

*MAY 3: BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY AND ROCKFORD CITY*

# **ELECTION GUIDE**

***MEET THE  
CANDIDATES***

**THE DAILY TIMES** PRESENTS YOUR



THE DAILY TIMES

Election Guide

ON THE BALLOT

CANDIDATE PROFILES

COUNTY & JUDICIAL PRIMARIES

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2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: ASSESSOR OF PROPERTY

The Blount County Assessor of Property is required by the Tennessee Constitution to list and value all property subject to being taxed "according to value." The assessed value of taxable property is a percentage of "fair market value" or "use value." Commercial property is assessed at 40 percent of "fair market value; residential improvements, 25 percent of "fair market value"; and residential land, 25 percent of "fair market value" or "use value." The office is elected to a four-year term. (Source: Blount County Property Assessor Office; BlountTN.org)

ALLEN LATHAM

AFFILIATION: Republican

OCCUPATION: L&M of Maryville

BIOGRAPHICAL INFO: "I was born and raised in Blount County, am a graduate of Maryville High School, and began my career with the city of Maryville working on a

garbage truck in 1999. I went on to the street and water departments before becoming a police officer. I left the Blount County Sheriff's Office as a night shift sergeant in January 2016 to focus on my small business, L&M of Maryville, full time. In my free time, I enjoy hunting, fishing, golf, and spending time with my fiancée, children, and grandchildren."

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION? "I saw an opportunity to help the people of Blount County. I am a natural problem solver and leader. I also have the heart of a fighter and a teacher and plan to use the position to educate the community about the office and fight for the citizens to keep tax rates low. No one should be forced to leave their home because they are having to choose between food and property taxes."

WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE? "Leadership and servitude are things that cannot be taught. I am a proven leader and have dedicated my life to serving the people of Blount County. My supervisor experience involved listening to com-

munity issues and making sure the right people and systems were in place to best serve the citizens. My experience as a business owner, as any business owner can attest, has forced me to utilize and hone those skills. I am a strong problem solver and will use that to help the community while also leading the strong staff of the office."

WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE? "I don't believe that the only function of this position is to sit behind a test and do paperwork. I want the office to be community-focused; spending time educating others on what the office does, ensuring that the citizens of Blount County are aware of existing programs that affect their tax burden, and assisting them in utilizing those programs. I plan to make the voice of the people be heard. The people of Blount County deserve someone that understands how unique this county is and is willing to go to bat for them at the local and state levels."

TODD ORR

AFFILIATION: Republican

OCCUPATION: Assessor of property

BIOGRAPHICAL INFO: "I'm a life-long Blount Countian. My parents are Jack and Linda Orr. I graduated from William Blount High School in 1992 and Tennessee Technological Univer-



sity with a Bachelor of Science

in business administration/management information systems in 1996. I've been married to Staci Myers Orr for 24 years. Staci is a high school English teacher. We have two sons, Riley and Brady. Our family enjoys sports, particularly baseball and golf. I was privileged to coach both Little League and travel baseball for 11 years. We attend Foothills Church in Maryville."

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION? "I chose to leave my previous position in order to serve Blount County, as I truly believed that my education and professional experience made me an asset to residents. My career has been property assessment and oversight. It's what I do. Thus, it seems right to use my expertise to serve the county I have lived in my entire life. I am passionate about serving others, and I want to continue to combine my personal attributes with my education and experience in assessment offices to make our county even better than it already is."

WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE? "After college graduation, I began working for the state of Tennessee, Division of Property Assessments. The division provides assistance, expertise, and oversight to local assessment offices. I primarily worked with East Tennessee assessors' offices for 17 years. After leaving the state, I spent 8 years as a regional manager with Patriot Properties, working with assessors in numerous states. My daily responsibilities included providing customer service, as well as overseeing the

productivity of the company's project managers and developers of online services. Thus, I have both management experience and current knowledge of state law regarding the responsibilities of the assessor office."

WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE? "As the current assessor, I have prioritized property owners' issues and shown my commitment to serve. I am already performing all required duties of the office and, most importantly, building relationships with citizens, current staff, and other government offices. A well-managed office is essential. Having developed personal relationships with assessors throughout Tennessee and the country, I have access to a wealth of expertise and have already been using those resources to enhance our office. I believe my proven commitment to serve citizens, as well as having 25 years of hands-on experience in assessor offices, clearly makes me the best choice."

MELISSA MCCROSSEN

AFFILIATION: Democrat

OCCUPATION: Project manager

BIOGRAPHICAL INFO: "Professionally, I've spent 20-plus years as a regional sales manager in the manufacturing sector with responsibilities including database administrator and



SEE ASSESSOR, 3

THE DAILY TIMES

Your Vote. Your Life. Your Times.

The Daily Times  
(USPS# 332-320)  
is published daily by  
APG East, LLC  
307 E. Harper Ave.,  
Maryville, TN, 37804.

Periodical postage paid  
at Maryville TN 37804.  
Send correspondence to:  
The Daily Times  
307 E. Harper Ave.,  
Maryville, TN, 37804.

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Circulation: 981-1100

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. For delivery concerns, call from 6 - 10 a.m. Monday through Friday and 7 - 11:30 a.m. Sunday.  
Circulation Director: Pat Helms  
pat.helms@thedailytimes.com

IMAGES: To purchase images, visit the-dailytimes.com. Images marked for sale will have a BUY button underneath the photo. Clicking that button will open the online store where digital downloads and various print options are available.

Advertising

**Classified Marketplace:** 865-981-1170; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday  
**Retail:** 865-981-1152; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday

**Advertising Director:** Darrell Richardson  
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Social Media

Twitter: @DailyTimes  
Facebook: facebook.com/TheDailyTimes

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# ASSESSOR:

FROM 2

supervisor. I've held a Tennessee Real Estate Affiliates Broker license as of 2016 and have served as my HOA's president since the same year. I am currently employed as a project manager for a home improvement contractor and am a member of the International Association of Assessing Officers. In addition to serving as the Blount County Democratic Party's District 7 representative, I volunteer for an equine rescue and have just begun my first year as a tnAchieves college mentor."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"Full-time career posts with six-figure salaries such as property assessor disservices the public by being a partisan position. Leading a highly impactful office tasked with establishing property values requires a skill set and experience which may not always coincide with a Republican or Democratic affiliation. In Blount County's current political climate, 30 percent of the electorate are voting Democrats, yet Democrats hold 4 percent of partisan political positions because most can't risk disclosing their political affiliation — that means qualified candidates are not utilized. I'm a qualified, experienced manager, and I can rebuild the assessor's office to serve the taxpayer."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"The property assessor must wear many hats, and juggle multiple responsibilities including public relations, as well as obligations to the county stakeholders and taxpayers. I'm a proven manager who has led teams through complicated projects. I'm a moderate collaborator who wants to understand both sides and find common ground. I'm an inspiring leader who has rallied teams to keep focused on the given mission and perform to their collective best. Most importantly, I've been an outsider — tasked with evaluating and revitalizing a struggling, yet critical department and I am ready to rise to the occasion again."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"My husband and I chose Blount County to enjoy the numerous benefits of Tennessee life, including the affordability. The fact that I'm an outsider and have lived in other areas and worked in the private sector afford me a level of insight the career politician won't have. I know the challenges that will come to a community that sees a doubling of property values in 18-months. I've experienced the burdens of being saddled with inflated taxes and unfair assessments and I will lend on that experience to serve the taxpayer versus the power brokers who might prefer an insider."



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: CHANCELLOR DISTRICT 4/DISTRICT 5

A chancellor is a judge who presides over a chancery courts and hears a variety of issues, including lawsuits, contract disputes, application for injunctions and name changes. Divorces, adoptions and workers' compensation can be heard in either chancery or circuit court. The 4th/5th Judicial District includes Blount, Cocke, Grainger, Jefferson and Sevier counties. Chancellor Telford E. Forgety Jr. is retiring after having held court since 1997. The judicial seat is elected to a four-year term. (Source: Tennessee State Courts, TNCourts.gov)

### NICK BLACK

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Attorney

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a Blount County resident and a Maryville High School graduate. I earned a Bachelor of Arts in communication and a Master of Business Administration at Clemson University, and I am a University of Tennessee College of Law graduate. I am married to Regina Sentell Black and we have three children: Mariella, Nicholas, and Emelia. I previously served as president of Blount County Bar Association. I currently serve as a precinct vice chairman on the Blount



County Republican Party Executive Committee. I have twice been elected to the Maryville City Board of Education and have served as board chairman since 2020."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "I want to continue to make a difference in our community and across the 4th and 5th Judicial Districts. As a litigator I have been fortunate to see that good judges can make positive impacts on the individuals and groups that come before them. I want to be the chancellor because I want to give back to the profession and the communities that have afforded me a very fulfilling career. Being a judge comes with a tremendous amount of responsibility, and I will approach the position with a humble and patient heart, and the constant motivation to be impartial."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** "I am a litigator and am most comfortable in the courtroom. My experience as an attorney has encompassed a very diverse set of cases and clients. I currently handle family law (custody, divorce, and adoptions), probate and estates, contracts, property disputes and real estate, and conservatorships. I have argued and tried cases in front of juries, judges, chancellors, and at the Court of Appeals. A chancellor is a trial court judge that handles a wide variety of civil cases. I have experience practicing in the Chancery Courts of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 9th, and 10th Judicial Districts."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"One aspect that sets me apart is the Master of Business Administration I completed. I had the opportunity to take advanced courses in finance, accounting, marketing, economics, and public administration. I also have a more diverse practice. Family law cases encompass a large portion of the chancellor's docket, and I have over a decade of experience handling very complex family law cases. Lastly, I am the more conservative candidate. I am a lifelong Republican and a staunch supporter of Republican candidates and ideals."

### JIM RIPLEY

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Attorney

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Law and am licensed to practice law in the state of Tennessee. I have continuously practiced law in Sevier County. I am a past president of the Sevier County Bar Association, a member of the Tennessee Bar Association, and a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. I am an avid hunter and fisherman, and I was twice appointed by Republican speakers of the House to serve as a commissioner of Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission. I am immediate, past chairman of the TFWC."



## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I was honored to have been contacted by the Honorable Telford E. Forgety Jr., chancellor of the 4th and 5th Judicial Districts, who told me he was retiring, and he felt, given my experience, knowledge, and performance in his court, I am the man for this job. I am honored he has endorsed me for this position. I believe it is now my duty to offer myself for public service, and if I am elected, I will work hard for the people of Blount, Cocke, Grainger, Jefferson, and Sevier counties to see that justice is administered fairly and equitably."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** "I have 38 years of experience practicing law with most of my practice taking place in Chancery Court. I have tried complex boundary line cases, contract cases, and many types of matters that fall within the jurisdiction of the Chancery Court and other courts. I have extensive experience serving by appointment of Chancery and Circuit Court judges as special master to hear testimony, consider evidence, and provide professional, legal opinions to the judges in complex legal matters. I have tried appeals to the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals and the Tennessee Supreme Court."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"There is no question that my extensive experience sets me apart from my opponent. Good judgments are borne of experience. I have that experience, and I humbly ask for your vote."

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: COUNTY CLERK

The duties of the county clerk include public notices, recording County Commission and Beer Board minutes, motor vehicle and boat licensing and registration, issuing marriage licenses and business licenses, and keeping a record of notaries in the county. The office is elected to a four-year term. (Source: Blount County Clerk, BlountTN.org)

### GAYE HASTY

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** County clerk  
**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Married to Mark Hasty Sr. for 42 years. Two children: Mark Jr. and Ashlee Hasty; Allen and Marissa Lambert; eight grandchildren. Graduate of Porter High School and Hiwassee College. Received the Certified Public Administrator designation with the County Officials Certificate Training Program through the University of Tennessee and County Technical Assistance Service. Completed the Local Government Leadership Program through Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership, class of 2020.”  
**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**



“To continue to serve the citizens of Blount County and to keep the county clerk’s office a user-friendly, transparent, efficient environment.”

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“I have served as the county clerk for six years. I am familiar with the many hours that the job entails, and I love what I do. My strong organizational skills have helped to transform the clerk’s office into a more user-friendly and efficiently run organization. I am actively involved in the Tennessee County Clerk’s Association and the East Tennessee Clerk’s Association. I am currently serving on the legislative committee, the hotel/motel tax committee, the conference planning committee, and chairman of the marriage and vital records committee.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “Experience.”

### MARTE LAWRENCE

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat  
**OCCUPATION:** Paralegal  
**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was born and raised in East Tennessee. My family is from Tazewell in Claiborne County. I moved with my mother to Mississippi for several years after my mother remarried. I met my husband there and we will celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary in June. We have one son. We moved back to Tennessee when my husband got the opportunity to come to work in Blount County and have been here ever since.”  
**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**



work experience would enable me to effectively serve the citizens of Blount County.”

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“I have experience taking and keeping minutes from committee meetings, dealing with the public, bookkeeping and am technology savvy. I also have 15-plus years dealing with the circuit, chancery and federal court systems.”

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“I am a great listener and excel at solving problems. I believe the ability to think on my feet and to see the big picture makes me a unique candidate.”

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: COUNTY MAYOR

The county mayor is the county’s chief executive officer, exercising general supervision of the county government. The mayor serves as a non-voting ex officio member of the county commission, committees, boards, and other commissions. Except as otherwise provided by general law, or special or private act, the county mayor shall appoint members of county boards and commissions and county department heads, subject to confirmation by the county commission. This office is elected to a four-year term.

(Source: Tennessee Code Annotated; Blount County Election Commission)

### JAMES “JIM” HAMMONTREE

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### ED MITCHELL

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** County mayor  
**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Sixth-generation



Blount Countian and live on the same family farm which was settled in 1800 by my great-great-great-grandfather. I’ve spent 43 years as a public servant in Blount County: Blount County Sheriff’s Office deputy for 4½ years, Maryville

Fire Department for 27 years, with the last 15 years as fire chief, current mayor since 2010. I’ve served on multiple committees and boards with organizations who give back to our wonderful community. I’ve been married to my wife, Kim, for 40 years, and have two sons, Jordan and Josh, with his wife Tracie and my three grandchildren, Mason, Lily, and Ella.”

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

“The same reasons that inspired me the first time: I love this community and want to leave it better for future generations. In 2010, the county was \$250 million in debt; 90-plus percent variable rate. Knowing this and more,

I couldn’t retire peacefully. My priority is to reduce debt while continuing to provide the best services to citizens and keep our tax rate low. The debt is down to \$139 million and will be down to around \$120 million by June. Improvements take time to accomplish. Other than my family, being mayor and working for the people is my passion.”

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

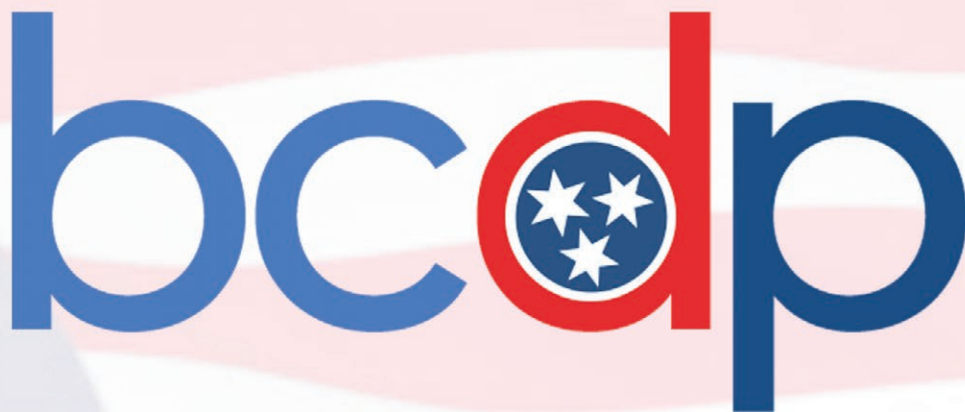
“In every job, it has always been my top priority to be fiscally responsible with taxpayers’ money. As mayor, we have increased the county’s general fund balance from \$6.3 million to \$35.7 million, debt service fund from \$13.2 million to \$22.4 million; eliminated all variable rate debt, consolidated departments, invested into our employees of the county, invested into needed technology improvements, long-term general county capital and school capital improvements. I have used state/federal funding where possible, which saves local tax dollars. Blount County government is the benchmark for other county governments across the state.”

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“My entire career has been in public service. I represent all the people. Tough decisions

are required and sometimes aren’t pleasing to everyone. I hope I’ve earned the trust of our citizens and that they know my decisions are with the best interests for all of Blount County. My family has been blessed by Blount County for 200 years. Every day I feel it’s my responsibility to give back to the community that I treasure. I want future generations to have the same opportunities — safe community, great education, great job opportunities, and a great place to raise your family.”





## Blount County Democratic Party

We Have **20** Democrats on the May 3rd Ballot

Check Your Registration ***Vote Blue !!***

**bcdp Summer Picnic**

Sunday July 10, 2022



Springbrook Park

Come  
Join  
Us !



District 3 Presents

***Meet the Candidates***

June 9, 6:30- 8  
John Sevier Pavilion

[blountcountydemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:blountcountydemocrats@gmail.com)  
[blount.tndp.org](http://blount.tndp.org)

Political Ad Paid For By the Blount County Democratic Party, Vickie Stewart Treasurer

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: COUNTY TRUSTEE

The duties of a county trustee include the collection of state and county taxes on property; keeping a fair regular account of all the money that the trustee receives; and investing county funds that are not otherwise being used. The office is elected to a four-year term. (Source: Tennessee Code Annotated)

### SCOTT GRAVES

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** County trustee

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a life-long resident of Blount County and have been Blount County trustee since Sept. 1, 2000. I have a Master of Business Administration degree and over 25 years of work experience in the areas of finance, accounting, and management."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "The job of county trustee involves finance, accounting, management, and customer service. With my education and experience in these areas, I feel like I am a good fit for this position. It has been an honor to provide these services to the citizens of Blount County for the past few years."



**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** "I have been serving as Blount County trustee since Sept. 1, 2000. Prior to that, my work experience involved business, personnel management, accounting, large operating budgets, statistical analysis, forecasting, spreadsheets, and other duties that are related to the job of trustee."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I am the candidate that has experience as county trustee. Since I have been trustee, my office has always tried to provide friendly customer service to the citizens while establishing strong accounting internal controls to safeguard the funds. The trustee's office has had no audit findings in our annual audits since I have been trustee."

### STEVE PHILLIPPY

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana. My family moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1965 and then to Clearwater, Florida, in 1966, where I graduated from Clearwater High School. I majored in accounting with informal minors in computer science (CS) and math at the University of South Florida (USF). My career was mostly in CS (software engineering, information technologies, university research at USF, teaching computer/internet professional development courses at USF, etc.) but included consulting, accounting, finance, real estate, etc. We retired and moved to



Townsend in 2013. I am married. We have four adult children and five grandchildren."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "I feel that voters should have options when selecting community leaders. Having advocated for more voting options for several years, I was recruited by the Democratic Party to run for this position. I would bring a fresh perspective to the trustee office. I would limit myself to one term in office. If possible, I would work to change the office to an appointed position instead of elected."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** "I have a career background in computer science, accounting, finance, and real estate. I was an elected volunteer non-profit board member, which elected me to chair the investment committee, where we managed an investment portfolio of about \$4 million."

### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"I am accepting no contributions to my campaign. I would limit myself to one term in office. I don't need the job. My wife and I are comfortably modestly retired. I would bring a new perspective to the organization. If possible, I would work to change the office to an appointed position instead of elected. I would attempt to use technologies to increase the productivity of the organization wherever possible. I would hope to reduce the total cost and increase the portfolio of work done by the office."

## GO VOTE TN

GoVoteTN (<https://tnsos.net/govotetn/index.html>) is a portal for Tennesseans to access election information. The services and information provided are maintained by the Tennessee Secretary of State's Division of Elections.



### VOTER REGISTRATION

Register to vote online from your computer, tablet or mobile device. Download a printable Tennessee voter registration application to submit to your county election commission. Check your voter registration status. Contact your county election commission.



### ELECTION DAY

View election results for current and past elections in the state of Tennessee. Watch a video to see what voting is like. Print a sign, take a picture and use #GoVoteTN on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.



### GOVOTETN APP

The easiest way for Tennessee voters to find their Election Day polling locations, view and mark sample ballots, see their elected officials, districts and county election commission information as well as access online election results is through the GoVoteTN app. iOS and Android versions of the app were updated in fall 2018. Please make sure you using the most recent version to ensure full functionality.



### HONOR VOTE PROGRAM

The Honor Vote program lets Tennesseans dedicate their vote to those who are serving or have served our country.



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICTS 1-5

The county commission serves as the legislative body of county government. The county commission adopts an annual county budget, sets the county property tax rate, makes certain appointments, and adopts ordinances and resolutions. Commissioners are elected to four-year terms. (Source: Blount County Commission, BlountTN.org)

### DISTRICT 1, SEAT A

#### SHAWN K. CARTER SR.

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** I grew up in a small Va. town called Glade Springs. In high school I played football, basketball and track for the Patrick Henry Rebels in Emory Va. A decorated U.S. Army veteran. Worked for two years in the U. S. Postal Service. A lifelong resident

of Blount County, where I have lived with my wife and four children. Pastored the Lenoir City Church of God for 12 years and have coached football for 21 years.

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

With the growth that we have experienced as a county many hard choices will have to be made in order to maintain our county sufficiently without a drop off. To keep our schools up to date, our roads taken care of and to continue to have safe communities which takes a funded police force. We need fiscal conservatives. I love this county, and I will be graciously humble and dedicated to serve everyone in my district.

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

My military training has taught me leadership and discipline and how to work with others to evaluate all aspects of a situation and end with a favorable result for whatever may occur. As a pastor I learned to really listen to people and their concerns, and to truly care. At Department of Defense and the USPS, being a service to the community, being part of something that is greater than yourself. I have been elected in district one twice in past years and I am familiar with all the county boards.

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

Im a proud Black American Republican Army Vet. At the local level commissioners should be elected to care and listen to all voices from the county regardless of color, financial status, religious beliefs and sexuality. We are elected to be the voice of the people, not the voice of certain individuals. Being a commissioner is not just something I want to do in my spare time. To truly do the job and do it well, one must make a commitment to the people of the district.

#### JESSICA HANNAH

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

#### JACKIE HILL

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Graduated salutatorian from Charles M. Hall High School. She received bachelor's, master's, and MBA degrees from Tennessee State University, University of Michigan, and University of Rochester. While employed at Kodak, she held domestic and international positions and was featured in Ebony Magazine as 'One of the 100 Best and Brightest Blacks in Corporate America.' Upon retirement to Blount County, she completed the Leadership Blount, the Chancellors Associates (UT), and the Experience Your Smokies programs. She received honors for public service, including the Game Changer Award (Alcoa/Blount County NAACP), and the Legacy of Excellence Award (Alcoa City Schools Foundation)."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "Blount County is a wonderful place to live, work and play and accordingly, deserves elected representatives who want to continue and build upon the progress that has been made and just as importantly, representatives who listen and then act upon what they have learned. This is my pledge!"

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have over 25 years of strategic, administrative, budgetary, and personnel experiences at Eastman Kodak leading technical and non-technical operations both small and large organizations."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"My experience is broad with responsibilities for leading small and large organizations, both domestically and internationally. My commitment to work hard continues even into retirement. Also, my decision to come out of retirement provides me with the opportunity to give back to a county that supported me as I was growing up. I have lived a life beyond my wildest dreams and now I am back offering my services. Yes, contrary to popular belief, 'you can go back home!'"

### DISTRICT 1, SEAT B

#### NIKKI BOLINGER

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Personal insurance underwriter

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Nikki has been a resident of Blount County for 17 years. She graduated from Maryville College as a Bonner Scholar with a bachelor's in business and currently works as a personal insurance underwriter. Nikki has been married for the last 11 years and has a daughter who attends Foothills Elementary, along with two dogs, a cat and a fish. As a family, they like to enjoy the neighborhood parks, library and great local restaurants and shops Blount County has to offer. They also get to Disney as much as possible."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "Nikki is running for County Commission to ensure Blount County thrives for all its residents. Her goals on the commission are to ensure that the county sustains its current period of growth and develops a cohesive zoning plan, improves its environmental conservation while also adopting practical policies to ensure Blount County remains affordable for current and future residents to be able to enjoy."

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"Nikki is a full-time working wife and mother. She can prioritize the most pressing items while balancing tasks and making everyone a priority. As an insurance underwriter, Nikki makes decisions daily based on risk versus reward. Whether she is negotiating with partners at work, her husband, or her young daughter, she recognizes that you need to be able to hear the other person and evaluate what will work best. From her time at Maryville College as a Bonner Scholar volunteering in the community and since, she has seen the need in Blount County and how that gap has been growing."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"Nikki will bring a unique vision based on the hard work she put in to establish a life in Blount County. After growing up outside Chicago, she planted roots here after graduating from college and sees where the needs lie for its residents and what we can do to grow in a beneficial way. As a parent, Nikki sees the current struggles

our schools face with the increase in families moving here and the amenities Blount County lacks that nearby towns have. She is ready to work hard with our residents to ensure Blount County reaches and exceeds its potential."

#### EARL MCMAHAN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### DISTRICT 2, SEAT A

#### MIKE AKARD

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Akard Commutator

of Tennessee

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Married incredible wife Donna, 1996. Parents, Wayne Akard and Susie (Myers of Townsend) Bowman and the late Jack Bowman, DDS. Grandparents, Herbert (of Cades Cove) and Kathryn Douglas Myers. Birthplace: Blount Memorial

Hospital. Attended First Baptist Alcoa Church. Product of Alcoa City Schools. Selected 'Who's Who' among class of 1983. Secret Service clearance to meet President Ronald Reagan; twice assisted presidential press corps locally. Business major, University of Tennessee, 1983-87. Bachelor of business administration, East Tennessee State University. Marketing/sales manager, ICC in Maryville, 1990-1993. Founded ACT in 1993. Reelected to Blount County Commission, 2018. Chairman of redistricting committee, 2021."

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I'm a native Blount Countian with conservative values. I believe Blount County is the perfect place to live, work, and raise a family. People relocate here because we enjoy the 'total package.' Our low property tax rates are extremely appealing. Local residents typically support conservative Republicans 3:1 to continue improving Blount County without the pitfalls of Democrat-run communities. I have been working with conservative officials building on a common-sense, fiscally responsible, pay-as-we-go plan to continue building a better Blount County. Current fuel prices nationwide are a perfect example of what happens with Democrats in charge."

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class of High Impact Practice Ambassadors for statewide service-learning promotion.”

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

“To put my leadership skills to work for our growing community and make sure that our district is well informed about development and planning. Also hoping to represent the district from a neighbor and parent’s perspective as we all want our future generations to have ample opportunities for their career and their quality of life.”

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“Seventeen years in nonprofit leadership and 10-plus years of strategic planning, human resource management and teaching. Volunteered hundreds of hours in the community and works to bring diverse groups together to foster collaboration.”

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“I am not a politician, and I am not concerned about working with people that have different ideas. Approaching conflicts as potential opportunities can help me work with many leaders so we can keep our focus grounded and lead this community in paced and smart growth with very diverse populations in mind.”

## DISTRICT 2, SEAT B

### WAYNE BALDWIN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Technology manager

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I am originally from the Greenback area and attended Greenback School where I graduated in 2007. I began my career at Blount County 911 in 2011 as a dispatcher and moved into the position of information technology manager in 2017. I am married to my



wife Haley and we have one son, Eli, who recently turned 2. We attend Piney Grove Baptist Church in Maryville.”

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

“With this commission seat becoming vacant it is very important that we fill it with a true conservative Republican candidate who has experience maintaining a budget and has no family ties or conflicts of interest. We must keep our property taxes low and adjust the rate if the property tax reassessment causes an increase. I will never be in favor of any tax rate increase for our county. I also believe that we are in desperate need of improved zoning that will reduce rapid overdevelopment.”

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“In my position I work with employees from the municipalities, county, all

three school systems and everyone in between. I believe that those relationships will definitely help when needing to get things accomplished. I also manage one of the largest financial line items at the 911 center, technology. I have always been and always will be a good steward with the tax dollars I am in charge of managing. With all of that said, I am also a believer that experience when it comes to politics is not always a good thing.”

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“My objective is to serve the citizens of Blount County by reducing duplication of services, wasteful spending and increasing funding where we need it. I strongly support Fund 177 which doesn’t require money to be split with the two city school systems. This fund has been huge when it comes to the county schools playing catch-up on backlogged maintenance projects. I do not believe that politics and family should mix and I have no conflicts of interest when it comes to me seeking this position. I would term limit myself to one to two terms.”

### DYRAN BLEDSOE

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Teacher

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was born and raised in Alcoa. I attended Alcoa City Schools, graduating from Alcoa High School in 1994. I went on to receive my bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Tennessee. Shortly after graduating from UT, I received



my education specialist degree from Lincoln Memorial University. I have been an educator at Alcoa Middle School for 21 years. My wife, Brandy, graduated from William Blount High School in 1998 and is a nurse practitioner at a private office. I have two wonderful kids: Karson, a freshman at Alcoa High, and Cooper, a third-grader at Alcoa Intermediate School.”

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

“I am running for this position because I have a passion for public service. Blount County has always been my home. I would like to put my leadership skills to work for the citizens of Blount County. The County Commission would be another avenue for me to serve. If elected, I will represent the citizens with honesty and integrity. It would be an honor to serve as a voice for the citizens in District 2.”

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“I have served in several leadership positions. As an educator, school ath-

letic director, and youth sports director, I have worked with the public for the past 21 years. I serve in a leadership role every day for the kids and parents in the community. This has allowed me to develop effective communication skills with individuals from all walks of life. It would be an honor to bring my experience to the Blount County Commission.”

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“Out of respect for the other candidates, I will not speak of others in my campaign. I really don’t know how I am different, because I personally do not know them. Voters can make their decisions based on what I share about myself. I wish everyone the best in the upcoming election.”

## DISTRICT 3, SEAT A

### NATHAN FARNHAM

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### SCOTT KING

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

## DISTRICT 3, SEAT B

### MIKE CAYLOR

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### ROBERT K. HANYE

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I grew up on Long Island, the offspring of a Georgia boy and a Lower East Side (New York City) girl. I attended the University of Pittsburgh, where I met and then married a coal miner’s daughter from Western Pennsylvania. We have two children and four



grandchildren, two of whom were born here and attend local public schools. We have lived on Long Island and in New Jersey, Virginia and upstate New York. We chose Blount County because of its beauty, affordability and closeness to family. We bought our Blount County home in 2013.”

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

“I am running because I believe my experience can help the commission in its decision making. I see a Blount County that protects its rural character and the environment, values its diversity, provides opportunities for personal growth and economic well-being, and where tolerance is the norm.”

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## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

“Unlike my opponent’s party, Republicans believe in fiscal responsibility and know how to get things done efficiently. I’ve been blessed with tremendous success in founding (from scratch) ACT and managing a team of professionals operating a world-renowned electric motor part manufacturing business. I credit much of ACT’s and Blount County’s phenomenal success to conservative commitment to sensible spending within our means, always aggressively pursuing the best deals, seeking competitive quotations, and performing routine price comparisons. Throughout my time as a commissioner, I helped save Blount County’s taxpayers a tremendous amount of money without eliminating or reducing services provided.”

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

“Red state conservative values vs. Blue state liberalism. Local Democratic Party is advertising and sponsoring candidates for nearly every office in Blount County. 2020 local election was 72 percent Republican vs 27 percent Democrat and we’ve all seen the horrific national results from Democrat rule since 2020. I’m encouraging every Republican to get out to vote to continue traditional Blount County conservative values and properly serve taxpayers with proven ‘pay-as-we-go’ progress for Blount County while incurring no new debt and continuing successes like Tennessee’s annual State Audits showing no findings 7 of last 9 years (unprecedented). I will vote Republican.”

### TRACEY FARR

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Associate professor

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Tracey lives in Springbrook and has one son in college, two daughters in Alcoa schools. She effectively sets goals, meets deadlines and works hard to follow through. She has a master’s in organizational management, Tusculum University,

and a Bachelor of Arts, University of Tennessee, in political science. She served on a Central America mission team, graduated from Knoxville Community Action Agency’s Community Leadership Class and University of Tennessee’s inaugural cohort of the Consortium for Social Enterprise Effectiveness and was recently chosen to serve for the Tennessee Board of Regents inaugural





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## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I retired as the CEO of an organization where I led a team that transformed it into a leader in its field. We expanded our manufacturing and contract service lines and created a range of new training services for infants through elders with vision loss. Prior to that, I was a senior manager at a related national nonprofit. I have served on a number of nonprofit boards and government advisory committees. I was also elected to a school board where the public voted annually to approve the budget. The board then asked me to complete a vacant term."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"I have been blessed with a career that gave me opportunities to combine mission-driven services with strong elements of leadership and business. I have worked closely with governments at all levels and served on appointed advisory committees. Having lived in communities that have been challenged by suburban sprawl gives me a unique perspective. My experience serving on and chairing boards provides me with a strong background in how to work as a member of a

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governing team. I understand the need to manage for the present and plan well for the future."

## DISTRICT 4, SEAT A

### ROBBIE BENNETT

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Assistant principal

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I have lived in Blount County for 44 years, graduating Alcoa High School in 1995 and Maryville College in 2000 where I played baseball. Received a master's degree and an education specialist degree in administration and supervision from Lincoln Memorial University. Through the years I attended, worked, and volunteered at the Boys and Girls Club of Blount County, and from 1994-2000 I was the athletic director and became a board member in 2000. I taught at Heritage Middle for 11 years and have been the assistant principal/athletic director at Heritage High School and the head baseball coach for 21 years."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "I am running for the commission because I feel we live in a great county where



we have three great school systems, a great sheriff's department, three great police departments, great fire departments, great parks and recreation, and great roads and transportation. In my opinion, we live in the greatest county in Tennessee, and I don't take things for granted, so I want to be able to keep those things great! During my lifetime I have seen Blount County improve and become the great county it is and I'm grateful for the past leaders of this county."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have been in leadership roles and served this great county since I was 16 years old, and has become a lifetime passion of mine. I have been on the County Commission for the last four years where I have learned a lot and would love to continue learning and help this county to continue to improve."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"Forty-four-year Blount County native, passion, work ethic, dedication, and the love for all the people of Blount County."

### CORINNE DOOLEY

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "While raising three daughters as a single parent, I received



a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing, graduating with magna cum laude honors, followed by a registered nurse license. Later, attending college again for a Master of Science degree and two nurse

practitioner (NP) certificates, one as an adult NP, the other as a family NP. Most of my career was in a busy emergency department, then later as a hospitalist. A smaller portion of my career was managing a home care agency and a side job as a volunteer and on-call EMT/firefighter for local towns where I resided."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"Blount County is seeing rapid growth with industry and housing which raises concern for how schools will handle the influx, the traffic's impact on our roads, the character of the area changing, the current property values, and how the police, fire and ambulance services will keep up. Another major concern is that developments may result in more flooding. These concerns should be scrutinized before any permits are given. We need to leave green space and farm

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# CRISP

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Elected in 2010 • 22 years Experience • UT Certified Public Administrator  
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Republican Women Party Member and The Republican Executive Committee • Served on the Habitat for Humanity Women's Build  
Athena Leadership Nominee • United Way Pillar Society • Blount County Chamber Member

Paid for by the Committee to Re-Elect Phyllis Crisp - J. Michael Garner, Treasurer



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land for the future and provide buffers for current residents. A percentage of the developments should be set aside as affordable housing.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “I have experience in national, state, and local boards involving nursing, kennel clubs, and specific breed clubs. I was on a town’s ‘Affordable Home Committee’ interviewing developers and residents, bridging the gap between developers and residents, and then making planning recommendations to the town. There was a lot of venting by residents, and it was met with constructive planning resolutions and changes were made. Everyone received a better understanding of the need and how to achieve it. The developments that did survive joined the community harmoniously.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “The county is currently acting too quickly and without a thorough investigation into industries and housing developments. Too many questions and not enough answers. As Blount County commissioner, I can work with the county residents and incorporate their concerns into planning. We need to slow down or stop the process of approval until the county can reevaluate zoning and long-term plans for the future. I will communicate with the district I represent, making myself accessible, as it would be my pleasure to work for you.”

## DISTRICT 4, SEAT B

### KEN LEE

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I grew up in Plymouth, Michigan, graduating from Plymouth High School. Then, went to college at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, before graduate school at UCLA. After living in Chicago, I moved to Pittsburgh for work and met my wife, Janice, of 34 years. We raised our daughter in Pittsburgh and Leesburg, Virginia, until she married and moved to Florida. When our grandkids came, we moved to Fort Myers, Florida, to help them, and then followed them to East Tennessee. We all now call Blount County home and love it here. My hobbies include hiking, golf, and rescuing dogs.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “Since making Maryville our home, I

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have become interested in local politics concerning county growth and education. Since most folks rightly focus on family lives and daily activities, local politics and politicians can be kind of anonymous. Now retired, I can focus on issues that are important to those daily activities of our neighbors. Critical issues include maintaining and improving quality educational options for all families; keeping taxes low to allow retirees, young families, and first-time home buyers the ability to afford housing; and managing growth to ensure we maintain our small-town culture.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I am new to politics having never run for any office before. I have a Master of Business Administration and a doctorate in economics. My consulting career history and educational background provide the finance, regulatory, community relations and communication skills that are needed to keep our neighbors informed and aware of issues that come before the commission.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“There are critical issues facing Blount County — growth, taxes, budgeting, finance, infrastructure, and education, to name a few. My background and consulting experience directly relate to these issues. One of the key skills in consulting is listening — I pledge to listen and respond, and to hold elected officials accountable for paying attention to our citizens. I strongly believe in open, transparent communications at all levels of government. We are elected within our district, but I will ensure two-way channels for sharing information with everyone in the county since decisions impact all of Blount County.”

### DAWN JOHNSON REAGAN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Teacher

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was born at Blount Memorial to Galen and Betty (Pierce) Johnson and three older sisters. I went to Porter Elementary and to William Blount, where I was in the first-ever freshman class. I graduated from Tennessee Wesleyan College in 1988 (Bachelor of Science), Lincoln Memorial University in 1991 (Master’s), and 1994 (Education Specialist). My husband and I married in 1992 and our daughter Mindy was born in 1997. I lived and worked in Sevier County from 1988-2004 and moved back home in 2004 to be closer to my family. I attend Fairview Church.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**



“Four years ago, I decided I needed to run for County Commission to be an advocate for the people of District 4. Since I grew up in this same community, live here now (in the same house I was raised in), and even work in the community, I had a pretty good understanding of the people and what they want. I feel that as a county commissioner, it takes a couple of years to get the ‘job’ figured out, and the last two years is where you can start really understanding the process.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I am the incumbent for County Commission District 4 Seat B, so I have three and a half years of experience of being a commissioner. I have enjoyed learning and growing in this position and hope to continue that for the next four years. I have been amazed at how little I knew about local and state government until I became a commissioner. Now I feel like I have the experience under my belt and can be a great commissioner for the next four years.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“I have been a Blount County girl since birth. I don’t know that there are many people who can say they have been around Blount County for all their life. When my parents both passed away, my husband and I decided to buy the house that I was raised in. I am committed to Blount County District 4 and want to represent those people for another four years! I love my district, my county, my state and want to try to do what is right for the people! I would be honored to represent the people of District 4 for one more term.”

## DISTRICT 4, SEAT C

### JIMMY BRADLEY

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### JOHN E. GILES

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Married to Linda R. Giles for 41-plus years.; two children, four grandchildren. Started my career in law enforcement, in Blount County. Worked for Alcoa Inc. for 31 years, including overseas assignment as a general manager. Owned and operated a small firearms business in Blount County. Worked as an assistant softball coach at Alcoa and Maryville high schools. Have been involved in numerous community volunteer roles, including Maryville Little League,



Recreation and Parks youth sports and Maryville High School athletics. Lived in Blount County for 56-plus years.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“Blount County is no longer a secret to other residents in our state and nation. With our children and their respective families living in Blount County, I want to protect and preserve the style and quality of life for them and all my fellow residents. I will utilize my business background and knowledge to professionally adopt the county annual budget and the setting of the county property tax rate as these are two of the main responsibilities of a Blount County commissioner. My values have always been to contribute/volunteer in my community.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I have a vast amount of leadership experience in the private and public sectors, coupled with my strong business/financial background, both as an executive with a Fortune 500 company and a small-business owner. I have strong communication skills and a rudimentary amount of Tennessee Code Annotated knowledge. I have lived in Blount County for over 56 years as a child/student, adult/parent, a taxpayer and involved citizen. I have never held a political office at the local, state or federal level.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“After meeting some of the other candidates running for County Commission, I’ve concluded that we are blessed as a community to have such wonderful folks involved in public service. I am a fiscally and socially conservative individual. Even with my conservative Republican values, I believe very strongly that we must work together regardless of background or political affiliation to maintain our current Blount County culture and lifestyle. There is no room for placing blame or finger-pointing. I have the desire, ability and the passion to represent people of the 4th District.”

### KEVIN J. MCNEILL

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was one of seven children. My father was a police officer, my mother a jail matron. I have two daughters and two grandsons. I made Maryville my home in 2017. My education is in electronics and technology. During my career, I was director of electronics manufacturing; director of aviation global logistics; vice president of aircraft





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manufacturing; and a professional investigator. In retirement, I am a SMiles driver; director with the Sheriff's Office Citizen Academy Alumni Association; vice president of the Tennessee Highway Patrol Citizen Trooper Academy; and volunteer for the Maryville chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"We require strong business and community leaders. I can apply my business knowledge to fiscally prepare for the future. Capital investment plans are required for county buildings replacements, wastewater management projects and road improvements. We need leaders that can ensure population growth, industrial growth, commercial growth, and residential growth are done responsibly. County employee-related spending will continue to rise and will require fair budget decisions. The county hospital is in urgent need of fiscal recovery and sustainability plans. I am confident I can make a positive impact in these areas."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have been responsible for the design, construction and operation of warehousing and logistics operations on global basis. I have a strong technical background in computer hardware and software. I was the vice president of operations in the aviation manufacturing business. As a licensed professional investigator, I specialized in white-collar crime."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"My variety of job experiences and senior leadership positions have prepared me to be a county legislator. I am a fact-based manager who can collect and analyze business information quickly and accurately. Past work experience taught me to appreciate conflicting points of views. I have the platforms to provide improved communication back to the citizens. I can clearly articulate a set of findings and conclusions for the full commission to reach a consensus vote. I can formulate a concise problem statement and a supporting action plan. My ability to track and follow-up on major milestones is a well-honed skill."

## JOSH SULLINS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Project manager

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Originally from Spruce Pine, North Carolina. I moved to Blount County upon graduation from East Tennessee State University while serving in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves (4th Unit Combat Engineer



Battalion-Delta Company). While serving in the military, I deployed once to Afghanistan as part of Delta Company — serving alongside current C-Seat Commissioner Brian Robbins. Raised with Christian/conservative values I believe in America first, constitutional law, strong local community and schools, fiscal responsibility, well-planned urban/rural development, and I'm strongly pro-military/police/emergency and health worker."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "In addition to being passionate about my career, I'm also passionate about representing/serving my community. Ever since my first reading of The Federalist Papers, becoming a statesman has always appealed to me and been part of my plan to give back."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** "Honorably discharged from the Marines as a staff sergeant; Bachelor of Science, political science, East Tennessee State University. Current profession as senior project manager on multiple commercial construction projects; operations planning and coordination; fiscal responsibility via successfully and actively managing multimillion-dollar projects; interaction and navigation with multiple municipal agencies, including permitting, inspections, codes, and zoning. Past few years, I have attended County Commission meetings, questioning the commissioners to ensure my understanding of the key decisions. I have set up multiple meetings with various county government officials to ensure my full understanding of the responsibilities, issues, and needs of my community."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I can't speak for other candidates, but I will say of myself that I'm one of the younger candidates. I see my youth as an advantage to the diversity of the commission with the potential to add a distinct perspective. To me, this isn't a legacy position or position to fill retirement time. It's a chance for me to directly serve the citizens of my county with youth, endurance, and proven leadership skills. With the above said, I hold the utmost respect for senior members of public service and don't want that misconstrued in any way."

## DISTRICT 5, SEAT A

### JARED ANDERSON

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Attorney

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Ninth-generation Blount Countian, born and raised in Maryville and graduated from Maryville High School. Bachelor of Arts from Vanderbilt University in political science with double-minor in corporate strategy and leadership/organiza-



tions. Doctorate in jurisprudence from Emory University School of Law with a certificate in transactional law (business). Practiced law in Knoxville before returning home to Maryville to open a law practice. Currently owner/attorney at Jared Anderson, Attorney, PLLC. I am married to Ashley (Morrell) Anderson, and we have two daughters: Elizabeth, 5, and Julia, 4."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"We are very fortunate to live in a beautiful county with traditional values, but we should acknowledge that we benefit from the decisions of those who came before us who invested a lot of time, energy, and money in improving our community over the generations. When I consider the decisions we have to make on the County Commission, I want us to be sure to recognize the impact those decisions can have long term. Some decisions have results that will impact the next four years. Other decisions have results that will still be here 20 years from now or longer."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"My degrees and career experience are in law and business. I have served for the past 3½ years as a county commissioner, as commission parliamentarian, and as a member of the budget, finance, audit, human resources, and insurance committees. I have spent that time working to master the details of county government. Almost every day I find myself applying the skills I have refined in the private sector to my work as a county commissioner."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I am the only candidate for this seat, so I will just use this opportunity to express my gratitude to the voters and citizens of my district for their faith in me to serve in this position. I will continue to do everything I can to serve them faithfully, diligently, honestly, and humbly."

## DISTRICT 5, SEAT B

### THOMAS ANTROW

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Small-business owner

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I have been an independent small business owner for over 35 years. I formerly enjoyed an upper-level management position with a large international company based overseas. I have spent time as a producer and host of my own daily radio show on KCSF AM



1300 and co-hosted talk shows for KVOR AM 740 for Cumulus Broadcasting in Colorado Springs. I have resided in several states. I've also served as the president of the Driving School Association of the Americas (DSAA). I am still involved on a national level with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reviewing educational standards for novice drivers."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I believe, based upon my experiences, living across the United States, observing several negative changes, and witnessing the growing pains in multiple towns, cities, and states, that I can assist my own town, county, and state face those challenges wisely. If given the opportunity to serve, I will not just occupy a seat. I will actively participate to protect our county."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I believe, based upon my experiences, living across the United States, observing several negative changes, and witnessing the growing pains in multiple towns, cities, and states, that I can assist my own town, county, and state face those challenges wisely. If given the opportunity to serve, I will not just occupy a seat. I will actively participate to protect our county."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "Dogged determination and better hair."

## RICK CARVER

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Health care

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Sixth-Generation Blount Countian. Parents: Pete and Audrey Carver. Daughter, Sarah (Joseph) Turner, grandson, Rhodes. Worked 45 years in health care, starting at Blount Memorial as a respiratory therapist. Worked with high-risk neonatal/pediatric



# COMMISSION:

patients at University of Tennessee Medical Center and Egleston Children's Hospital, Atlanta; was a respiratory clinical consultant with Kinetic Concepts Inc. in Atlanta and Knoxville before returning to BMH. Board member, Blount County Recovery Court, Smoky Mountain Animal Care Foundation; past Tennessee state delegate, American Association for Respiratory Care; past board member, Knoxville chapter, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation; past board member/past chapter president, Tennessee Society for Respiratory Care."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**  
"To serve my community and to help make our county better today and for future generations."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**  
"I have 12 years of experience and knowledge of county government. I sit on six committees and am chairman of one."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I am a Blount County native with roots that go back to the early 1800s, so I have a vested interest in the welfare of Blount County. As the county has grown into one of the nation's most desirable communities to live in, I have worked hard while in office to build a base of understanding of the needs of the people, the businesses and the public services. I am familiar with the federal and state mandates we are required to follow. I am always willing to listen respectfully to differing viewpoints and try to more fully understand them before making decisions."

## JENNY JORDAN

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Project administration

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I grew up here in Blount County with my parents, Tim and Amy Jordan, and my younger brother, Chris Jordan. I spent my formative years deeply engaged in the community: involved with my church, Girl Scouts, athletics, and school organizations; cheering on my brother as he played in sports from the pee-wee leagues through the high school level; visiting my parents at work in the medical field while they cared for the community. In my college years, I lived in Indianapolis and Murfreesboro while I attended Butler University and MTSU, but I always ended up coming back home to Maryville."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

FROM 11

"I love Blount County, and I want to do my part in ensuring our community continues to thrive well on into the future by working to keep the values that the area has been built on while realistically taking care of the needs caused by its growth over the last several decades."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"I've spent the last 10 years working in construction administration and insurance, dealing with government regulations and projects. I regularly deal with multimillion-dollar contracts, making sure that requirements are met, budgets are followed, and projects are cleaned up and finished. In addition to my office positions, I've also maintained a job as a restaurant server, just a shift or two a week because I love being able to interact with a wide variety of people and the satisfaction of taking care of a guest's needs for a great experience."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "As a candidate, I'm not interested in partisanship or playing political games, particularly at the expense of the citizens of Blount County. I'm an excellent problem solver, and I love diving into research on current situations so I can be as informed as possible on potential solutions. I love working with different people, and I firmly believe that the people of Blount County should be involved in the decisions that affect our community."

## DISTRICT 6, SEAT A

### NICK BRIGHT

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### PHIL TIEHEN

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Phil Tiehen grew up in the blue-collar city of Galesburg, Illinois, where he learned the value of hard work and helping others. The eldest son of seven siblings, he and his wife raised their family in Galesburg before moving to Blount County. Phil is a retired HVAC journeyman whose work included the installation, maintenance, and repair of all types of HVAC/R systems. A 38-year union member, Phil knows that when people organize they have power to make communities thrive. Phil believes that preserving and protecting Blount County is important to all of the members of our community."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"I believe the county could use a fresh set of eyes on the commission to help address the problems of unchecked growth and infrastructure with more conscientious decision making to maintain the beauty of Blount County."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"Being in the building trades for over 30 years and being directly involved in planning and executing projects in coordination with the other trades to achieve a common outcome has given me the experience needed to listen and work together for the good of the county."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"This will be the first public office I have run for and I will be the first to admit that it is a daunting task. That being said, I will be committed to hearing the voices and concerns of the people in my district and of the county as a whole without having to worry about pleasing or accommodating the wishes of those with special interests."

## DISTRICT 6, SEAT B

### TOM COLE

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Management

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I have lived in Blount County for 30 years, been married for 34 years, and have raised 3 boys in Blount County. I have worked in a large automotive supplier here in Blount County for over 30 years and been in management for over 20 years."

I have a small farm that I operate after work where I raise cattle and occasionally some pigs. In addition to farming, I like to fish and go camping."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"I am running for this position because I want to stay active in the community and I want to make sure we keep Blount County a great place to live. We need to make sure we have a clear path forward for the huge growth that we are seeing and the infrastructure to support it while continuing to manage the spending and debt in Blount County to keep taxes low."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"I have a lot of experience in managing large budgets, problem solving, and working with people as a team to get things done through my work experience. My personal life has shown that I am dedicated, family oriented, have good values, and I am a hard worker."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"The relevant experience that I just listed says a lot, but people that know me would say I have a very logical approach and thinking way that allows me to show leadership. I am a good listener and will gather all of the facts before making decisions. In this position I recognize that I am there to represent the people of Blount County."

## MISTY DAVIS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Insurance agent

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** Born and raised in Maryville and lived in the Binfield Community all my life. Graduated from William Blount High School and received a Methodist Scholarship and graduated from Tusculum College with a Bachelor of Science in

Organizational Management Marketing Concentration. I am a single mother when I am not at work, I am at my sons travel baseball games supporting FCA 323 or Greenback Football. My hobbies are cooking and attending UT football games.

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

I am passionate about the history and future of our County and the people living in it. I feel in my heart this is my opportunity to give back by keeping Blount Conservative.

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

My achievements in organizational management and accounting will help contribute to the success of our counties growth development, infrastructure and education planning. I served as the President of The Credentials Committee for Fort Loudon Electric District 5.

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

I communicate very forward but also possess empathetic communication skills. I build rapport and establish long lasting relationships with everyone.

## DISTRICT 7, SEAT A

### TOM STINNETT

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** Married to Patricia Long Stinnett, 40 years; children, Alyson Flynn, 36 years old, Cameron Taylor Stinnett, 31 years old; two granddaughters; lifelong citizen of Blount County; member of Central Baptist Church Alcoa; bachelor's degree from East

Tennessee State University, 1979; master's degree in safety from the University of Tennessee, 1982; educational specialist degree from Lincoln Memorial, 1986; conservative; and spend my free time as a volunteer with Blount County Community Action Agency.

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**



# COMMISSIONER:

FROM 12

I am running for the Commission position of District 7A in order to continue my work improving public safety, agriculture, and the wellbeing of our county employees. I have been honored to serve as your District 7A Commissioner for the last 8 years and look forward to continuing to work for the benefit of Blount County.

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

As the District 7A incumbent, I have gained irreplaceable experience that I can apply to the position on day one. I thoroughly gather all the information and facts on an issue in order to determine how my decision will impact the applicable entities. This has allowed me to make tough decisions to the betterment of our community.

## SHELDON SAPOZNIK

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** BioGill North America Inc. vice president

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I have 20 years of county government experience in an agriculturally sensitive area reliant on tourism and farming as mainstays of the community economy. After leaving the public sector, I started a small business serving the wastewater needs of



the agricultural industry. I am now a company executive for a small wastewater manufacturer serving the food and beverage industry. The son of a school teacher, I learned early on the importance of education.

Originally from California, my wife and I have been proud residents of Friendsville for about 7 years. I am an avid equestrian and sports fan (Go Vols!)."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"This campaign comes down to one major issue, stopping the overdevelopment of our beautiful rural community! Strategic and slow, moderate growth in line with our primary guiding principle of maintaining our rural heritage is what is needed. We are spiraling out of control with unchecked development inconsistent with the needs of the community. With out-of-control growth comes crime, traffic, overcrowded schools, environmental impacts, higher taxation, poverty, and unsustainable rise in real estate/housing costs. I pledge to put common sense and realistic protections in place to secure our future as a rural county rooted in our agricultural and open-space history."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have 20 years of county government experience in a planning department. An environmental health professional with a proven track record focused on mindful regulation and planned zoning to balance the needs of industry and the community. As a small-business owner and corporate executive, I have proven fiscal responsibility with an emphasis on spending every allocated dollar with impactful intent. I am a methodical thinker relying on data and metrics to guide policy and positions and have experience saying "No" to big developers and influential stakeholders looking to skirt regulation and silence the will of the people."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I am immensely qualified with years of experience protecting agricultural lands from overdevelopment. I have firsthand knowledge of the impacts unchecked growth has on a community and have decades of experience writing and enforcing regulations to assure rural communities and farmland are preserved. My blend of business expertise and understanding of government responsibilities makes me uniquely qualified to serve Blount County during this critical time. Overdevelopment of Blount County transcends political party and I will be working to earn the support of all vot-

ers; Democrats, Republicans, and Independents who want to protect our rural and small-town community."

## DISTRICT 7, SEAT B

## STACI CRISP-LAWHORN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Family nurse practitioner

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a lifelong resident of Blount County and District 7. I am a 1989 graduate of William Blount High School, a 1993 graduate of Maryville College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry and a 1995 graduate of University of Tennes-

see with a Master of Science degree in nursing. I work as a family nurse practitioner for Mediko. I have two children: Ty, 22, a firefighter with Rural Metro, and Andi Love, 15, a freshman at Alcoa High School. I currently serve on the Family Promise board of directors and am a member of Middlesettlements United Methodist Church."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"Blount County is a very special place to me and my family. I want to see Blount

SEE COMMISSION, 14E



# KEEP BLOUNT CONSERVATIVE

Vote Republican: August 4 & November 8  
Early Voting: July 15-30 & October 19 - November 3



➤ Join us at [www.BlountGOP.com](http://www.BlountGOP.com)

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- Blount County Young Republicans

➤ Follow us on Twitter and YouTube @BlountGOP

\*Paid for by Blount County Republican Campaign, Mike Lewis, Treasurer

# COMMISSION:

FROM 13

County flourish in a responsible manner without sacrificing our county's small-town feel and quality of life. My father, Bill Crisp, was a teacher, principal, Friendsville mayor, District 7 county commissioner, and Blount County mayor. His servant leadership also inspired me to run for County Commission. I want to use my experience and talents to serve this community where I can most effectively. I want to cultivate more recognition for and connection to the resources, people, and businesses here in our backyard."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have held the office of county commissioner for District 7, Seat B, for the past four years. I have experience defining high-level goals and long-range outcomes as well as identifying ways and means to achieve desired outcomes. I work well in high-stress environments and emergency situations. I have created numerous budgets for large-scale organizations and have experience working on numerous boards and committees."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"I believe I offer a unique perspective stemming from the multifaceted views of the political realms that I have been fortunate enough to experience. Observing the leadership of my father, my experience as a county commissioner, my civilian position within the Blount County Sheriff's Office, as well as my role as a mother, have allowed me to better understand the needs of the community as a whole and work towards continuing the betterment of Blount County."

## JOHN ROSS CONLEY

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Media specialist

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a graduate of William Blount High School and The University of Tennessee."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "I have spent time living and working in dozens of communities all across the country. I have worked with local governments and non-

profits of each community connecting with the members of those communities. Blount County is no different, its citizens have needs and desire connection with the local government. Our current commission fails at making that connection, I wish to change that. I can guarantee that if I'm elected, the words

of all the concerned citizens in Blount County will no longer fall on intentionally deafened ears."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I am raising a family in Blount County. I own a home in Blount County. My experience is one that includes witnessing our county be consumed by bad practices of uncontrolled overdevelopment, lack of integrity in the stewardship of our globally unique natural resources, and unwillingness to invest in the future of Blount County in favor of short-term gains. My experience is one of a frustrated, concerned, and loyal Blount County resident that says enough is enough. It is time for some accountability."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"I am a youth soccer coach, student pastor, working for a nonprofit, a dad and husband, and a product of Blount County schools. Many other candidates are also those exact types of things. All across this ballot, which is a very full ballot, you find a wide array of model citizens representing everything good about Blount County. I am proud to share a ballot with all of them. The Democrats on this ballot desire for Blount County residents to regain confidence in their local government that is currently missing. We have your back, and that is why we are different."

## DISTRICT 8, SEAT A

## BRAD BOWERS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Self employed

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Born at Blount Memorial Hospital on Aug. 31, 1964, and raised in the Oak View/Walland community on the family's country farm. Parents: Tom and Charlotte Bowers. Sister: Kristi Yates. Married to Melissa Myers Bowers since 1994. Three children: Gracie, Thomas, and Railee (deceased). Graduated from Heritage High School and University of Tennessee with a Bachelor of Science in agriculture."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"Maintain and keep our government efficiently and as small as possible while providing Blount Countians with the best possible service. Keep debt low and keep government from intruding into our lives as much as possible."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"Past experience as a commissioner, worked in county government for 10 years, being self-employed, all give me a unique perspective to make a very good commissioner."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "I think my experience sets me apart and gives me light years of knowledge that my opponent doesn't have. My Republican conservative values are also very important and set me apart from my opponent."

## PHIL YOUNG

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "My dad was in the Army and stationed in Colorado when I was born. We moved around. My family has had military connections since 1938. Moving to Tennessee in 1976, I started a landscaping/retail nursery business. Thirty-two years ago, I married my wife, Patti, and began teaching at a Knoxville inner-city school. We raised two children and started an equestrian facility on our farm. My 20 of teaching were at Walland Elementary School. Now I want to be the Blount County District 8A commissioner."

## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"Blount County is home. I want to work to keep it 'Peaceful.' Rampant growth is a problem. Planning and zoning policies need careful attention. As a retired teacher, all education issues are important, especially upgrading school facilities, increasing salaries to attract and keep teachers and staff, and preparing students for the 21st century workforce. Small businesses are the backbone of communities. I will promote small businesses, especially agriculture, and the infrastructure to support them. Everyone deserves economic, political, and social rights opportunities. I will work for veterans, a reduction of food insecurity, and local efforts to reduce climate change."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"As a Democratic candidate, I am running unopposed in the primary election."

## DISTRICT 8, SEAT B

## JEFF JOPLING

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Self employed

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Jeff is a Blount County (Townsend) resident who attended Townsend Elementary, Walland Middle School, Heritage High School, and earned his bachelor's degree in music from Maryville College. Jeff has served one term on the County Commission (2018-2022) representing District 8. Jeff is the pianist at his church, Tuckaleechee United Methodist Church,



## WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I hold this office to represent the residents and businesses that live and work here now, and to maintain Blount County's rural atmosphere. I see no need to incentivize and more importantly subsidize new businesses to move here as this is already a great place to live and work. New businesses need no more incentive than that and it is my belief that any further subsidy is simply putting the government in a position of helping new businesses at the expense of current and existing taxpayers."

## WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"As the incumbent, I have currently held this office for one term (2018-2022) and I seek reelection to have the opportunity to continue the work that we have been doing for four years."

## WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"I believe that there are many who seek this office for their own political gain, feather in their cap or resume builder. I don't care about any of those things. The reason I got involved in county government in the first place (at the expense of my own business) is to help protect my business, my family, and other businesses and families like mine who need and deserve honest representation from their government without political or financial aspirations motivating their decisions."

## PETE GIRARD

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

## DISTRICT 9, SEAT A

## RON FRENCH

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Bachelor of Science, environmental health, East Tennessee State University, 1971. Served in the U.S. Army. March 1972-May 1976, (1st lieutenant), honorable discharge. Member of Seymour Volunteer Fire Department board of directors, 1992-present; Blount County commissioner, 1998-2002, 2006-present; married, Gail





# COMMISSION:

FROM 14

## DISTRICT 9, SEAT B

### STEVE MIKELS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### CHUCK TALLENT

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

### ALICE WARDREP

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat**OCCUPATION:** Health care**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "From Southwest Virginia; lived in Blount County since 1998. Worked in health for entire career; spent 30 years with a major health care company in national operations management and regional sales and operations management."

Experienced in working with people, understanding, finding and implementing solutions and working within a budget."

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I am a moderate who wants to have a part in maintaining our standard of living in Blount County. I want to work with my fellow Blount County neighbors to get done the things we need done in the best possible manner. We need to take care of our environment and ..."

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"Over 30 years as a manager has given me experience in many different aspects of running a business (or in this case being part of a county commission). In addition, I am an experienced public speaker."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

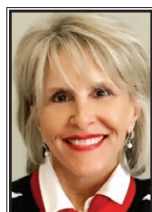
"I have strong management experience, experience in public speaking and sharing information, and my years spent in health care helps me to better understand medical issues that the public faces on a daily basis. I listen and try to understand things from other's perspective and work to find an agreeable solution, this is in my opinion a strong attribute for someone in public office. I am a driver and I work well with others to get things done in the best possible manner."

### LEAH HOOD

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

## DISTRICT 10, SEAT A

### LINDA JENKINS WEBB

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Operations manager**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "First, I'm a wife and mother of two grown daughters. I have lived in the Louisville community for more than 55 years. I previously worked in the banking industry for 25 years in Blount County, and for the last 12 years I've worked for the town of Louisville."

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I'm seeking reelection for District 10, Seat A, because I believe I have a unique combination of life and work experiences to represent the people of District 10, and I believe I can bring something positive to the County Commission. I want the best outcomes for the people who live in my community, and I understand compromise means that no one gets everything they want, but everyone gets some of what they want."

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I have lived in the Louisville community for more than 55 years; the past 12 years, I've worked as the town of Louisville's operations manager. In that capacity, I have had the opportunity to learn how a municipality works — not only policy and procedures but that it doesn't work in a vacuum. In Blount County, for example, the town of Louisville must work in partnership with the Blount County government. I've also been fortunate to complete several courses with both the Municipal Technical Assistance Service along with County Technical Assistance Service. I have been honored to serve District 10."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"When I considered these questions, it occurred to me that I know so many people in District 10 — friends from school, from church, neighbors, and in a lot of the families, I know more than one or two generations and even extended family members. But I also have the pleasure of meeting a lot of the new residents who come into the Town Hall to get building permits or just ask questions about Louisville. I have lived some of the history of our community, but I get to see where we're going, too."

## DISTRICT 10, SEAT B

### STEVEN J. KELLEY JR.

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Realtor, hospitality manager**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "My family moved here from South Carolina in the early '90s when my father took a job at DENSO Manufacturing, where he still works. I attended Walld Middle and Heritage High School. After high school, I attended Pellissippi State Technical Community College while working full time, and a few years later, I completed my Bachelor of Science in organizational management from Tusculum College. Almost 10 years ago, I married my beautiful wife, April, and several years ago we purchased and renovated our first home here in Louisville (District 10), where we hope to retire."

"We love living in Louisville (District 10), and I have always felt that I wanted to be a larger part of the community. I have always wanted to be involved, and this opportunity would allow me to continue to represent my community."

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"For years I have attended almost every County Commission meeting and tried to be active in Blount County meetings. In 2018, I was appointed to the Louisville Planning Commission; in November 2020, I was elected as an alderman for the town of Louisville (a voluntary/unpaid position). I am constantly involved in anything I can that our community does or needs, and I plan to continue doing so. I also feel my experience in sales and hospitality has conditioned me to work with people, lead, listen, and try to find agreeable solutions when there are conflicts or differing opinions."

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"The main difference is my desire to serve our community. I've been involved in our community as long as I've lived here. In years of attending County Commission meetings I've learned many things about our county including many of the arising issues. Usually, I am one of the few citizens at the meetings until a few months prior to election when a few candidates make the last-minute decision to 'become involved.' Vote for someone who is passionate about your district with the track record prove it. Vote for someone who will represent you and your district. Vote for Steven Kelley."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"The main difference is my desire to serve our community. I've been involved in our community as long as I've lived here. In years of attending County Commission meetings I've learned many things about our county including many of the arising issues. Usually, I am one of the few citizens at the meetings until a few months prior to election when a few candidates make the last-minute decision to 'become involved.' Vote for someone who is passionate about your district with the track record prove it. Vote for someone who will represent you and your district. Vote for Steven Kelley."

# COMMISSION:

FROM 15

## DAVID WELLS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Emerald Youth Foundation vice president**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** Born and live in Blount County. Attended Friendsville Elementary, William Blount High School, and the University of Tennessee. Married to JJ Wells, a 25-plus-year educator in Blount County Schools. We are blessed to have two sons, Carson and

Dawson. Carson is a graduating senior at Carson-Newman University and Dawson is a junior at William Blount. We attend Middlesettlements United Methodist Church, where my wife grew up. I also currently serve the church as worship director. For the past 10 years, I have also served as the vice president of the board for Eagleton Ball Park.

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“I have been blessed to live in this community all my life. My work life has taken me to Knoxville every day for the past 25-plus years. This is a way for me to utilize the experience and skills I have developed to give back to my hometown. Also, I feel the time is right in my life to offer to serve in this way.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“Prior to my current work at Emerald Youth, I served as general manager for Foothills Broadcasting, a group of four radio stations serving East Tennessee. That executive leadership role gave me a lot of opportunities to connect with the communities and businesses we served. The areas I lead now at Emerald Youth include business contract management, facility development/management, as well technology and data systems. These roles allow me to work with Knox County Commission, Knoxville City Council, Planning Commission, and others. I feel all of these provide very relevant experience to serve well for the role of Blount County commissioner.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

In addition to my experience, which itself I feel is unique, I have developed long-term relationships with businesses and community leaders across Blount County. With always living here, as well as my wife, along with our work through church, sports, and community organization involvement, there are opportunities to connect and hear from those relationships as decisions are being formulated.



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Duties of the Board of Education include the management and control of the school system, particularly in matters of human resources, materials, and infrastructure. Members are elected to a four-year term. (Source: Tennessee Code Annotated; Blount County Election Commission)

### DISTRICT 1

#### BRIAN KING

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Small-business owner**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “A resident of the Blount County community, for 55 years. I attended the Blount County school system. I have been in business for 31-plus years in Blount County. I have served on the Blount County Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for over six years now. I am married to my wife, Sara, for 35 years and we share two sons together (Josh and Hunter). I am a member of Pleasant View Church.”**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“I believe the community should have qualified candidates to choose from. I have been asked by constituents in the community to serve at the position of Blount County school board. I am a graduate of the Blount County school system. I have the kids and taxpayers’ best interests at heart.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I am a 31-year business owner of the community. I understand how to navigate through an ever-changing environment and be successful while doing so. Due to my ability to communicate, I have been successful in meeting customers’ needs through the years.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“Diversity, decision making, problem solving, and communication. As a business owner, I have an understanding of how to lead and help others to become successful. Being a member of the BZA, I have the ability to see both parties’ sides, therefore I know I will have the ability to serve the school board at its best. I will be able to equally represent the kids and taxpayers of the community.”

#### STEVEN PHIPPS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Did not participate.

#### DEBBIE SUDHOFF

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Areawide Development Corp. executive director**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I am a native East Tennessean having lived in Blount County for over 30 years. My two children attended Blount County schools (Porter, Heritage Middle School, and Heritage High School). I am the executive director of Areawide Development Corp. which provides Small Business Administration financing for small busi-

nesses. I have worked in the financial industry for 34 years. I am a graduate of Leadership Blount, class of 2008. I served on the Blount County Education Foundation board from 2010-2014. I serve on

the Blount County Community Action Agency board. I organized the first Heritage baccalaureate service in 2011.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“I am seeking reelection to the Blount County school board for over 10,000 reasons — one for every child enrolled. Our children deserve the very best education and to have all the tools and resources available to achieve academic success. I want to ensure we equip our students with an education that provides them success in their postsecondary education and/or careers they pursue following high school. I want to ensure that future leadership elevates our system in the correct direction and that our facility renovations/improvements/expansions continue over the next four years as our children deserve safe, secure learning environments.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“Parent: I have been actively engaged in Blount County schools since 1998. Blount County Education Foundation board member: supporting our school system with educational resources. Board of Education: I have proudly served as the District 1 Board of Education representative since 2014. Professional career in the financial industry.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“I wholeheartedly believe in, support, and promote Blount County schools! I have been actively involved with Blount County schools since 1998 as a parent, volunteer, and as school board member (since 2014). Both of my children attended Blount County schools from kindergarten through graduation. My understanding of the needs of our students, each of our schools, the school system, and our community from serving on the Board of Education for the last eight years.”

### DISTRICT 3

#### DIANE BAIN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican**OCCUPATION:** Retired**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was born and raised in Maryville and attended these schools: Alnwick Elementary; Everett

High School, class of 1969; University of Tennessee, 1973; Lincoln Memorial University, master’s in instructional administration and supervision, 1991; Lincoln Memorial University and Cumberland

University, master’s plus 30 in curriculum and instruction. I am invested in our community: teacher for Blount County schools for 42 years, 1975-2017; CARE Teacher of the Year, 1994; attend Cornerstone Fellowship Church; member of Alpha Delta Kappa International Honorary Organization for Women Educators, Epsilon Chapter; trustee for Mount Tabor Cemetery; elected to serve on Blount County school board 2018.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“I am running for reelection to continue advancements for Blount County students in their education. These include working on efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified staff and promoting career and technical education opportunities. My priorities will continue to be making sure classes and curricula adequately prepare students for the job field and dealing with the challenges of funding and the wise spending of the taxpayers’ funds.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I have 42 years of experience as a classroom teacher and 3½ years serving as District 3 school board representative. I know the issues that must be addressed in order for all students to reach their maximum academic, social and emotional potential. Collaborating with parents, teachers and the general public is a must.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“My experiences in 42 years of service as a teacher and 3½ years on the Blount County school board make me different from the other candidates for this office. I understand the day-to-day operations of the classroom and have a sound knowledge of instruction, curriculum, and education programs. I would like to continue to work to improve instruction for all students. I have a strong work ethic and a passionate commitment to see that our Blount County schools graduate students who are college and career ready and prepared to be productive citizens.”



# EDUCATION:

## STANLEY ISH YOUNG SR.

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Person-centered facilitator

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “A Blount County native, educated in the Maryville city school district. In 1977, I received a Bachelor of Science in psychology with a concentration in human anatomy. I have been employed with the state Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) for 34 years. Currently, I serve as a person-centered facilitator for those with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (IDD), helping them reach their maximum potential and have a meaningful life. As a mentor with TnAchieves, I motivate and encourage high school seniors to pursue postsecondary education in college and skilled trades. I worked with Children’s Hospital Inpatient Psychiatric Hospital as a primary counselor for latency-aged children, working closely with administrative staff and families.”



**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “I love living in Blount County and have seen a tremendous amount of growth over my lifetime. I want to share what’s working for some schools with all our schools. I want to see our students walk across the stage, with the academic and interpersonal skills to be successful in our community.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“My 34 years working to facilitate clients in reaching their maximum potential and have a meaningful life. This includes communicating with the family, school personnel, and others to coordinate educational curriculum and goals. My experience working through state and federal protocol with DIDD gives me the ability to work with others through difficult challenges. Working with TnAchieves provided the opportunity to motivate and encourage high school seniors to pursue college and skilled trades. My work with Children’s Hospital gave me insight into not only the needs of the child but also the needs of the family and greater community.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“My 34 years working to facilitate clients in reaching their maximum potential and have a meaningful life. This includes communicating with the family, school personnel, and others to coordinate educational curriculum and goals. My experience working through state and federal protocol with DIDD gives me the ability to work with others through difficult challenges. Working with TnAchieves provided the opportunity to motivate and encourage high school seniors to pursue college and skilled trades. My work with Children’s Hospital gave me insight into not only the needs of the child but also the needs of the family and greater community.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“My experience allowed me to be a successful person-centered facilitator, working with individuals of all ages with various mental health diagnoses. My career with DIDD and volunteering as a mentor with TnAchieves has provided great insight into the holistic

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family and how to identify their needs. My ability to strengthen parent involvement and identify successful strategies to enhance student development and reach their maximum potential is an asset.”

## DISTRICT 5

### ERICA MOORE

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Administrative assistant

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I grew up in the Kansas City, Missouri, area. My father was a pastor, and my mother a homemaker. My dad’s love of God and education trickled down to me, the firstborn of three. I am married to my wonderful husband, Kevin, and together we share a blended family of three amazing boys. My education consists primarily of writing, teaching, and mentor-related disciplines. In addition, I enjoy a good book, the outdoors, and a love for traveling. I am currently an administrative assistant to a thriving youth ministry in town and very happy to call the Blount County community home.”



**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “Blount County Schools (BCS) deserves leadership that values and addresses the community’s needs. As a mom with children in BCS, I understand how important it is for parents’ voices to be heard and their rights preserved. Our children deserve a quality education based on the core skills: reading, writing, and arithmetic. Not on divisive concepts like critical race theory. I want to see BCS students grow academically to achievement levels comparable to or exceeding surrounding districts. I pledge to strengthen community partnerships to ensure students, staff, and parents all smile again.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I graduated summa cum laude from Park University. My educational journey has afforded wide-ranging opportunities to mentor college students using various teaching strategies met with great success. In addition, I have taught in both urban and suburban school districts, so I have firsthand experience and knowledge of the economic disparities our children face. My passion is helping students develop proper study habits, time management skills, and accountability. Finally, as an administrative assistant of a local youth ministry, my passion remains developing positive relationships with parents and the community while helping students grow, mature, and achieve beyond their imagined skillsets.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I graduated summa cum laude from Park University. My educational journey has afforded wide-ranging opportunities to mentor college students using various teaching strategies met with great success. In addition, I have taught in both urban and suburban school districts, so I have firsthand experience and knowledge of the economic disparities our children face. My passion is helping students develop proper study habits, time management skills, and accountability. Finally, as an administrative assistant of a local youth ministry, my passion remains developing positive relationships with parents and the community while helping students grow, mature, and achieve beyond their imagined skillsets.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“My passion

and drive are unparalleled. Advocating for students is a calling. I understand the educational landscape is a fierce one. But, today, I stand before Blount County residents, equipped and ready to face any battle with dignity, respect, and a smile because these are our children. Parents deserve respect. Teachers deserve to be valued. Children deserve an education that preserves our value systems. Blount County students are some of the brightest and the best, and I will not leave any stone unturned until our district becomes recognized as a top-tier district that offers multiple pathways for all students.”

### BRANDON EVERHART

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Realtor

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I was born and raised in Blount County. I grew up at Fairview Elementary and was graduated from William Blount High School in 2000. I have been happily married for 11 years, and we have two children, Mercy Rose, 8, and Rowan, 2. I proudly serve on the Community Impact Committee for the United Way, and I am currently the chairman of the Blount County Education Foundation. I am in the 2022 Lead-



ership Blount cohort. Our family attends Maryville First United Methodist Church.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

“I believe education is the foundation of all great communities. I love our Blount County Schools and the opportunities they have given to me. My family has been in Blount County for generations and our schools were instrumental in the success of our lives.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

“I have worked closely with Blount County Schools since joining the board of the Blount County Education Foundation, which provides direct-to-classroom grants to our hardworking teachers. Through the grant funding process, I have been able to see the needs the teachers have while gaining a unique perspective from administrators as we work to improve our schools. I believe my experiences growing up here and being a student in Blount County school system helps better my understanding of what our community needs and values.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

“To be forthright, I know very little about the other candidate, as she has only recently relocated to Blount County from out of state. I will learn about her at the same time the community does.”

SEE EDUCATION, 18

# VOTE SHAWN CARTER

County Commissioner Seat 1A

## Candidate Meet & Greet with Shawn Carter Sr.

Today, April 10th  
from 4-6 pm at  
Brackins Blues Club  
112 E Broadway Ave

Paid for by Shawn Carter

# EDUCATION:

## DISTRICT 7

### FRED GOINS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Born and raised in Blount County, my family consisted of my parents and four older brothers. My brothers and I all graduated from Blount County high schools. I furthered my education at Hiwassee College earning an Associate of Arts degree. At Tennessee Wesleyan College, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in education with a focus in early childhood grades K-3 and 4-9. I began teaching in 1977 at Rocky Branch Elementary. While teaching I attended night classes at the University of Tennessee and received a master's degree plus 30 hours. My endorsements included curriculum, instruction, administration, and supervision."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"I am running for this position because I



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like to see children learn, develop skills, and succeed. I will continue to emphasize that student academic performance is important to the child, parents, school system, and our community. We all want our students to graduate with the ability to be successful in whatever role they take in our society. Assisting students and teachers is a wonderful opportunity."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"I began teaching at Rocky Branch Elementary in grades 3-5 (1984). I then transitioned to Binfield Elementary teaching grades 6-8 (1988). I was selected to open Eagleton Elementary for grades K-8. Next, I opened a new school at Townsend Elementary and remained the principal there for 15 years. Due to student perseverance and teacher dedication, Townsend was recognized for academic growth and even received a visit from President George W. Bush (2006). I was chosen to open another new school at Carpenters Elementary and remained for seven years before retiring. I am currently serving on the Blount County school board."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"I am different from others because I will not give up. I will continue to keep the focus on academic excellence. I believe in being

present in the schools to see in person what is happening at our schools. I know what our students are capable of doing and I want to see them achieve it. I believe in our students and teachers."

### CAROLE JEWETT

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Retired

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I'm a mother and grandmother. My graduate education is in psychology/mental health nursing, childhood development and special education. I taught nursing in universities, retired as a captain from the Navy Nurse Corps and am a Vietnam and Desert Storm veteran. I served in the Peace Corps and traveled extensively. I also served 13 years as a mission pilot in the Civil Air Patrol."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"The mental health and well-being of children and teachers have been driven to a breaking point by the pandemic and the fear and grief it has brought. I decided that it was time to 'Put up or shut up!' Among the responsibilities of a school board these days is mitigating the effects of COVID disruptions on our



children and teachers. With my educational background and experience in childhood development, it made sense to bring that training and experience to the table. And as a Nurse Corps officer for 32 years, I learned much about teamwork, leadership and making hard decisions."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"As a mother, I can relate to parents who want the best learning experience for their child and who look to a school board for support and guidance. As a nurse, I understand how the COVID challenges can affect students' mental health and their academic achievement. As a nursing instructor, I understand the complexities of a good curriculum. Teachers and educational specialists are the experts and know how to do this. Hire the best, support them, give them the tools they need and let them do their job."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"The incumbent for this position is an experienced educator but times are changing rapidly. There is a growing need by parents and teachers for more transparency and communication with school boards. Parents are more vocal about their concerns and deserve to be heard. I will always listen with an open mind and answer questions honestly and with respect."

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

The Circuit Court Clerk's Office maintains records related to Circuit Court, General Sessions Court, Juvenile Court, Traffic Court, and orders of protection. Clerks are elected to a four-year term. (Source: BlountTn.org, Circuit Court Clerk; Blount County Election Commission)

### TOM HATCHER

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Circuit Court clerk

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Tom Hatcher was born to James and Lydia Hatcher and grew up in the Porter community on the family farm where he learned the value of hard work. He attended Porter School and Roane State Community College. He met the love of his life,

Donna Pangle Hatcher, who lived in the Chilhowee View community, and they have been married for 43 years. Their son, Dustin, and his wife, Julia, have given them two granddaughters. In 2014 the Hatchers formed a charity to benefit Alzheimer's of Tennessee, the Boys and Girls Club of Blount County and other nonprofits."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"I want to continue to serve the citizens of Blount County."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"Twenty-eight years as Blount County circuit court clerk where he strives to assist the citizens of Blount County in his capacity as an elected official."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** "The 28 years of experience and my community involvement. I also served five years as a Blount County commissioner for District 9."



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY:

### CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE, 5TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Circuit Court is the state trial court for civil and criminal cases and appeals from General Sessions Court involving some civil cases as well as certain Juvenile Court cases. By private act, Blount County Circuit Court has both legal and equitable jurisdiction in civil matters. Judges are elected to an eight-year term. (Source: Clerk and Master Stephen S. Ogle; TNCourts.gov)

### DIVISION I

### TAMMY HARRINGTON

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Circuit Court judge

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Harrington was appointed to the bench in 2011 by Gov. Bill Haslam and ran uncontested in 2012 and 2014. A graduate of the University of Florida and University of Tennessee College of Law, Harrington was a career prosecutor prior to becoming a judge. In addition to various community and legal activities, she has served on the Board of Judicial Conduct and as vice-president of the Tennessee Judicial Conference. She is a commissioner for the Tennessee Lawyer's Assistance Program and serves on the state's judicial ethics commit-



tee. She has been an adjunct professor at the UT College of Law since 2014."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"It has been an honor and privilege to serve the citizens of Blount County as Circuit Court judge. I am looking forward to continued service and I greatly appreciate all the support and trust from this wonderful and unique community."

### DIVISION II

### DAVID DUGGAN

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL, 5TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

The District Attorney General prosecutes criminal cases and provides legal support to victims and law enforcement agencies investigating crimes in and related to Blount County. This office is elected to an eight-year term. (Source: BlountTN.gov, District Attorney General; Blount County Election Commission)

### RYAN DESMOND

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** Assistant district attorney general

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am a graduate, with honors, from East Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee College of Law. I've served as a prosecutor in the Blount County District Attorney's Office since 2010 and live in Maryville with my beautiful wife, Jodie, who is a director at Maryville Children's Academy. We are blessed



with two wonderful children, Tucker (6) and Carly (4)."

#### WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?

"I have dedicated my entire career to the aggressive but ethical prosecution of criminal offenders. Growth within Blount and overflow from surrounding counties has created significant challenges within the local criminal justice system, and the actions taken over the next few years will be critical in deterring any influx of criminal actors while ensuring Blount County remains the safe community we know and love. The relationships I have built with our law enforcement leaders and agencies during my career have positioned me per-

fectly to partner with them to achieve these ends."

#### WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

"I am currently the lead homicide prosecutor for all of Blount County, having successfully litigated over 20 homicide cases resulting in over 600 years of prison time. I also currently serve as the lead prosecutor for the city of Alcoa and have previously prosecuted on behalf of the 5th Judicial Drug Task Force. I am also president of the Blount County Recovery Court, vice chairman of the Blount County Republican Party, former chair of Blount Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team (Be Aware Blount), a graduate of Leadership Blount, and board

member for the Gateway to Independence (The Gate)."

#### WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?

"While the incredible support I was fortunate to receive has led me to be unopposed for this position, I want to assure all Blount residents that I am supremely qualified and motivated for this position. With me, they should feel confident that their district attorney will support our law enforcement and fairly and justly uphold the rule of law. I personally pledge to make the safety of our community the greatest of priorities."

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: GENERAL SESSIONS JUDGE

General Sessions Court handles misdemeanor criminal cases and preliminary hearings in criminal and small-action civil cases. By private act, the Blount County General Sessions Court also has jurisdiction as Juvenile Court, Probate Court, and domestic relations cases. General Sessions judges are elected to 8-year terms. (Source: Clerk and Master Stephen S. Ogle; TNCourts.gov)

### DIVISION I

#### MIKE GALLEGOS

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** General Sessions judge

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Gallegos was elected in 2016 and reelected in 2014 without opposition. He is the founding and presiding judge of General Sessions Veterans Treatment Court. A past vice president for the Tennessee General Sessions Judges Conference. He is a former assistant district attorney general in the 4th, 5th, and 6th judicial districts. He is a graduate of Sevier County High School (1985), University of Tennessee Knoxville (1990) with a Bachelor of Arts in geography/political Science, and the University of Memphis (1994), with a Doctor of Jurisprudence. He is an enlisted veteran of the United States Navy Reserve."



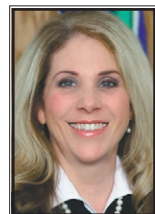
**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "It has been an honor and a privilege to serve all Blount Countians since my election in 2006 and would appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve."

### DIVISION II

#### KENLYN FOSTER

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** General Sessions judge

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Elected Blount County General Sessions judge, 2014. Established Blount County Juvenile Court Model Foster Care Review Board, expanded Blount County Youth Court, installed Free Little Library at Juvenile Court, and implemented



needs-based assessments, informal diversion process, and individualized case management plans for youth. Tennessee Interstate Compact for Juveniles East Grand Division Judicial Representative, Tennessee Supreme Court Project ECHO. Author, "Astronaut Noodle on Planet Velocity." Bachelor of Arts, University of Tennessee; Doctor of Jurisprudence, University of Tennessee College of Law. Prior Employment: Administration of George H.W. Bush, NRA, assistant district attorney. Spouse: Andy Hutsell (three children)."

### DIVISION III

#### WILLIAM R. BREWER

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** General Sessions judge

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Education: Doctor of Jurisprudence, University of Tennessee College of Law; Bachelor of Arts, Maryville College; Everett High School; 15 hours plus per year of continuing legal education."



**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "It has been my privilege and pleasure to serve the citizens of Blount County as judge of General Sessions Court, Division III, for the past 33 years; I look forward to continuing to serve in that capacity. I will continue to uphold the oath of office; to support the constitutions of the United States and the state of Tennessee, and to faithfully and impartially perform the duties of office to the best of my skill and ability. I respectfully ask for your vote and support."

### DIVISION IV

#### ROBERT L. HEADRICK

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** General Sessions judge

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "Education: Doctor of Jurisprudence, Nova University; Bachelor of Arts, the University of Tennessee; Heritage High School; 15 hours plus yearly continuing legal education."



**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** "Since taking the bench in September of 2008, it has been my privilege to serve the people of Blount County. My entire professional career has been in public service and I am honored to be able to continue providing for my community in this manner. I take my oath of office very seriously and work hard each day to support my oath to this community and the great state of Tennessee. I humbly ask for your support."

2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

The county highway department is charged with maintaining Blount County roads. The two primary sources of funding come from the county portion of the gas tax and a portion of the sales tax. The gasoline tax revenues only come from purchases made outside of city limits. This office is elected to a four-year term.

(Source: BlountTN.org, Highway Superintendent; Blount County Election Commission)

JEFF HEADRICK

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** Highway superintendent  
**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Blount County highway superintendent since 2016; married to Susan Lambert Headrick; Tennessee County Services Association board of directors; Tennessee County Highway Officials Association board of directors; Keep Blount Beautiful board; Solid Waste Authority board; Blount County Government Human Resources



**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “I work every day to improve the roads in Blount County so that they will be

es Committee; former county commissioner; envisioned and created the county’s first recycling center; spearheaded one of the only glass recycling centers in the state; and lifelong resident of Blount County.”

safer for our residents. With the growth of Blount County, my office continues to plan for increased future capacity so that we can maintain safe and efficient transportation throughout the county. In addition to maintaining the roadways, our office manages development services and the county’s recycling program which will soon include one of the state’s few glass recycling programs. As a steward of taxpayers’ dollars, I perform these duties in the most cost-effective

manner to ensure the taxpayers’ dollars are never wasted.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “Six years as the Blount County highway superintendent; two years on the Blount County Commission. Prior to public service, worked as a local developer in Blount County.”

2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: PUBLIC DEFENDER, DISTRICT 5

The district public defender has the duty and responsibility of representing indigent persons for whom the district public defender has been appointed as counsel by the court. The office is elected to an eight-year term. (Source: Tennessee Code Annotated; Blount County Election Commission)

MACK GARNER

**AFFILIATION:** Republican  
**OCCUPATION:** Attorney  
**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Born in Blount County 1951. Attended Maryville College and University of Tennessee Law School. Began general practice in 1973. Elected public defender in 1990 and have held



the office since then.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “To continue the work I have done over the past 32 years.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “I have

held this office for the past 32 years and was in private practice for 17 years before that.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “I have no opposition.”

ELECTION CALENDAR

COUNTY PRIMARY & ROCKFORD CITY ELECTION

Feb. 24 - Candidate Withdrawal Deadline

April 4 - Last Day to Register to Vote

**April 13** - Early Voting Opens

**April 26** - Last day to request an Absentee by mail ballot

**April 28** - Early Voting Closes

**May 3** - ELECTION DAY

FEDERAL & STATE PRIMARY,  
COUNTY GENERAL,  
FRIENDSVILLE AND TOWNSEND CITY ELECTION

Offices on the General Ballot - all county primary winners from the May 3 Election, City of Friendsville - Commission (3 seats), and City of Townsend - Commission (3 seats)

Federal & State offices on the Primary ballot are: Governor, US House of Representatives, TN House of Representatives (8th & 20th), State Executive Committeeman & Committeewoman (1 Republican / 1 Democrat).

Note: Alcoa City School Board (2 seats) and Maryville City School Board (3 seats) will be included in the primary.

**April 14** - Candidate Withdrawal Deadline

**May 6** - First Day to Request an Absentee By-Mail

**July 5** - Last Day to Register to Vote

**July 15** - Early Voting Opens

**July 28** - Last day to request an Absentee By-Mail

**July 30** - Early Voting Closes

**August 4** - ELECTION DAY

FEDERAL & STATE GENERAL,  
ALCOA, LOUISVILLE & MARYVILLE  
CITY ELECTION

Federal & State General ballot - All winners from Aug. 4  
Federal & State primary election (except State Executive Committeeman / Committeewoman).

Offices on the ballot: City of Alcoa - City Commission (3 seats), School Board (2 seats - primary winners plus independent candidates), City of Louisville - Mayor, Alderman (2 seats), City of Maryville - City Council (3 seats), School Board (3 seats - primary winners plus independents).

**June 20** - First Day to Pick Up a Petition

**Aug. 10** - First Day to Request an Absentee By-Mail

**Aug. 18** - Candidate Qualifying Deadline

**Aug. 25** - Candidate Withdrawal Deadline

**Oct. 11** - Last Day to Register to Vote

**Oct. 19** - Early Voting Opens

**Nov. 1** - Last Day to Receive an Absentee by-Mail

**Nov. 3** - Early Voting Closes

**Nov. 8** - ELECTION DAY



## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: REGISTER OF DEEDS

The duties of the register of deeds is to serve as custodian and recorder of legal documents pertaining to real property. Such documents include warranty deeds, deeds of trusts, liens, power of attorney, plats, releases, amendments, and other statutory documents. The office is elected to a four-year term. (Source: County Technical Advisory Service; Blount County Election Commission)

### PHYLLIS CRISP

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Register of deeds

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Graduate of Everett High School. Married to Tony Jay Crisp for 46 years. Mother of two daughters, Amy (Eddie) Davis, Joni (Mike) Seratt. Proud grandmother of five grandchildren and two bonus grandchildren. I started to work for Blount County government in 1999 in the register of deeds office. In 2010, I was elected as register and continue to serve this position. Achieved Certified Public Administrator; East Tennessee Register of Deeds president, 2012-2013; Leadership Blount, class of 2014; East Tennessee Regional Leadership, 2015; Registers Association president, 2016-2017; Outstanding Register of the Year, 2017; and have served on many community service boards.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “Being your register of deeds is not just a job, it is my passion. Blount County citizens have placed a great deal of trust in me by electing me three times into office. With my experience, I will continue to work very hard to preserve the integrity and trust that is expected from the office of register of deeds. I love Blount County and want it to continue to be a great place to live, work, and raise a family.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “Working in the office for 11 years under the leadership of the honorable Penny Houston Whaley prior to becoming the register gave me firsthand experience working with customers and providing them with courteous service. Under my direction as register I have 12 years’ experience preparing and managing a yearly budget. I manage nine full-time employees and two part-time.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “I have worked in the office the past 22 years. My experience and wealth of knowledge is assurance that I am the only candidate that is qualified to provide the citizens of Blount County with the highest level of service, as they should expect and deserve.”

### BETH MYERS-REES

**AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Taxi driver

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “Originally from Chicago, I am the oldest of five children. Our father was an engineer specializing in the design and construction of hydroelectric power plants and turbines and our mother was in nursing school when she met and married dad and settled into life as a mom and volunteer for educational causes, helping to start Chicago’s first Head Start program. Our family moved to El Paso in 1971 where I completed junior high and high school. I lived in five states and West Germany before settling in Blount County in 2000. I have two daughters and two granddaughters.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “I am running for register of deeds to serve the citizens of Blount County with the skills and knowledge developed over four-plus decades of administrative and accounting work in several different industries, as well as specialized work in real estate. I am currently serving as chair of the Planning Commission’s Ad Hoc Committee on Zoning and Subdivision Regulation. Having reaped the benefits of citizenship, I feel it is my turn to enter public office and give back to the community I chose to put down roots in.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “My work experience has always involved record management and customer service with relevant experience in title examination, real estate market research and analysis, real estate law, and the Department of Defense. In all of my jobs, relationship building and attention to detail have been key components to my success. I earned my bachelor’s degree in writing communication at Maryville College in 2017 and am currently driving for Blount Taxi, which brings me to neighborhoods all over Blount and surrounding counties and gives me a better understanding of the real estate market in East Tennessee and Blount County in particular.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “What sets me apart from other candidates is that I have not sought public office prior to this election cycle, I have no political agenda and, if elected, will serve no more than two terms as I am a firm proponent of term limits for all elected officials, federal, state, and local. The founders of this great nation intended government officials to be private citizens who serve their fellow citizens for a period of time and then return to the private sector.”

### MAUDE HANNAH VOLK

**AFFILIATION:** Democrat

**OCCUPATION:** Tutor

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** “I have lived in Maryville since 2013. Before that I was a long-term resident of Batavia, Illinois. While there I tutored with Waubensee Community College. I earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Illinois, in 1985. I’m always learning and at Pellissippi I earned an Associate of Applied Science in computer science/computer systems technology which included three semesters of database classes. I’m currently working on media technology/web technology. I am happily married.”

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?** “I’m interested in learning how this office works and giving voters a choice at election time.”

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?** “I served two four-year terms as city clerk in Batavia. I enjoyed learning the workings of that office. I gained a real appreciation of all the hard work that goes into public service.”

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?** “As a student of database management, I am very interested in the upkeep of the data that the register of deeds must maintain. I want to know how the database is kept accurate, protected, and backed up. As a public servant I would look to see if the services, such as hours, could be improved.”



## WHAT ID IS REQUIRED WHEN VOTING?

All voters must present a federal or Tennessee state ID containing the voter’s name and photograph when voting at the polls, whether voting early or on Election Day

### Any of the following IDs may be used, even if expired:

- Tennessee driver license with your photo
- United States Passport
- Photo ID issued by the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security
- Photo ID issued by the federal or Tenn. state government
- United States Military photo ID
- Tennessee handgun carry permit with your photo

### The following ID’s are NOT acceptable:

- College student IDs
- Photo IDs not issued by the federal or Tennessee state government are NOT acceptable. This includes county or city issued photo IDs, such as library cards, and photo IDs issued by other states.

### The following individuals are exempt:

- Voters who vote absentee by mail
- Voters who are residents of a licensed nursing home or assisted living center and who vote at the facility
- Voters who are hospitalized
- Voters with a religious objection to being photographed
- Voters who are indigent and unable to obtain a photo ID without paying a fee

## 2022 ROCKFORD CITY ELECTION: ROCKFORD CITY COMMISSION

The City Commission serves as the legislative body of city government. Commissioners are elected to four-year terms. There are two open seats and two candidates in this nonpartisan election. (Source: Blount County Election Commission)

### MATT HESTER

**OCCUPATION:** Mail carrier

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I am 26 years old. I have served in government for the last eight years, three years with the U.S. Postal Service, five years in the U.S. Marine Corps infantry as active duty. I have been married for five years, my first kid is due in June; we have four dogs. I am one of like five folks in Blount County driving a camo truck so I am pretty recognizable. I have an associate degree in firearms technology (gunsmithing)."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**



"I am almost the only Rockford resident to attend the city meetings. I have been

wanting to get into the civil service for some years now, figured this is the best place to start from since I am very familiar with the city of Rockford."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"The closest relevant experience I have is likely coming from the Marine Corps. The last year I was in the Marine Corps I was in a position that allowed me to aid my fellow Marines with administrative guidance. Collaborating with others and ultimately helping Marines solve various problems that arose. Having done this, I feel confident that I am prepared

for the position of city commissioner and ready to help any of my townsfolk as best I can."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"To be fair, I have never met Kenneth Arwood. I don't know anything about him, so I honestly can't say I am very different from him; maybe we have a ton in common, perhaps we have nothing!"

**KENNETH M. ARWOOD**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Did not participate.

## 2022 BLOUNT COUNTY PRIMARY: SHERIFF

The sheriff serves as the county's principal law enforcement officer. "It shall be the duty of the sheriffs, in their respective counties, by themselves or deputies, to patrol the roads of the county, to ferret out crimes, to secure evidence of crimes, and to apprehend and arrest criminals." The office is elected to a four-year term.

(Source: Tennessee Code Annotated; Blount County Election Commission)

### JAMES LEE BERRONG

**POLITICAL AFFILIATION:** Republican

**OCCUPATION:** Law enforcement

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFO:** "I was raised in Maryville and graduated from Maryville High School. I began my career with the Blount County Sheriff's Office in 1977 before transferring to Maryville Police Department in 1979. I remained with Maryville as a reserve officer until 1989. The Blount County County Commission appointed me as sheriff in 1989, and I took over a staff of 65 men and women. I have been sheriff of Blount County for more than 30 years, and with the help of a dedicated staff, I have approximately



350 professional deputy sheriffs."

**WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THIS POSITION?**

"A lifelong resident of Maryville and Blount County, I love my community and the people who live, work, and

visit here. I've dedicated my adult life to serving and protecting, and I wish to continue making sure the county stays safe for our citizens, old and new, who call Blount County home. Since I first became sheriff, we've seen a lot of growth and change in this community,

but due to the foresight of the leaders of this county, we have been able to maintain an excellent quality of life here, including steady job growth and a low crime rate."

**WHAT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

"I have 30-plus years of law enforcement experience."

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE?**

"I am blessed in this election cycle to be running unopposed. However, I try not to take anything for granted. Life is short, and it doesn't slow down for any man. By hiring the best quality and qualified individuals and investing in top-level training in

each of them, I am assuring the same measure of professionalism and care for our citizens regardless of whether anyone is running against me or not."

## SCHOOLS BOARDS NOW PARTISAN ELECTIONS

The Republican and Democratic parties in Blount County have called for a primary election for both county and city (Alcoa & Maryville) school board elections. The primary for county school board seats is on May 3, 2022. The primary for Alcoa & Maryville City school board seats is August 4, 2022. Independent candidates will only run in the general elections (Aug 4 County General and Nov 8 State & Federal General) but have the same qualifying deadline as their counterparts who are running in the primary elections.

For those who wish to be a candidate for the Blount County School Board, the first day to pick up a petition for the May 3, 2022 County Primary election is on Monday, December 20, 2021. The QUALIFYING DEADLINE to submit petitions is at NOON on February 17, 2022. This deadline is also for those who plan to run as an Independent in the August 4 General Election.

For those who wish to be a candidate for the Alcoa and Maryville City School Board, the first day to pick up a petition for the August 4, 2022 Federal & State Primary is on February 7, 2022. The QUALIFYING DEADLINE to submit petitions is at NOON on April 7, 2022. This deadline is also for those who plan to run as an Independent in the November 8, 2022 General Election.

For more information, call the Blount County Election Commission at 865-273-5920.

# YOUR VOTE. YOUR LIFE. YOUR TIMES.



# To vote or not to vote? The reasons people vote or abstain

As a political scientist, I see my role as answering — in the most rigorous way possible — questions that have been formulated as clearly as possible. One of the questions to which I have devoted the most time and effort in my nearly 50-year career is this: why do some people vote in elections and others don't?

It's the kind of question I love — a straight-forward one, about simple citizen behavior. It appeals to my populist side. I'm always curious to understand what motivates people around me to make the kind of small decisions that speak volumes about who they are and what they are passionate about.

Hundreds of factors affect the decision to vote or abstain from voting during an election and these vary from voter to voter. The researcher's goal is not to create an exhaustive inventory of all these factors. Rather, it is to systematically examine certain hypotheses about them.

## A MORAL DUTY

In 2000, I wrote "To Vote or Not to Vote? The Merits and Limits of Rational Choice Theory." Rational choice theory, which was developed by economists, was popular in political science at the time and was being used to explain everything from the legislators' to voters' behavior.

In the case of voters, the theory was paradoxical. The "rational" voter realizes that in an election with millions

of voters, the probability that his or her vote will change the outcome is infinitesimally small. In sum, the anticipated gain is minimal and most likely greater than the anticipated cost, i.e. the time spent deciding who to vote for and getting to the polls.

From this point of view, abstention seems to be the rational option. However, we see that most people do decide to vote, at least in national elections (the average turnout is now around 65 to 70 percent). The facts seem to contradict the theory.

So I spent a few years reading and re-reading the research on voter turnout and conducting new studies of all kinds. These were mostly surveys, which remain the preferred instrument for understanding individual behaviour, but I also analyzed election results, conducted semi-structured interviews and even did an experiment to see how students react when presented with rational choice theory.

My conclusion was that when it comes to understanding voting behavior, rational choice theory is not very useful. When deciding whether to vote or not, most people do not do a cost/benefit analysis. In fact, many people vote in an election primarily because they feel it is a moral duty to do so. Ethical considerations outweigh "rational" ones.

I would add, however, that some voters are sensitive to how much time it takes to vote, and that turnout is

somewhat higher when the outcome of the election is uncertain. So rational consid-

**From this point of view, abstention seems to be the rational option. However, we see that most people do decide to vote, at least in national elections (the average turnout is now around 65 to 70 percent). The facts seem to contradict the theory.**

erations do come into play somewhat. Rational choice theory should not be rejected entirely, even if its contribution is limited.

## QUESTION OF MOTIVATION

More recently, I wrote with a former student of mine "The Motivation to Vote: Explaining Electoral Participation". The thesis is clear and simple: the decision to vote or not is above all a matter of motivation.

If I am interested in politics, it is more or less self-evident that I will want to vote in an election. In the same perspective, if I am not interested in politics, the "normal" thing to do is ... nothing, i.e. not vote. Unless, of course, I believe that voting is not only a right but also a civic duty, in which case I would feel guilty for not voting.

In the book we show that interest in politics and a sense of duty are the two attitudes that most strongly correlate with the decision to vote or not. We then refer to research showing that these two attitudes are very stable and change little after the age of 20. Ultimately, values acquired early in life, one's taste (or not) for politics and one's conception of civic duties in a society are what most influence the decision to vote or not.

## HABIT AND RESOURCES

Our work questions the validity of influential theories of voter turnout.

One of these theories is that people vote or abstain out of habit. We show that this explanation is not convincing. It is true that there is stability in behaviour about voting; a person who votes (or abstains) in one election is likely to do the same in the next.

But if it were a habit, one would expect to find that the values (such as interest in politics) that influence participation have a weaker impact on older people (who are

more habitual and therefore less influenced by their values). The data show that this is not the case. The determinants of voting are basically the same for the young and the old. So the habit hypothesis is invalidated.

Our interpretation also casts doubt on another influential interpretation, that of resources. It is often argued that poorer and less educated people vote the least and that this is essentially because they have fewer political resources. While it is true that voter turnout is correlated with education and income, it should also be noted that this correlation is not very strong.

Moreover, it is far from clear that this is explained by a lack of resources, since the vast majority of citizens find it easy to vote. Resource theory is useful for explaining more demanding modes of participation, but it does not really apply to voting.

Some of my detractors will say that I take great pleasure in refuting popular explanations. There may be some truth to that. My motto is "Not Convinced," as my students kindly reminded me at a conference in my honour. But isn't the role of the researcher to subject both scientific theories and common sense to rigorous scrutiny, starting with healthy skepticism?

**ANDRÉ BLAIS** is a full professor, in the Department of Political Science at Université de Montréal.

## GET INVOLVED WITH THE PROCESS BY SERVING AS A POLL WORKER

**SIGNING UP :** Complete the poll worker application and mail, email, fax, or hand-deliver it to the Blount County Election Commission. In order to be appointed to work in a Primary election, poll workers must select which Political Party they represent. Independents will only be appointed in General elections.

**APPOINTMENT:** Poll Workers are appointed by the Election Commission no more than sixty (60) days prior to Election Day. An appointment letter is emailed to the

Poll Worker and a response is required. Poll Workers are compensated \$150 for Election Day.

**TRAINING:** Poll Workers attend one mandatory training. Training classes are conducted usually no more than thirty (30) days prior to Election Day and are held on a day and time set by the Election Commission.

**POLLING PLACE ASSIGNMENTS:** You must appear at your assigned polling place at approximately 7:15 a.m.

The Officer of Election dismisses the Poll Workers at the precinct after the polls close at 8 p.m. after all tasks are completed.

**EVALUATIONS:** An evaluation for each Poll Worker is completed by the Elections Officer at each polling place. Poll Workers who are not able to meet the standards for job performance, maintain non-partisan behavior, follow all election laws, or fulfill the duties properly and efficiently will not be appointed in future elections.



# Republican Philosophy



## We believe that:

- The right of the individual to achieve the best that is within him, as long as he respects the rights of others, is the source of our Nation's strength.
- Government exists to protect the freedom of opportunity in which each individual's creative ability can flourish.
- Government activities should be limited to those things that people cannot do at all, or cannot do so well for themselves.
- The most effective government is government close to the people.
- That both government and society should assist those who cannot provide for themselves, but that every effort should be made to help them become self-supporting, productive citizens with pride in their independence.
- Equal rights, equal justice and equal opportunity belong to all, regardless of race, creed, age, sex, and national origin.
- The preservation of our Nation and the security of our citizens depend upon the Constitution, the laws and the courts, and that respect for them is the responsibility of every individual.
- Government is accountable for maintaining sound money and a responsible economy. Individual rights, liberties, and properties are continually eroded when citizens are oppressed by excessive taxation, inflation, government waste and over regulation.
- Government is responsible for national defense and that only a strong America can remain a free America.
- It is absolutely essential to maintain a strong national defense posture in order that we may, at all times, negotiate from a position of strength, not weakness, in our continuing efforts toward world peace and friendship.

**These concepts are the foundation of our national strength and that the Republican Party, which is committed to their preservation, is the party of today and the party for the future.**

## **The Right Choice for Your Voice!** **Blount County Republican Women**

Follow us on Facebook: Blount County Republican Women

[www.blountgop.org/republican-women](http://www.blountgop.org/republican-women)

[blounttngopwomen@gmail.com](mailto:blounttngopwomen@gmail.com)

Meetings are the 4th Monday of each month (except May & December)

Contact us for more information!

*Political ad paid for by Blount County Republican Women*