegle said he wants to install air conditioning in all of the system’s gyms because they are being used more and more as multipurpose facilities, and he would like to continue the system’s emphasis on music and arts programs. On a local level, he said he would like to see plans in place for expanding Good Hope’s schools to keep up with the growth that the city is seeing.

“In the next five to 10 years, we’re going to be looking at portables,” he said. “And when you hit portables, you’re going to have start looking at plans for something big.”

Speegle said one of the challenges to the board is to continue to look for viable new resources that will benefit students.

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle

As leader of the state’s most prolific economy, Battle has repeatedly challenged Ivey to appear at forums with other candidates to field questions and outline her plans for the state.

With Huntsville’s space and military industries paying the state’s top wages, Battle is touting his leadership of a burgeoning economy. He also played a major role in landing the Toyota/Mazda project that will bring a minimum of 4,000 high paying jobs to the region. Battle put politics aside and worked with Ivey’s administration to help land the largest economic project since Mercedes during former Gov. Jim Folsom Jr.’s administration.

Scott Dawson

The Birmingham-based evangelist and author has drawn a lot of attention in the primary with an evangelistic message of hope and taking control of the state from special interests and career politicians.

Dawson has also challenged Ivey to show up at forums while delivering his message of a better future through faith and integrity in politics.

Bill Hightower

An Alabama state senator who touts being one of the most conservative lawmakers in the state, Hightower has worked with Fortune 500 corporations including Emerson Electric, AlliedSignal, Eaton, and Balfour-Beatty.

Hightower a board member of Outback America, a Christian organization that holds family camps in Mobile and other cities; board chairman of a local Christian School; a board member of N.E.S.T., a local organization servicing the needs of the Strickland Youth Center; and an Executive Committee member of the Alabama and Mobile Republican Parties.

Kay Ivey

Ivey inherited the governor’s chair when former Gov. Robert Bentley succumbed to political pressure over mounting questions of ethics and an affair with a top aide.

The 73-year-old governor has been in political roles in Alabama since 1979, including a stint as state treasurer and finally lieutenant governor.

Ivey has travelled the state for industry expansions and announcements such as Toyota/Mazda, taking credit for the state’s low unemployment during her 11-month tenure as governor.

Michael McAllister

The Pike County Republican died April 11 at the age of 69.
Sue Bell Cobb
A former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice, Cobb has campaigned for education, infrastructure improvement and a lottery as the means for pushing the state forward to resolve funding and build sustainable economic growth.

In recent weeks, she has challenged the abilities and success of Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox, who leads polling in the Democratic Primary.

Christopher A. Countryman
For a decade, Countryman has been active in the LGBTQ community and was a co-founder of Equality Wiregrass, an LGBYQ and civil rights advocacy group. After he and his partner were refused a marriage license on February 9, 2015, his activism increased as Equality Wiregrass became more involved in the fight for marriage equality and dignity for all Alabamians.

James C. Fields Jr.
A Cullman County resident and former candidate for lieutenant governor after serving in the Alabama House of Representative, Fields has travelled the state with his message about improving education across the state and improving opportunities in areas that have little.

After college, James began working for the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, where served for over 28 years, assisting the public in locating jobs and he worked as a supervisor of the North Alabama Unemployment Fraud Division Investigators. He retired from this position to seek the Office of State Representative District 12, to devote his entire energy to serving the people of District 12. He was elected, January 29, 2008.

Fields has also stressed caring for the state’s natural resources for health and tourism purposes. He also has promoted the state’s farming industry and has encouraged more bipartisan action in government.

Walt Maddox
The 45-year-old Tuscaloosa mayor has been recognized for his actions after a devastating tornado tore through the state’s most notable college city. He also led a recovery effort that has the city continuing to grow and welcome redevelopment and economic growth.

Maddox challenges the recent economic figures, noting the low unemployment is also accompanied by declining wages and spotty success in public education.

The mayor has also pointed out the failure of rural hospitals and pushed for improved funding for roads and bridges so that economic growth will not reverse.

Doug “New Blue” Smith
Smith, a 78-year-old businessman from Montgomery is running as a Democrat. He has worked on the transition of six governors, starting with Gov. Lurleen Wallace.

He helped establish state economic agencies and departments, including the Alabama Development Office, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the Appalachian Regional Local Development Districts, which worked in conjunction with the state’s intergovernmental affairs office in Washington.

Anthony White
A native of Eufaula and a military veteran, White has pushed for more equitable education funding and creating better paying jobs for Alabamians.

An ordained minister and business owner in Dothan, White also encourages improved funding for Medicaid to meet the needs of Alabamians who fall at the poverty line or below.

White also supports citizens voting on a statewide lottery.

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INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VOTER

TO VOTE YOU MUST BLACKEN THE OVAL ( ) COMPLETELY! DO NOT MAKE AN X OR ✓.

IF YOU SPOIL YOUR BALLOT, DO NOT ERASE, BUT ASK FOR A NEW BALLOT.

“This office runs by district and male and female.”

For many years, Melvin Hasting was on the front lines of protecting people’s property and lives by volunteering his time with Vinemont Providence Fire Department.

In 2015, Melvin Hasting was on the front lines fighting against the eradication of Southern history by “Governor Bentley and the liberals.”

In 2016, Melvin Hasting and his wife Shea, joined the front lines of the Trump presidential campaign by volunteering their time and money in the battleground state of Florida.

Now Melvin Hasting wants to be on the front lines of bringing trust and confidence to the Circuit Court of Cullman County, Place 2.

As your Circuit Judge, Melvin Hasting will work to ensure your case is heard in a timely manner and that you will be treated with respect and fairness.

Melvin Hasting will follow the law and do everything possible to help protect the people of Cullman County from the career criminals invading our country.
There’s three things I’ve been focused on throughout this campaign:

First, is being accessible to the people. There’s no way for us to address the concerns of our community without knowing its needs. We must be accessible.

Second, I would like to put my experience to work for Cullman County’s Citizens. I will streamline the probate office, restore relationships, and provide training and quality leadership to the staff. I believe my years of business management is not only an asset to this office, but will bring the positive change that is desperately needed.

Third, We must address mental health at the local level. We must address from a local level. We must come together as a united community with an open mind. Cullman’s suicide rate has not only risen, but doubled - from 15 people in 2016, to 30 people in 2017. It is time to educate and take action.