Countywide Special Edition

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The Woodford Sun

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Candidates Q&A's

By Scott White
Woodford Sun Staff
Report for America corps member

As is traditional, we have asked the candidates for each office to respond to three questions we think are on the minds of voters. Since the *Sun* was a co-sponsor of the Candidate Forums and covered them extensively, we tried to ask questions that were different from those asked at the forums.

Along with allowing each candidate to submit a free candidate announcement and co-sponsoring the Candidate Forums, this Q&A marks the third "free" opportunity the *Sun* has provided every candidate for local office to speak directly to the voters. Just like the free candidacy announcements, the candidates' answers to the questions are unedited – we only checked the spelling.

Whether they chose to advertise with the *Sun* or not was, and is, not relevant to this Q&A. Part of our mission at the *Sun* is to inform and educate the community – and we believe strongly this is part of that mission.

Each candidate was given 100 words for each question, except for the candidates running for Versailles mayor and county judge-executive, who were given 200 words. *A note on that* – when we first emailed the candidates, the word count we gave was 200 words, and 400 words for mayor and county judge-executive. However, due to a miscommunication, which was entirely *my* fault, we did not have enough space for all the candidates' answers given the section page limit imposed by our printer. Again, this was solely *my* mistake.

Since the candidates who chose to respond had already sent in their answers, they, and the acting party chairs, were all informed by email late Saturday afternoon, Oct. 24, of the need to resubmit their answers with a deadline of 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27. Further, if we had the candidate's cell phone number, they were also informed by text. They were also informed that if we didn't receive new answers, then we would cut off their answers at the applicable word limit.

We apologize to the candidates for this, recognizing they are all very busy heading into the final week of the election.

Woodford County Judge-Executive



Michael Duckworth



James Kay

Why do you want to hold the office of County Judge-Executive?

Michael Duckworth: For 35 years, Woodford County has been home. Debbie and I raised our family here, worked and worshiped here, and served alongside neighbors who care deeply about this community. Listening to people and helping solve problems have been central to my life and career. I'm running because I want our children and grandchildren to have the opportunity to build their lives here, in a county where they can afford to live, find opportunity, and enjoy the community we love. This campaign has brought me to kitchen tables in Versailles, coffee shops in Midway, farms in Nonesuch, and conversations with business owners in Millville. Wherever I go, people want clear answers about their government, confidence that their money is being spent wisely, and leaders who follow through. I hear you. That is why I have put my plan in writing, so you know where I stand and can hold me accountable. My experience as a County Extension Agent for Agriculture and a Commercial Loan Officer has prepared me for this responsibility. I have worked with families and farmers to solve problems, evaluated budgets, and weighed financial risks. I understand that decisions involving someone else's livelihood or money deserve careful thought. As

James Kay: Serving as your Judge is the greatest honor of my professional life. I am running for you, your family, and Woodford County's future. My service is about showing up every single day for every citizen. We believe deeply in "One Woodford" putting people ahead of politics to deliver real results. In these tough economic times, county government must step up to lighten the burden. Over the last four years, we delivered the largest property tax cut in county history, balanced budgets, lowered debt, and built strong reserves. We stood up to out-of-state corporations and banned data centers, protecting our farmland, water, and utility bills. We also made historic investments in roads, water lines, parks, emergency services, and high-speed internet without burying our children in debt. When neighbors struggle, we provided emergency housing, utility relief, and food assistance. Overdose deaths are trending down, crime is at historic lows, and we have Kentucky's lowest unemployment rate alongside higher wages. There is more work ahead to lower taxes, protect farmland, and ensure every resident thrives. We don't need to move left or right. We need to keep moving forward together as One Woodford.

The Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for applicants?

Duckworth: Yes, I support the Young Farmer Program. Helping the next generation get established is essential to keeping agriculture strong in Woodford County. But success requires more than writing a check. As County Extension Agent for Agriculture, I helped establish the County Agricultural Investment Program, known as CAIP, in Woodford County. That experience taught me the value of pairing financial assistance with education, sound planning, and investments that help farms remain productive. As a Commercial Loan Officer, I have guided new farmers toward low-interest agricultural loan programs to purchase land, build farm infrastructure, and establish their operations. I have helped them understand financing options, evaluate what they can afford, and develop a path forward. For someone getting started, access to the right financing can make the difference between having a plan and putting it to work. Government is not always the answer to making farming work. Sometimes its responsibility is to get out of the way and let farmers do what they do best. We should remove unnecessary obstacles and respect farmers' ability to make decisions about their businesses. I would bring

See JUDGE p. 12

Social media, misinformation and knowing who to trust

Political rhetoric stokes distrust in elections

By Bob Vlach
Woodford Sun Staff

With so much political rhetoric that deepens divides among people nationally, Woodford County Clerk Sandy Jones says she has to reassure voters "there's no reason to distrust our election process."

Jones, who is retiring Jan. 1, has been chief administrator of elections in Woodford County for 12 years. This is her 19th election as clerk, and she says the challenges of doing her job have changed in recent years.

So when Jones has an opportunity to talk directly to voters, like during the recent candidate forums co-sponsored by *The Woodford Sun*, she wants to reassure them that elections in Woodford County are fair, accurate, secure and nonpartisan.

With the rise of social media as a primary means of getting information, Jones and others in public office, as well as two veteran journalists, shared their views on the challenges of people being informed *or misinformed* by what they see on social media, along with its good and bad attributes.

Jones says she doesn't spend a lot of time on social media, because she prefers hearing directly from voters – face to face.

"I've always welcomed anyone to come and talk to me if they're concerned about our (voting) machines," says Jones, noting the public is welcome to view inspections, which ensure voting machines are secure.

Also, after every election, someone from the Kentucky Secretary of State's office visits county clerk offices to conduct an audit of a machine chosen at random, where every vote is hand-counted while being videotaped and observed by a representative from each of the local Democratic and Republican parties, says Jones.

She welcomes the audits, which she says have "instilled a lot of confidence that our machines are accurate."

Jones says she relies on her deputy clerks to inform her about what's being talked about on Facebook and other social media platforms. "So it's not that I don't pay attention. I just don't let that be my driving force," she says. "And that's not what has prompted me to be out there to make sure that people here in Woodford County know ... our history of elections" being fair, accurate and nonpartisan.

As Midway's mayor, Grayson Vandegrift says it's important for him to be a part of the conversation. So he's on social media to hear from his constituents because they are less likely to walk into his office at City Hall for a conversation. While Vandegrift says he doesn't often respond to comments posted on social media, he will if there's a question about the city.

Vandegrift says he's less likely to respond to a comment on social media pages that do not involve dialogue specific to Midway. However, he says he will say something when he reads comments that are not factual, including a recent back-and-forth about the right of newspapers like *The Woodford Sun* to publish editorials.

"So I will occasionally respond to things that I think are just misleading, misinformation. I have a sense of justice in me, and I hate when people misinform people. I hate it. It really bugs me," says Vandegrift.



Sandy Jones



Grayson Vandegrift

With about 2,000 members, Vandegrift describes Midway Musings as "probably our biggest arbiter of public opinion in Midway," so he pays attention to what's being said and what ideas are being shared on that social media page.

He also likes to remind people, "Please don't expect social media to be the way to change things," because "calling City Hall is to me a very American, democratic" way of voicing a concern or asking a question.

Leading up to the Woodford County Board of Education's vote on approving a property tax rate, board member KT Gould expressed her concerns about misinformation being spread on social media. "When misinformation gets shared, then it can really be detrimental, ultimately, to the future of our kids," she says.

"The concerning thing for me is that nobody is reaching out directly to the people that can answer their questions," she adds.

Instead of asking questions and getting information about Woodford County Public

See RHETORIC p. 13



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* Source 1: Legislative Research Commission, 2025 Vote History for House Bill 775
† Source 2: Legislative Research Commission, 2026 Vote History for House Bill 567
‡ Source 3: Legislative Research Commission, 2024 Vote History for House Bill 2

Woodford County Attorney



Cassie Barnes



Carmine Iaccarino

Why do you want to hold the position of county attorney?

Cassie Barnes: As a current Assistant County Attorney, I know what the job entails, and how impactful this position is. I want to serve as County Attorney to carry forward the values of integrity, fairness, service, and respect commensurate with this office, and to help make our community safer, and local government more effective and efficient. I will serve with pride and passion for the office, and for this special community. I would be humbled and appreciative for your vote, and I pledge my steadfast commitment to uphold the high standard this county deserves, has had, and should continue to have.

Carmine Iaccarino: I love this community, I love public service, and I have the experience to make a difference. I have advised governors, attorneys general, state agencies, local governments, and public officials on difficult legal questions. I have handled complex litigation, constitutional issues, and employment matters. I want to bring that experience home to Woodford County. The County Attorney's Office can do more: prevent problems before they become lawsuits, modernize outdated ordinances, support law enforcement and victims, and provide independent legal counsel focused on people rather than politics. I humbly ask for your vote. If you have questions, call me at 859-321-2041.

During the Candidate Forum, you each said you intended to be a full-time county attorney, but you each have an existing private practice. Explain your plan to transition away your existing clients and how long you anticipate that will take.

Barnes: I'm well-versed in the wide-ranging duties of the office, including District Court prosecution, county government, child support services (853 active cases), advising the Boards of Elections, Health, and Assessment Appeals, prosecution of juvenile offenses, and dependency, neglect and abuse cases, among others. Fulfillment of these duties requires complete and undivided attention. I have obligations to clients at my Versailles practice that I'll fulfill to the extent possible, with careful adherence to rules of professional conduct. Accordingly, I'll remain associated with my partner, Joe Hoffman, during the necessary portion of my first term to ensure an ethical wind-down of my practice.

Iaccarino: I have built a thriving private practice handling complex litigation, constitutional questions, employment matters, and significant public-law issues across Kentucky. I have been privileged to represent clients ranging from Supreme Court Justice Pamela Goodwine to state and local governmental entities, including the Kentucky Horse Racing & Gaming Corporation. That work has prepared me to step into the County Attorney's Office ready to handle difficult legal questions from day one. After Election Day, I will work closely with my clients and colleagues to ensure I am ready to hit the ground running to serve you, the People of Woodford County.

The county attorney term is four years, but there is always the possibility of a judicial election or appointment coming up. Do you each pledge to serve your full four-year term without seeking another office or appointment, judicial or otherwise?

Barnes: I'll serve my entire term as a full-time County Attorney, operating out of our Courthouse. The County Attorney handles serious matters requiring continuity and focus. Victims, law enforcement, and county officials depend on stable, present leadership. When I filed, I committed to Woodford County citizens to fulfill this office's duties completely. I'm proudly endorsed by Woodford County leaders, past and present, not state and federal politicians. I won't seek a judicial appointment, and you won't find me politicking at Fancy Farm. I am invested in this role, and hope to serve many more if voters entrust me with that privilege.

Iaccarino: I pledge to serve the full term as Woodford County Attorney. I am running for County Attorney because I want to be County Attorney. I have spent more than fifteen years handling complex litigation, constitutional and administrative law, employment matters, and advising government agencies and public officials. I have served at senior levels of Kentucky state government and today represent clients in significant matters across the Commonwealth. I want to put that experience to work here at home. If the people of Woodford County entrust me with this office, they will have my full attention and commitment.

Woodford County Clerk



Amanda Centers



Jackie Anthony

Why do you want to hold the position of county clerk?

Amanda Centers: I am running for Woodford County Clerk because current experience matters. For six years, I have worked at the clerk's office. Also, as the current clerk's Executive Assistant, I have gained firsthand experience in daily operations, election integrity, recordkeeping, and serving residents. I know this office, its dedicated staff, and the responsibilities of leading it. I am prepared to provide experienced leadership from day one. I believe elections must be fair, accurate, and secure, and politics should never interfere with public service. Guided by faith and supported by family and friends, I am ready to serve Woodford County.

Jackie Anthony: We have the best Clerk's office doing an exceptional job upholding the best customer service in the state. With my years of customer service skills and leadership in the restaurant industry, I realized while working in the clerk's office from 2017 - 2022 that if she ever retired, I wanted to give back to the community that helped shape me. We need a leader with the skills to manage high-stress environments, expertise in customer service, and maintains clear communication with the community. I have built many relationships serving for years on multiple boards and through volunteering. I'm prepared and ready.

The assistant county clerks serve at the pleasure of the elected clerk. Do you pledge to keep all existing deputy clerks on your staff who wish to remain?

Centers: Yes! I am committed to retaining every existing deputy clerk. The Clerk's Office is a family, and I am proud to be part of it! I would put our staff up against any Clerk's Office in Kentucky. Their knowledge, dedication, and commitment to Woodford County are exceptional. As a current Deputy Clerk and Executive Assistant, I work alongside this team every day. We respect, support, and depend on one another to serve our community. Keeping this experienced team together will ensure a smooth transition and continued dependable service for every Woodford County resident.

Anthony: As Woodford County Clerk, I pledge to keep every existing deputy clerk. To ensure operations continue to run smoothly, it is essential to retain all current employees. When taking the position as GM of Holly Hill Inn in 2022, I kept the existing employees and continued to build on that team. It takes a team to run the day-to-day operations in the Clerk's office, and for a new Clerk taking the position, we would need all current deputy clerks to remain for a smooth transition.

During the forum you each said you would be open to a possible new location? If you do choose to do this, how will the funding for the new location and staff be funded?

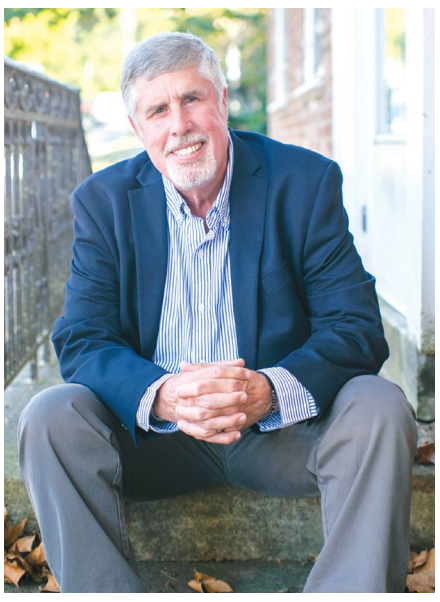
Centers: As I mentioned at the forum, Midway is one location where a branch office might be worth considering. However, exploring an idea is different from committing taxpayer dollars. Any changes to operating hours or employee assignment would require Fiscal Court approval. Before moving forward, we must evaluate community needs, accessibility, staffing, and operating costs. If a genuine need exists, I would work with the Fiscal Court to explore locations and develop a responsible, sustainable funding plan. I am open to considering changes, but my priority is providing dependable, accessible service while responsibly managing taxpayer dollars.

Anthony: As far as a new location for the Woodford County Clerk's Office, I don't think it is necessary at this moment or for many years to come. The Locust Street location was a great addition and at the moment it is working to help have faster service for registration and car transfers. I would, however, consider opening up possibly once or twice a month for half-days on Saturdays to extend the County Clerk's services to our community.

JOE BELFORD

FOR VERSAILLES CITY COUNCIL

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ABOUT ME:

- Recently retired after a 40-year career in finance, with a solid understanding of fiscal responsibility.
- Kentucky resident for 19 years; Versailles resident for the last decade.
- Board member of the Woodford Educational Endowment Foundation (WEEF) since 2017 (Treasurer 2017-2021; Vice Chairman 2021-present).
- Member of WCPS Superintendent Dr. Lori Jones' Budget Committee for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 school years.
- Volunteer member of Southland Christian Church's Helping Through Him ministry three days a week.
- Solid educational background, with BS and MBA in Finance from St. John's University (1986 / 1989), and MS in Global Cybersecurity from Arizona State University (2023).

MY PRIORITIES FOR OUR CITY:

- **Smart Growth:** Balance rapid development with clear-sighted infrastructure zoning and planning.
- **Traffic Issues:** Focus on solving worsening traffic and congestion challenges.
- **Thriving Local Business:** Promote economic development while protecting our vibrant, historic downtown.
- **Future Generations:** Ensure that tomorrow's leaders have the opportunities and environment needed to build their lives right here in Versailles.

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- **Roads that actually get fixed.** You should know which District 2 roads are next and when, not just hear about them at election time.
- **Public safety comes first.** I stood with the County Fire Board and our first responders, and I'll make sure they have what they need to keep us safe.
- **Growth that makes sense.** I'll stand up for our farmland and neighborhoods when growth is on the table, and tell you where I stand before the vote.

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Versailles Mayor



Cory Cooley



Laura Dake



Jason DeVore



Nick Green



Fred Siegelman

Why do you want to hold the office as Versailles Mayor?

Cory Cooley: I believe my military background in the Marine Corps, community involvement, growing up here, and now raising a family in Versailles has given me the skills, perspective, but most importantly, the heart to lead our city. In the Marines, I was entrusted with taxpayer dollars as the Supply Chief for my battalion. Every decision had to be made with accountability and efficiency because we were spending the public's money. Those lessons in leadership and fiscal responsibility have stayed with me throughout my life. Service is in my blood, and I have a vested interest in the success of Versailles. My wife and I chose to raise our family here because we cherish the small-town character, strong community, and quality of life that make Versailles special. If elected, one of my first priorities will be meeting with department heads and city staff to gain a clear understanding of ongoing projects and city objectives. I will work to ensure we are focused on the priorities of our citizens while maintaining transparency and open communication. It would be an honor to serve as your Mayor and earn your vote on November 3.

Laura Dake: I want to continue the positive momentum of the past two years in a full term. Being the mayor of this wonderful community has been one of the highlights of my life, and I am excited and grateful for the chance to serve. As I look back over my 10 years in local government, I think I've always been working for this opportunity. I have built relationships; written important legislation; made impactful decisions; attended conferences and trainings to better understand the intricacies of city government; learned valuable skills by reading, listening and doing; and always with the goal of making Versailles a better place to live for everyone. I have the experience, intellect, integrity, wisdom, discernment and vision to lead Versailles over the next four years. I take the position very seriously and worked hard to ensure a seamless transition after Mayor Traugott resigned. I have the confidence of the department heads and most of the city council. You deserve someone in the mayor's office who understands the city's issues and challenges and who knows how to get things done. I believe I am that person, and I am asking for your vote this election!

Jason DeVore: My desire to be Mayor started when I was doing philanthropy work for my fraternity at EKU. Most recently, I was part of WCYBSA for 15 years as a coach and a board member for 12 years. The last 10 years as a board member I served as vice President and it deepened my understanding of truly working for and with the people to build and maintain strong relationships with the community. I am driven to work with and for the citizens of Versailles to ensure our small farming community is financially secure, grows in a sustainable manner and a model for every city in Kentucky to strive to be like. My daughter's maternal side (Ethington, Ritchie) has farmed this land for decades. If we don't slow down this incessant need from our current leadership to put buildings, warehouses and units on every piece of farmland there won't be any land for my daughter or anyone else to have the opportunity to farm.

Nick Green: I view the office of Mayor not as a title or social position, but as an opportunity to serve the community I love. Hence, the "service" in public service. After Mayor Traugott stepped down, I decided run for Mayor. Over the past two years I have disagreed on how things were being done with the City's spending and economic development projects. I am running for Mayor because I care about the people and my community. I want to be better stewards of our money, our manpower, our time, our equipment, our resources and responsibly reduce the debt. I want to shift the City's priority from economic development projects back to strengthening infrastructure and serving the people. I view the position of Mayor as a balancing scale. On one end I have to do the best of my ability as Mayor. On the other end of the scale, you have to advocate for your community for their wants and needs. As an effective Mayor, I would strive to always balance this in the middle.

Fred Siegelman: Versailles has given me so much throughout my life, and I believe I have both the experience and opportunity to give back in a meaningful way. Serving as mayor was one of the greatest honors of my life. During my administration, we acquired the KCTCS building and secured its headquarters for a total city investment of just $1. We worked together to build Falling Springs Recreation Center, established a full-time fire department, and consolidated our city and county police departments. When I left office, Versailles had zero debt and a stronger rainy-day fund than we have today. Those accomplishments were the result of collaboration, responsible leadership, and people working toward a common goal. Today, I see our city committing substantial amounts of money to individual projects that, while worthwhile, exceed what we can reasonably afford. Good projects still require responsible budgeting. We must prioritize spending, manage growth, and protect essential services without placing unnecessary financial burdens on taxpayers. My experience gives me the opportunity to bring a fresh perspective and restore fiscal responsibility. Versailles is the greatest city in Kentucky, and I want to ensure it remains that way for generations to come.

Do you favor the construction of a bypass, such as the extension of Beasley Road to U.S. 60 near the Midway Road? If not, what specific proposal do you have to alleviate the significant increase in commercial and semi-trailer trucks through downtown Versailles?

Cooley: As Mayor, I would never dismiss an idea outright. Effective leadership requires listening to all perspectives with a calm, level-headed approach. That means working collaboratively with City Council, traffic and civil engineers, environmental planners, state officials, and most importantly, the citizens who would be affected by any proposed bypass. Traffic congestion downtown and throughout Versailles is a significant concern and one of my top priorities. While there may have been opportunities years ago to better prepare for growth, my focus is not on looking backward. My focus is on what we can do today to improve traffic flow, enhance safety, and protect the character of our community. As Mayor, I will advocate for the citizens of Versailles and work with local, regional, and state leaders to identify practical, long-term solutions. Versailles deserves strong, steady, and thoughtful leadership that can bring government officials, technical experts, and community stakeholders together to address these challenges and move our city forward.

Dake: I do not favor the construction of a bypass extending Beasley Road to U.S. 60 (often called the Northwest Mobility Corridor). In fact, my answer to a similar campaign question back in 2016 was the same so I haven't changed my mind! Besides chewing up valuable farmland and opening the area up to development, the impact of a bypass doesn't warrant the expense to build one. There are far less costly options we can try. The city's Walkability Committee, which I started, has a subcommittee dubbed, "Trucks, Noise, and Traffic (TNT)." The subcommittee is working on two solutions to address the issue of trucks downtown: requesting the state disallow tractor-trailers from passing through downtown and requesting local industries route their delivery trucks away from the downtown area. (The latter is especially important if the first request fails.) The Walkability Committee has also discussed putting Main Street on a "road diet" to limit truck traffic downtown. This might look like adding bump-outs to intersections which narrow the road a bit. Small changes like these slow vehicles down and – for large trucks – make a road less appealing to navigate.

DeVore: I do not support extending Beasley to US 60. I feel our roadway system is currently sufficient enough to route tractor-trailers, with no deliveries to our downtown merchants, around our beautiful downtown. I feel Google Maps is the biggest problem with the increase of tractor-trailer traffic. In order to deter traffic we can put signage at the entry points telling the trucks they are to go around downtown with directions to the proper path around downtown. We can put up maximum height crossbars similar to overpasses as a deterrent. I will work with the state Department of Transportation for assistance to alleviate this situation.

Green: I disagree with the bypass at this time as I want to preserve our city and county farmland. I believe that if we built a bypass, more development would follow. That is evident with the Falling Springs Bypass as we now see more development in that area as a result. Currently we have new developments like Anderson Communities and Estepp's that will be built on the corner of Main Street and Falling Springs Blvd. I would like to explore other options such as what we could do with our existing roads and the Bluegrass Parkway. I feel we can look into changing the way the parkway exits Versailles Road to better improve traffic flow away from downtown and provide a more defined inlet and outlet to the city.

Siegelman: I believe the proposed bypass is no longer a realistic option, but the traffic problems facing downtown Versailles remain and demand practical solutions. The increasing number of commercial vehicles and semi-trailer trucks traveling through downtown affects public safety, local businesses, and the quality of life of our residents. Unfortunately, this issue has become more political than practical, with years of discussion and little meaningful progress. One solution I would pursue is working with state transportation officials to explore an ordinance restricting large commercial trucks from traveling through downtown unless they are making deliveries to local businesses. Other communities have implemented similar restrictions, and I believe we should examine whether this approach could work for Versailles. I would also aggressively pursue the possibility of a flyover ramp at the end of the Bluegrass Parkway to provide a safer, more efficient alternative route for truck traffic. As mayor, I would work with state and county officials, local businesses, and residents to develop practical solutions. We cannot continue discussing the same problems without taking meaningful steps toward resolving them. Protecting the safety, accessibility, and character of our downtown must remain a priority.

What actions do you propose to ensure that some portion of the residential development on U.S. 60 between Paddock and the Bluegrass Parkway will be built as affordable (defined as within the means of a person earning the county average of $82K a year)?

Cooley: Affordable housing is one of the most important challenges facing our community. Many young families, first-time homebuyers, teachers, police officers, firefighters, healthcare workers, and other working residents are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase a home in Versailles. Growth is inevitable, but it should be responsible and balanced. As Mayor, I would encourage conversations between developers, city leaders, and residents to explore housing options that are attainable for working families while maintaining the quality and character of our community. I do not support asking taxpayers to shoulder the burden by waiving municipal or sewer fees to subsidize development. Any solution must be fiscally responsible and protect the services our citizens depend on. One option worth exploring is working with developers and planning officials to encourage a portion of new housing to be built within reach of local families. Property rights are important, and lasting solutions will require cooperation rather than confrontation. My goal is to ensure that Versailles remains a place where families can live, work, and raise their children without being priced out of the community they love. I will bring people together, find common ground, and work toward practical solutions that benefit both current and future residents.

Dake: Part of the affordable housing challenge is the cost of land. This, combined with high construction costs, makes affordability difficult for most developers. Unless a municipality owns the land and donates it (or sells it at a very low price) to a developer, it cannot demand housing be built as affordable. Regarding the newest proposed high-density development (2101, LLC or "Backer 2"), which for the record I and the council opposed 6-0 in 2019 as inconsistent with the Comp Plan, Wallick, an Ohio-based affordable housing developer, has applied for Kentucky Housing Corporation financing to build 72 rental units on five acres of the 67+ acre development. Wallick will learn in January if its application was successful. Affordability is relative, however: proposed rent for two-bedrooms at 50% AMI is $1,148/mo and three-bedrooms $1,264/mo. Unless a government entity owns the land and can insist a developer build affordable units, the developer sets the rents. We are looking at potential pieces of city-owned property that might be appropriate for affordable housing and are exploring zoning text amendments incentivizing developers to build affordable units. An example might include allowing more housing density per acre with the understanding that these extra units be priced affordably.

DeVore: In order to make sure there are affordable homes for this target group, we will have to make sure we have a contract with the developer to assure this will happen. If we don't have a structurally sound contract from the start we won't have any leverage to make this option available. I feel the vast majority of the project (75%) needs to be directed towards this target group. We have to find the one developer who is willing to ensure it gets done. They will have to know they won't be able to make their normal profit margins. We can't just settle on one that gets close to making it happen. It will have to happen.

Green: That section of Versailles Road is in the County. However, as Mayor, I will work with the other governing bodies as well as planning and zoning to advocate for more affordable housing. For one, I would like to use inclusionary zoning. This zoning method requires builders to dedicate a percentage of their development to affordable housing units. I would like to work with the County government to use tax initiatives for new builds to cut down cost to the builder as well as the buyer. I have been studying a company in Louisville that focuses on lower and middle-income housing populations. This developer specializes in both rehabilitation of existing houses in need of repair and new builds. They focus on teaching the tenant financial discipline as they begin to rent their home. Eventually after financial stability ensues, the tenant graduates from a renter stage to a rent-to-own stage. This is a great approach in a world where many people do not have resources for down payments and because it teaches financial discipline. This method helps set up a great footing to home ownership and retention.

Siegelman: Versailles must remain a community where the people who work here can also afford to live here. Recently, the City Council directed the mayor to sign a letter supporting a private developer's proposal to build income-based housing along the U.S. 60 corridor. I support pursuing opportunities like this, particularly in areas already designated for residential development, without requiring additional zoning changes. We must also identify appropriate opportunities for infill development and work with surrounding neighborhoods to address concerns while making responsible use of available land. Housing costs have risen beyond the reach of many working families. With new homes selling for $600,000 or more, we cannot overlook the teachers, first responders, service workers, and young families who are essential to our community. Affordable and workforce housing has been discussed for years, but discussion alone does not produce results. As mayor, I would prioritize working with responsible developers, community members, and local government to turn viable opportunities into actual homes. Growth should strengthen Versailles, not make it unaffordable for the people who make this community what it is.

★★★ VOTE ★★★

LINDA POPP

FOR WOODFORD COUNTY MAGISTRATE DISTRICT 8



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Born and raised in Woodford County

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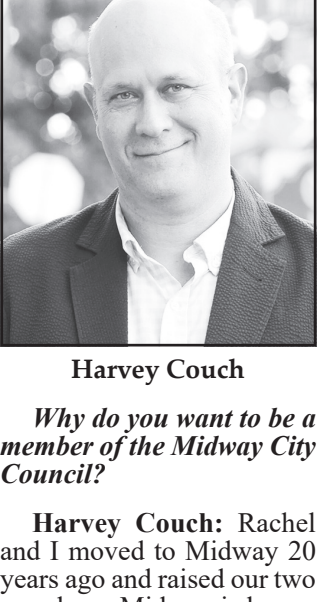
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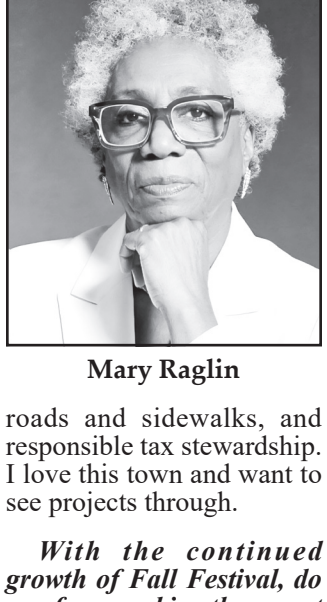
Midway City Council



Harvey Couch



Logan Nance



Mary Raglin

Photo not available

Zachary Rankin



Steve Simoff



Ian VanSteenbergh

Why do you want to be a member of the Midway City Council?

Harvey Couch: Rachel and I moved to Midway 20 years ago and raised our two sons here. Midway is home. When my friend Patrick Hall decided not to seek re-election, I felt called to give back. I spent eight years on the Northridge Estates HOA board, two as president, where I listened to neighbors, managed budgets, and built consensus. In my 20 years working for the Frankfort Plant Board, a municipal utility, I have learned how essential services are planned, funded, and delivered to a community that depends on them. Midway already works well. I want to help keep it on track.

Logan Nance: We're so fortunate to get to call Midway our home. Communities like Midway are becoming fewer and fewer. What we have is special and worth preserving. Since being elected to the city council, I see my role as an advocate for Midway. I will always stand up to outside interest groups who want to take advantage of our town. I'm proud of what we've accomplished over the past few years, and hope to continue to serve. I hope my fellow Midwegians know I can be counted on to be reachable, to listen, and to act with integrity.

Mary Raglin: I want to continue to be a member of the Midway City Council because I want to continue to learn as I serve. I have learned so much since I first entered this race of serving my community. Having a voice, a vote in what is considered best for Midway is my way of serving my community, and most of all, I can continue to bring diversity to the table.

Zachary Rankin: I want to bring my experience and unique perspective as a resident, former business owner and member of Midway Business Association. I love this city and want to continue to fight to preserve our small-town charm while continuing to improve the city for our both our citizens and businesses. It is important to listen to citizens and collaborate with our small businesses.

Steve Simoff: With three terms under my belt, I understand how local government works and that all issues must be studied thoroughly and without bias to make workable, common-sense solutions. We've seen the results that good governance brings and I would grateful to have another opportunity to serve the community.

Ian VanSteenbergh: I'm running for re-election to continue serving the community and keep local government working for the people of Midway. We lowered the property tax rate in 2025, held it steady in 2026, and passed balanced budgets. We invested in our parks and are planning to pave the Midway Cemetery. Our work isn't finished. As a business owner, the son of small-business owners, and someone with a public policy background, I bring a business-minded, community-driven perspective. My priorities: parks, supporting local businesses, roads and sidewalks, and responsible tax stewardship. I love this town and want to see projects through.

With the continued growth of Fall Festival, do you favor making the recent expansion to Bruen Street?

Couch: The expansion eased crowding on Railroad Street, added shade, and gave the festival room to breathe. The indoor space at Midway Christian Church also made it possible to welcome new vendors. I commend the organizers for continually working to improve the experience.

Fall Festival is a tremendous opportunity for Midway to show itself to visitors, but we must be considerate of everyone who lives and works nearby. Before making the change permanent, I would want to hear from Bruen Street residents, nearby businesses, organizers, and public safety officials. If that feedback is positive, I would support it.

Nance: I was unsure how the addition would work at first, but I think it's safe to say it went off without a hitch. All feedback I've received has been supportive, even from residents who live on Bruen. Being a public servant requires you to be open to hearing different perspectives, listening, and then making the best possible decision. You're not always going to make people happy 100% of the time, but you have to be decisive, and you need to be proactive and seek out feedback from everyone involved to make the most informed decisions that you can.

Raglin: Yes. The Midway Fall Festival is Midway's biggest fundraising festival for the community. I hope there are plans for future expansions to share Midway's beauty beyond downtown and bring more funds to our community.

Rankin: I believe it was well executed to accommodate the citizens who live on Bruen, provided a fundraising mechanism for the Christian church who gives back to the community in many ways and helped spread the crowd out. It caused minimal traffic impact, received praise from residents. Therefore, I am in favor of making it permanent.

Simoff: The decision to expand the festival was studied at great lengths before it was decided upon. It was considered a success because of thorough and thoughtful planning. It will always be considered on a year-by-year basis, but as it gives so much back to the community and provided for a smoother flow of visitors to Midway's signature festival, I am in favor of trying it again next year.

VanSteenbergh: I serve on the board of the Midway Business Association, and we received positive feedback on the Bruen Street expansion. Midway Christian Church proposed it as a fundraising mechanism for their community work, with the MBA donating its time as organizers. Fall Festival is a long-standing tradition that brings neighbors and visitors together and supports our small businesses, and this expansion supports the church's community work. I support making it permanent as long as the Midway Christian Church, the Business Association, and neighbors continue to back it. If concerns arise, we can listen and re-evaluate.

Are you in favor of some type of speed reduction devices, such as a speed bench or speed bump, placed on S. Stephens Street?

Couch: Yes, residents should be able to walk, bike, and cross Stephens Street comfortably and safely, and slower traffic helps make that possible. I would also like to significantly improve pedestrian safety along E. Stephens, especially from Brand St. to the Homeplace. Walkability is a top priority for me, and this stretch keeps some neighborhoods from being safely connected to the rest of town. The first step is research. A speed table, speed bump, or another measure may work best, but the council should consider every option with traffic data and neighbor input guiding the decision.

Nance: Residents on E. Stephens St. will tell you we have a speeding problem in that area. My family takes regular walks through there. People do drive too fast. I'm in favor of placing stop signs at the intersection of S. Gratz and E. Stephens. I believe with flashing lights or signs we can draw public attention to this change which will naturally slow down traffic and make it safer for families to cross the street. I know speed bumps, even stop signs, are not universally loved, but we do need to try something before an accident happens.

Raglin: Yes, I am in favor of some type of speed reduction device on South Stephen. The question is….What is the most effective and most affordable way for us?

Rankin: As a resident of Campus Gate, I am in favor of finding some creative solutions to the speeding issues. Until we can find a way to design and fund a sidewalk or walking path from Mill Rd place to Brand St, it's a dangerous road for pedestrians. Signage and occasional police presence is not enough.

Simoff: I'm in favor of speed tables on E. Stephen's that slow traffic but cause no harm to vehicles. If it proves successful, we could possibly consider them on other streets where it could be of benefit to the safety of neighborhoods.

VanSteenbergh: Absolutely; I'd start with a pilot project on Stephens Street. My degree from the University of Kentucky focused on urban planning, and speed tables are a common traffic-calming tool. Unlike a speed bump, a speed table's gentler, flat-topped design is easier on emergency vehicles while slowing traffic and making crossings safer for pedestrians. UK has them on campus. We can hear from the community and add more if it works. We have to be responsible by testing before committing more tax dollars. It's part of a safer, more walkable and bikeable Midway that I am running to accomplish.

Re-elect
Michele Shryock
RANKIN
Woodford County Jailer

It is an honor and privilege to serve as YOUR JAILER. I appreciate your continued trust, support and VOTE! I am looking forward to serving Woodford County for 4 more years.



Re-elect
Michele Shryock
RANKIN
for
Woodford County JAILER ★

PAID FOR BY MICHELE SHRYOCK RANKIN

Woodford County Jailer



Michele Rankin



Sean Williams

Why do you want to hold the position of county jailer?

Michele Rankin: I am seeking a fourth term because I still have the heart, experience, dedication, and desire to serve. I love Woodford County and would be honored to continue protecting its citizens for another four years. From the first time I was elected my motto has always been "Everybody is Somebody's Somebody" and those words are still true to this day. Being Jailer is not a job, serving your community is a calling. I do this because I care, because I want to continue making a difference, and I believe there are still lives to be changed.

Sean Williams: A safe jail starts with leadership and accountability. My experience in corrections, law enforcement, and as a FEMA reservist with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has prepared me to lead. I will prioritize officer training, reliable equipment, consistent policies, and strong oversight to prevent contraband. Favoritism has no place in our jail. Accountability starts with the Jailer, including me. Those in custody deserve humane treatment; families deserve professionalism; taxpayers deserve transparency and responsible spending. Woodford County is home. I will listen, lead from the front, and address problems directly. I respectfully ask for your vote on November 3.

The housing of federal prisoners did not come up during the Candidate Forum. Given that housing federal prisoners is a revenue source, do you plan to have an agreement with any federal agency to provide housing? And, if so, will you house federal prisoners that are in custody because of immigration status at the request of the U. S. Attorney and/or the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency?

Rankin: Jails are one of the biggest expenses counties are facing and I have always felt it is important to be responsible with taxpayer dollars. Additional revenue helps with the cost of running our facility. For fiscal year 2025/2026 our revenues were $720,028.55, just for housing federal inmates. Once federal inmates are sentenced, they are moved to the Bureau of Prisons. I have always had a good working relationship with our other agencies, and I plan to continue that. As long as we have the room and staff to safely house federal inmates, I see no reason to discontinue that relationship.

Williams: I would not enter or expand voluntary federal prisoner housing agreements, including immigration detention, while our jail exceeds capacity. At the September 14 forum, the current Jailer reported 113 inmates in a 95-bed facility. Safety comes before revenue. We must address staffing, supervision, medical care, emergency readiness, and space. I would review existing agreements with the Fiscal Court and legal counsel, honor lawful obligations, and assess the full costs before considering future commitments. Our officers deserve safe working conditions. Everyone in custody deserves humane treatment, regardless of immigration status. Revenue matters. Human lives matter more.

The issue of community safety and the community service program came up at the Community Forum. Explain in detail your plan for ensuring county or state prisoners/inmates will be supervised to minimize risk to public safety?

Rankin: The Community Service Program began in the early 1990s and saves our county over $1million per year in intangibles. DOC is responsible for classification and eligibility. DOC requires yearly work supervisor training for any agency participating in the program. Each agency supervisor must sign and abide by a contract that they will follow all rules and regulations. The Detention Center works closely with the supervisors for each agency and completes worksite checks required by statute. The safety of our community has always been my number one priority, and that includes our inmate community service program.

Williams: Inmate work programs can benefit Woodford County, but safety comes first.

I would require eligibility screening based on classification, conduct, and escape risk; assess work sites; and ensure supervisors receive documented training in accountability, contraband prevention, unauthorized contact, and emergency response. Staff would verify rosters, destinations, supervisors, and return times. Supervisors would document checks and immediately report incidents. Upon return, staff would reconcile rosters and conduct security screening. Violations would trigger investigation and corrective action; serious concerns could suspend a detail. I would regularly review compliance and incidents. Meaningful work must never come at the expense of safety.

Alvarado, Dembo spar over Iran war, data centers and Epstein in central Kentucky debate

By McKenna Horsley
Kentucky Lantern

-

The candidates in Kentucky's close 6th District Congressional race debated each other over rising grocery and gas prices, the war in Iran, data centers and the Epstein files during a televised debate Thursday evening.

Democrat Zach Dembo and Republican Ralph Alvarado both laid out how they would differ from each other if they are elected in the next couple of weeks and criticized their opponent's record. Dembo, a former federal prosecutor and Navy veteran, argued he would be an "independent fighter," regularly casting himself as a moderate Democrat in the race. Alvarado said he would be best positioned to address healthcare and insurance policy as a physician, and attempted to paint his opponent as a "liberal lawyer."

As the debate began on Fox56, moderator Andrea Walker asked both candidates to give specific examples of how their families have been affected by rising grocery prices. After saying he would support "an end to this senseless war in Iran," which was raising prices with the cost of gas and diesel, Dembo said he's seen a rise in ground beef.

"Cattle farmers should be able to make a living, but I don't think the solution is to undercut them by bringing in hundreds of thousands of tons of cheap foreign beef," Dembo said, referring to a Trump administration plan to import beef to offset prices, after the question was repeated.

Alvarado said he and his wife grow a lot of food at home, but do buy some beef from local farmers, before then claiming Dembo supported raising taxes. Alvarado was then asked to give an example.

"My wife does a lot of the shopping for us, so I don't get to — I mean I'm a physician. Usually, if I go to the Walmart and go down and do some shopping, people will pull me aside, want me to look in their kids' ears and do examinations, so I don't do a lot of shopping in person," he said.

Walker was joined by reporter Will Kenneally in moderating the debate, which lasted an hour. Afterwards, Dembo came out to speak to reporters. Alvarado did not appear, but his campaign advisor, Tim Murtaugh, spoke instead.

Murtaugh said "that was about the most one-sided debate I've ever seen."

"Ralph Alvarado absolutely plastered Zach Dembo with all of the things that he's wrong on and all of the things that he's out of step with Kentucky-6 on," Murtaugh said.

Tim Murtaugh, Republican Ralph Alvarado's campaign adviser, speaks to reporters following a debate between Alvarado and Democrat Zach Dembo. (Kentucky Lantern photo by McKenna Horsley)

Dembo said he plans to spend the remaining days before the election speaking with voters.

"We're going to be all over the place," he said, adding that he will be part of a town hall with End Citizens United on Saturday and "barnstorming" the 16 counties in the district.

Here's some of the other answers from the debate:

War in Iran

Throughout the debate, both candidates spoke about President Donald Trump's war in Iran, which has become a theme in the upcoming midterm elections nationwide as control of the Strait of Hormuz has been tied to rising gas and diesel prices.

Asked about suspending the federal gas tax to offset costs for Americans, which Trump temporarily did through an executive order, Dembo said the move "makes sense, but it's only a Band-Aid."

"What we have to do is end this senseless war in Iran. Everyone knows that's what's led to these huge spikes in gas and diesel. I have been against this war from the beginning, and let me be clear: a vote for me is a vote to end this endless quagmire in Iran," Dembo said before adding that the war should be ended "so that we can stop putting my fellow service members in harm's way with no plan for an exit strategy."

Alvarado said he would support ways to lower taxes, including the gas tax, before pivoting to the war. He said Iran has been "at war with us for 47 years, and it's important that we have no sympathy for the government that's there," saying Iran is trying to build a nuclear bomb.

"We need to make sure that we end the war that's there. I think it's time for us to end it," Alvarado said. "Once it ends, though, however, the gas prices are still going to be high. We need to manufacture more oil refineries that can help refine oil and be able to get gas and diesel prices down lower."

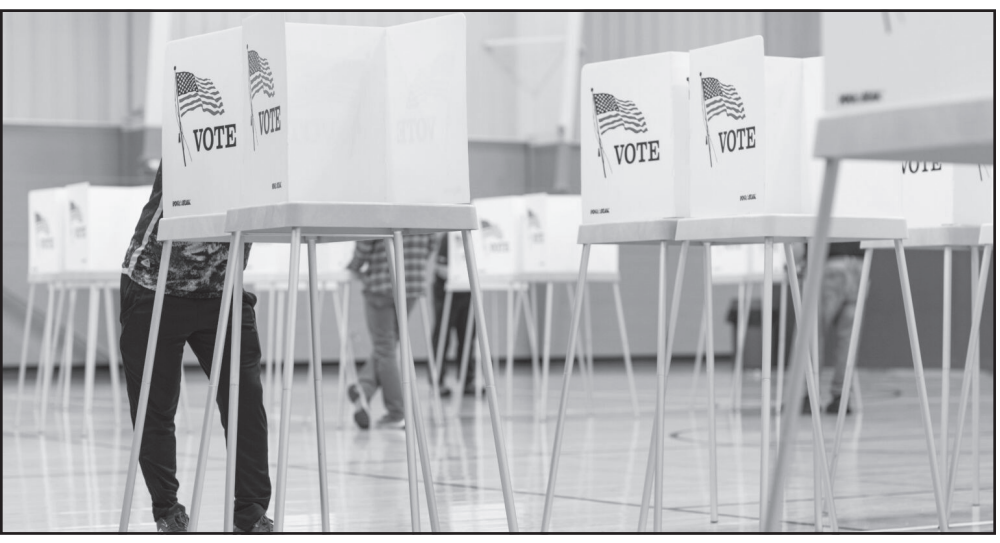
Data centers and … Epstein?

Kentucky communities have grappled with allowing or banning data centers leading up to Election Day. The proposals have raised questions about how such centers would affect Kentuckians' utilities and electric bills and the environment around them.

Both candidates said they would support federal rate-payer protections. In his answer, Alvarado said people should have local control over if a data center is in their community, before he began questioning a $500,000 donation from Reid Hoffman, the LinkedIn founder who is supportive of building data centers, to a PAC supporting Dembo. Hoffman has been tied to former financier

See DEBATE p. 13

Early voting to begin in Kentucky this week ahead of November election



KENTUCKIANS CAN START VOTING EARLY on Thursday, Oct. 29, 2026. Warren County residents, above, cast early votes in November 2024 at the Ephram White Park polling station. (Kentucky Lantern photo by Austin Anthony)

By McKenna Horsley
Kentucky Lantern

For the November general election, early voting in Kentucky begins Thursday.

All registered voters may cast ballots Thursday, Friday and Saturday through in-person no-excuse voting. Hours may vary by county. To find polling locations by county, visit the Kentucky State Board of Elections website (govote.ky.gov).

The general election is next week — Tuesday, Nov. 3. The deadline to register ahead of the election in order to vote was in September.

The ballot will include local and statehouse races, as well as federal elections for the U.S. House and Senate. One constitutional amendment regarding governors' pardon powers will be on the ballot. The State Board of Elections website also includes sample ballots from around the state.

Candidates are making their final pitches to voters with days left ahead of the general election. In what has become Kentucky's most competitive race — the 6th Congressional District in the central part of the state — Democrat Zach Dembo has announced a Lexington rally with Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday, the first day of early voting. Last week, Republicans held their own rally with volunteers in Fayette County featuring the GOP candidate in the race, Ralph Alvarado, and U.S. Senate candidate, U.S. Rep. Andy Barr.

In order to vote in Kentucky, voters must show proof of identification with a photo, such as a driver's license.

To learn more about candidates in the upcoming election, visit the Kentucky Lantern voter guide.



I am honored to be a first-time candidate for the Versailles City Council and would truly appreciate your support and vote.

As a 41-year resident of Versailles and Woodford County, I have seen how our community has changed. After growing up in the small town of Owenton, Kentucky, my wife, Dawn, and I and settled here so our three children could experience the benefits of a small town. Now, three of our four grandchildren are growing up in Versailles, and we want it to continue to thrive for their generation.

I hold a bachelor's in business administration from Eastern Kentucky University and a master's in health administration from the University of Kentucky. Since 1990, I have advocated for Medicare beneficiaries and protected their data as a cybersecurity professional on federal contracts.

An involved member of our community, I served three years on the Versailles-Midway-Woodford County Board of Adjustments and am an active member of Versailles Baptist Church, where I serve on several committees. I have coached youth baseball, middle and high school baseball, and girls' softball.

I am running for Versailles City Council to guide responsible growth supported by effective infrastructure. I will listen to residents, remain accessible, prepare thoroughly, and apply common-sense judgment. I will also uphold Planning and Zoning requirements and City Council regulations by holding developers to approved plans. My goal is to keep Versailles thriving for future generations.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns!
Powersfred5@gmail.com or 859-333-6307

Paid for by Fred Powers for City Council

Magistrate District 1

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

Donald Mitchell: I was born and raised in the Midway area and have lived and worked in District 1 my entire life. My family has farmed here for five generations. This is home, and I care deeply about our community. I'm not a politician. I believe in common sense, listening, and working together regardless of party. My service on local, state, and national boards has taught me to ask questions and make responsible decisions. I'll work to protect our rural character, maintain infrastructure, and respect taxpayer dollars. I'll be accessible, listen, and represent our neighbors. People Over Politics.

Liles Taylor: I am seeking re-election after two productive terms because there is still work to do. I've proudly led Woodford County's rural high-speed broadband expansion, providing an essential utility for education and economic growth. We've also dramatically increased government transparency, moving from streaming meetings on my cell phone to launching a dynamic website where citizens can access budgets and report concerns at woodfordcountyky.gov/RequestTracker. Moving forward, I want to further implement data-driven asset management to ensure we maximize taxpayer dollars. Finally, I will continue equipping our incredible county workforce with the best tools possible to serve our community effectively.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Mitchell: Absolutely, I support the Young Farmer Program. As a fifth-generation Woodford County farmer and a former state president of the Kentucky Young Farmers Association, I understand the challenges young farmers face. My son is working to become one of the sixth generation of our family to farm here. I've seen firsthand the hard work and financial commitment it takes to get established.



Donald Mitchell



Liles Taylor

I would consider additional funding or expanded eligibility, but first want to evaluate the program's results, demonstrated need, and financial feasibility. We can support the next generation of farmers while being responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Taylor: I vehemently support the young/new farmer program. Our significant efforts to preserve farmland are futile if we don't have future generations willing or financially able to farm in our community. Agriculture often operates on thin margins, especially for less established farmers. This program attempts to help farmers getting their start. I'm proud to have led our investment in the Woodford County Rural Land Board, helping to not only conserve farmland, but while doing so, also reducing the tax liability and purchase costs of that farmland by 30%-50% of the previous total market value.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Mitchell: Everyone deserves safe, fair housing, and both tenants and property owners have rights and responsibilities. I'm open to considering an ordinance, but would first consult the County Attorney, hear from landlords and tenants, and examine Midway's experience. We must consider whether additional regulations could increase costs for property owners, potentially raising rents or reducing affordable housing options. I believe more government is not always the answer. We need to determine whether there's a demonstrated need and find a practical balance between protecting tenants, respecting property rights, and being responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Taylor: I would absolutely support the adoption of an URLTA ordinance for Woodford County. I'm thankful for Midway, again, leading on an important issue to protect some of our community's more vulnerable residents. I understand some local landlords may be hesitant, but I encourage them to study the issue and look to our neighbors in Fayette County. This is about setting a framework for all parties to work within. And, as always, I'm available to discuss this with anyone interested in the issue.

Magistrate District 2

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

John Gentry: I was born and raised in Woodford County, and serving as District 2 Magistrate has been an honor. I didn't get involved for politics, I got involved because I care about this community and the people who live here. During my first term, I've worked to lower the county tax rate, improve access to water and internet, support our first responders and county employees, and protect what makes Woodford County special. I believe in listening, showing up, and being accountable to the people I represent. I'm proud of what we've accomplished, but there's still work to do.

Chris Hooten: When the railcar tourism operation was wrecking quality of life for neighbors on Milner and Tyrone, many didn't want to stand at a podium and take on a business or the county. I stood with them. That's why I'm running. District 2 needs a magistrate who speaks for people who aren't comfortable speaking up, and who asks hard questions. I was raised on a farm, served in the Kentucky National Guard, and have managed multimillion-dollar budgets in real estate and construction. That work teaches you to read every contract and question every number. I'll bring that to every vote.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Gentry: I support the young farmer program because agriculture is a big part of what makes Woodford County special. With rising land and equipment costs, it's becoming harder for younger generations to get started in farming. I believe we should listen to those participating in the program and consider expanding eligibility or funding where there's a demonstrated need. As with any program using taxpayer dollars, we need to make sure the money is being spent responsibly. If we want to preserve our farmland and agricultural heritage, we need to help give the next generation of farmers an opportunity to succeed.



John Gentry



Chris Hooten

Hooten: Yes. The biggest barrier for young farmers here isn't desire or knowledge. It's the cost of land and equipment in a county where every acre carries a developer's price. District 2 is where farmland meets the edge of Versailles, so we feel that pressure first. A $2,000 grant won't buy a farm, but it can be the difference between a young family getting started and giving up. At $50,000 a year, it keeps land in production and helps families put down roots. On expansion, I'd put more money in and raise the grant amount before widening eligibility.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Gentry: I believe everyone deserves a safe, well-maintained home, whether they own it or rent it. Tenants shouldn't have to live in unsafe conditions or struggle to get legitimate concerns addressed. I support the intent of this ordinance because tenants deserve reasonable protections and landlords should be held accountable for their responsibilities. I also recognize there are many good landlords whose rights matter too. I would support considering a similar ordinance in Woodford County, while reviewing its requirements and hearing from both sides. To me, it's about fairness, protecting tenants without placing unnecessary burdens on responsible landlords.

Hooten: Yes. I own rental property here, so I'd live under this ordinance, not just vote on it, and I still support it. Midway adopted Kentucky's URLTA, the same rules Lexington and Georgetown landlords have followed for years. It requires a safe, habitable home and a written notice process that gets repairs made without court. It also protects landlords with clear rules on notice and tenant responsibilities. Midway acted because seniors were living with leaking windows and soaked carpet. That shouldn't depend on which side of a city line you rent on. District 2 renters deserve the same protection.

John Varner Statement

My name is John Varner. I've lived in Woodford County my whole life and have spent about 40 years with the Woodford Fire Protection District. Over those years I've served as a firefighter, training instructor, assistant chief, chief, board member, and chair.

I applied to serve another term on the board in May. Judge Kay did not recommend me. Lots of people have asked what happened before that decision was made, so I want to explain.

Judge Kay asked me to meet him at the courthouse on June 23 at 1400 to talk about my reappointment. When I arrived at his office, Squire Gentry was there too. I hadn't expected him and thought the meeting would be just between Judge Kay and me. There was some small talk about the history of the fire departments in Woodford County. Judge Kay then told me I was qualified to serve but said he would recommend reappointment only if the board lowered the tax rate from 7.3 cents to 7.0 cents per $100 of assessed value.

I told him I couldn't commit to that. That was a decision for the entire board and not mine alone. We hadn't received the estimated tax revenue information from the State, but I explained that I had concerns about lowering the rate due to the increase in costs and runs and the need for additional full-time staff in the coming years. I also raised concerns about property tax breaks for distilleries.

I asked Judge Kay and Squire Gentry to attend our upcoming meeting so they could participate in discussion with the full board about the tax rate. I gave them the date but neither came. That June 23 conversation was the only time I discussed my reappointment with them before the appointment decision was made.

I disagree with Squire Gentry, Downey, Taylor, Blackford, and Carl's decision to go along with Judge Kay. I've given most of my life to the fire department and this community. I think I've served longer than Judge Kay and many of the magistrates have been alive. I honestly don't know why I wasn't reappointed but I do know it wasn't because I couldn't do the job or hadn't done it well. This in my opinion is no way to thank a public servant for this commitment to the community.

John Varner

Paid for by John Varner.

Magistrate District 3

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

Amy Thomas Iwahara: I am running for District 3 Magistrate because I love my county and I wish to serve. Born and raised in Versailles, I understand the importance of community service and leadership. I have served in numerous capacities over the years right here in Versailles. I would appreciate the opportunity to be the voice for my constituents on the fiscal court. I am dedicated, organized and ready to get to work for the people of District 3 and all of Woodford County. I respectfully ask citizens of Woodford County District 3 to vote for me, Amy Thomas Iwahara.



Amy Thomas Iwahara



Darrell Varner

Darrell Varner: For the past four years, I have represented District 3 and seek to continue further work to enhance our neighborhoods. As a lifelong resident of Woodford County and a farmer, I understand the value of hard-earned money and advocate for fiscal responsibility in county government. I prioritize essential services like reliable water, maintained roads, and safe pathways, especially as our community expands. New developments must consider infrastructure needs while preserving farmland. I appreciate your support and ask for your vote on November 3rd, promising transparency and continued advocacy.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Iwahara: Farming is the foundational pillar that feeds the population and drives the rural economy. The farmland in Woodford County is precious, and the fiscal court has worked to preserve this finite treasure. I fully support the fiscal court's funding of the Young Farmer Program. With rising inflation costs and the increase in diesel costs, this financial support is vital to a young farmer's success. When elected, I would support expanding the program and widening the qualifications if the fiscal court budget allowed. Our farmland is precious and Woodford County farmers are a vital part of our future.

Varner: I have consistently supported the Young Farmer/New Farmer Program, aiming to create opportunities for farmers of all sizes. Recognizing the importance of selling agricultural products, I propose exploring a grain receiving facility with railroad access to enhance market opportunities. Additionally, I encourage collaboration between the Fiscal Court and Versailles City Council for a permanent home for the Woodford County Farmers Market, promoting expansions like hay auctions and local meat sales. Agriculture is vital, and investments should be practical and aligned with the needs of both young and established farmers.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Iwahara: Woodford County is no exception to the affordable housing shortage. Mortgage rates and rental rates are high and many Woodford Countians are being priced out of the market. Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant Ordinance. While landlords generally are not in favor of such ordinances, they can provide much-needed protection for renters. If the Woodford Fiscal Court would be inclined to adopt an ordinance, I think it would have to be mutually beneficial for both parties. If elected, I would work for a balanced rental environment where landlords and tenants feel secure and valued.

Varner: I'm open to supporting a landlord-tenant ordinance but seek clarity on its purposes and potential consequences before voting. It is essential that any ordinance is fair to both landlords and tenants and ensures safe living conditions. I propose asking the County Attorney to review the proposal for enforcement, costs, and responsibilities. We should gather feedback from landlords and tenants, using Midway's experience as a reference. Caution is needed to prevent unintended consequences like increased rents or reduced housing availability. Ultimately, I will support the proposal if it offers meaningful protections and is implemented responsibly, backed by facts and thorough consideration.

Magistrate District 4

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

Kelly Carl: Serving as magistrate these last 8 years means more to me than a title. It's about people in our community, a place we love and call home. The most rewarding part of serving is knowing that even the smallest action makes a difference in so many lives. I want to continue as magistrate for my community, serving with integrity, compassion and a commitment to work hard for the people who put their trust in me. It's about protecting what makes our community special while working together to make it better for the generations to come.



Kelly Carl



Teresa Huddleston

Teresa Huddleston: I want to serve as Magistrate for District 4 because I live here, raised my family here, and care deeply about our community. I'm not a politician; I'm a neighbor who wants to give back to the county that has given so much to my family. I will bring common sense, fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability to the Fiscal Court. I believe in working together, listening to residents, spending tax dollars wisely, and planning responsibly for our future. My goal is to be an accessible, dependable voice for District 4, serving the people with honesty and integrity— not politics.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Carl: I support the young farmer program and the current $50,000 budget appropriation. I will continue to support programs that protect our farmers, food supply and precious land.

Huddleston: I support the Young Farmer Program because preserving our farms and investing in the next generation are important to Woodford County's agricultural future. The program can help young farmers develop business planning and leadership skills while strengthening our community and economy. Before considering additional funding, I would want to review the program's performance over the past two years, including how many applicants it has helped and the results achieved. If the program has made a positive impact, I would then review the county budget to determine whether additional funding is financially responsible.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Carl: The Fiscal Court should carefully review Midway's action and hear public input to determine the best path to follow. Landlords and tenants need to be supported with clear guidelines.

Huddleston: Before voting on this proposal, I would ask the County Attorney to clarify whether Woodford County has adopted the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and whether the proposed ordinance creates any new legal obligations. I recognize the importance of safe and habitable rental housing. However, I believe we should understand the full scope of the proposed ordinance, including its impact on landlords and tenants, enforcement procedures, administrative costs, and the county's legal authority, before making a final decision. I would like those questions answered and the proposed ordinance reviewed before we proceed with a vote.

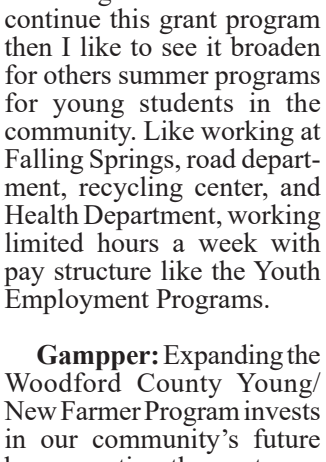
Magistrate District 5

The Sun did not request a response from William Downey who is running unopposed.

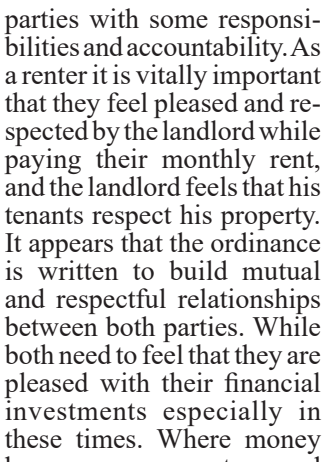
Magistrate District 6

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

Larry Blackford: I am not a politician, but a servant-leader. As an educator, I listened to students while understanding how to work together to solve difficult problems for their betterment. As a minister, I am drawn to serve, help, and respect people. It is important that every citizen feels respected and valued. Our community needs leadership to serve with integrity and character, which is why I'm running. I humbly ask for your support in my continuing servant-leader role. I wish elected officials realized as God-ordained servants, we aspire to serve to serve all the people in a just and fair way.



Larry Blackford



Mike Gampper

Mike Gampper: I'm running because I care about Woodford County's future and the community where my wife and I are raising our six children. I want to preserve a community where future generations can afford to live and thrive. My professional experience leading teams and managing budgets will help me demand accountability, transparency, and responsible spending. Guided by my faith, I view leadership as a responsibility and public service as an opportunity to make a difference. I will listen to residents, amplify their voices, protect green spaces, prioritize families, and approach growth responsibly to leave Woodford County better for generations ahead.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Blackford: I think it is a good idea and a way to help young farmers to obtain some little meaningful financial funds to use for their interest. But, with this amount of funds being $2,000 it would still be good to know the effectiveness and results and how it's being used. Then if we continue this grant program then I like to see it broaden for others summer programs for young students in the community. Like working at Falling Springs, road department, recycling center, and Health Department, working limited hours a week with pay structure like the Youth Employment Programs.

Gampper: Expanding the Woodford County Young/New Farmer Program invests in our community's future by supporting the next generation of agricultural leaders and preserving our farming heritage, agricultural land, and rural character. I would support broadening eligibility by removing age restrictions to include retirees interested in farming their land and pursuing additional funding. The Fiscal Court should collaborate with local businesses to organize events that generate matching funds, with proceeds reinvested into the county. As Woodford County grows, we must protect our agricultural identity while creating opportunities for future generations. We have a responsibility to leave them a stronger agricultural legacy.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Blackford: I think that the Landlord and tenant ordinance is a win-win for both parties with some responsibilities and accountability. As a renter it is vitally important that they feel pleased and respected by the landlord while paying their monthly rent, and the landlord feels that his tenants respect his property. It appears that the ordinance is written to build mutual and respectful relationships between both parties. While both need to feel that they are pleased with their financial investments especially in these times. Where money has never grown on trees and it never will.

Gampper: I respect the ordinance's intent to protect tenants and ensure fair treatment, but good intentions don't guarantee good policy. Adopting this statute could increase administrative, enforcement, and legal costs for taxpayers. Its broad requirements may unfairly burden small landlords who lack the resources of larger property management companies. We must also consider whether compliance costs and legal complexity could increase rents or discourage rental housing, worsening affordability. KRS 383.500 requires adopting the act without amendments, limiting local flexibility. I support targeted solutions that protect tenants, consider landlords, and preserve housing affordability without automatically defaulting to expanded government regulation.

Magistrate District 7

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

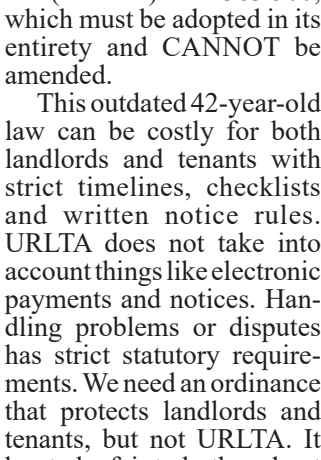
Mary Ann Gill: I'm running for magistrate because I know the job. With more than 550 hours of training in state and local government issues and having worked through eleven county budgets, I know how to address needs and problems and find solutions. I've seen lean times as well as times of abundance in County Government, Things can change quickly.

Tax dollars must be used to provide essential service for public benefit. Allocating funds to outside agencies, persons, non-essential services and costs, deserves scrutiny.

If elected I will continue to research issues, question spending and make informed votes. That is not always easy but Woodford County is worth it.



Mary Ann Gill



Joe Johnson

Joe Johnson: Woodford County is at a turning point; the Fiscal Court's decisions over the next four years will shape the next forty. I've farmed here and lived in both county and city, so I understand what makes this place special and what protecting it costs. My entrepreneurship and technology career taught me to read budgets closely and demand measurable results. District 7 families want good roads, reliable services, public safety, and a voice in growth. I commit to three things: protect our farmland while planning honestly for growth, treat every tax dollar as my own, and make county government more open.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Gill: Sections 171 and 179 of the Kentucky Constitution requires all government actions and spending to serve the public good rather than private interests, while ensuring counties strictly control how allocated funds are used. While I've supported these grants before, Woodford County is walking a fine line. They are a drop in the bucket of actual farming costs and lack spending oversight. Government can support farming better by expanding farmer's markets and creating closer crop markets by bringing in more farming-related industry like a grain elevator or an agricultural co-op.

Johnson: Yes, and I'd expand it now. The average Woodford County farmer is over 58, and development pressure makes land, equipment, and livestock harder for new operators to afford every year. The Young & New Farmer Grant Program is one of the Court's smartest investments and deserves more funding in the next budget. I'd widen qualifications to include farmers who lease land and value-added enterprises like processing, agritourism, and direct sales, with priority for Extension beginning-farmer graduates. I'd pursue state and private matching funds, including from our equine and bourbon industries, and publish annual results for accountability. Farmland lost is lost forever.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Gill: Midway adopted the Kentucky Universal Residential Landlord Tenant Act (URLTA) KRS 383.500, which must be adopted in its entirety and CANNOT be amended.

This outdated 42-year-old law can be costly for both landlords and tenants with strict timelines, checklists and written notice rules. URLTA does not take into account things like electronic payments and notices. Handling problems or disputes has strict statutory requirements. We need an ordinance that protects landlords and tenants, but not URLTA. It has to be fair to both and not cumbersome to either, with an efficient and inexpensive civil process to handle problems, safety issues and disputes.

Johnson: Yes, with careful implementation. Kentucky's Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act has been law since 1974 and is used by Lexington, Louisville, and dozens of other communities. Landlords keep units safe, habitable, and up to code; tenants maintain the unit, pay rent, and follow the lease. From years in property management, I know what water intrusion and neglect do to buildings and people, as Midway's senior apartment residents recently experienced. Because state law requires adopting the act in full, the Court should first hear from landlords and tenants, review Midway's approach, settle complaint-handling costs, and coordinate with Midway and Versailles.

Magistrate District 8



Josh Kight



Linda Popp

Why do you want to hold the office of Fiscal Court Magistrate?

Josh Kight: I am running for District 8 magistrate to bring a strong voice, practical experience, and an actionable plan to Fiscal Court. Over the past year, conversations with South Woodford residents have shaped our priorities: reliable water, expanded broadband, protecting farmland and our rural character, and maintaining essential infrastructure. As a small business owner, Coast Guard veteran, and agriculture professional, I understand budgeting, planning, and accountability. I will listen, ask hard questions, protect taxpayer dollars, and work to deliver results. This is our plan, built around the needs of our community. I respectfully ask for your vote November 3.

Linda Popp: I want to serve as Magistrate for District 8 because I believe in being a strong, independent voice for the community where I grew up. I am committed to preserving the values, traditions, and farmland that make Woodford County special. The people of South Woodford County deserve a representative who listens, respects their values, and puts people before politics. This is more than a position to me. It is an opportunity to give back to the community that shaped me and help preserve its unique character for future generations.

Fiscal Court has funded a young farmer program over the last two budget years. Do you support this? Would you expand it with additional funding or widen the qualifications to widen the scope for the applicants?

Kight: Yes, I support the Young and New Farmer Grant Program because helping the next generation succeed strengthens Woodford County's agricultural economy and rural heritage. However, expanding government spending is not always the answer. I believe a citizen committee with strong farmer representation could help oversee the program, encourage broader community support, and provide practical guidance. Before increasing funding, I would evaluate the program's results, demand, and accountability. Our goal should be to provide meaningful opportunities for farmers while protecting taxpayer dollars, supporting agriculture, and respecting the independence of the people who work hard to keep our farming tradition.

Popp: I fully support the Young Farmers Program, and believe investing in the next generation is essential to preserving Woodford County's agricultural heritage. Expanding funding and eligibility is worth considering while maintaining standards that ensure the program benefits those genuinely engaged in farming. I would like to explore creating separate categories for Young Farmers and New Farmers. Separating these groups could better serve individuals at different stages of their agricultural careers and encourage greater participation. Making the program more accessible while protecting its purpose can help grow agricultural businesses, support our farmers, and preserve Woodford County's farming traditions for future generations.

Midway recently adopted a landlord - tenant ordinance, which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections for tenants and a non-court process. Would you support Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

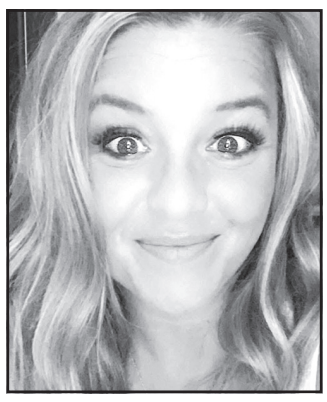
Kight: Before supporting a landlord-tenant ordinance, I would want evidence that it addresses a real problem without creating unnecessary costs or government interference. District 8 is outside city limits, and what works in Midway may not fit South Woodford. Tenants deserve safe, habitable housing, while property owners deserve respect for their rights and investments. I would ask the County Attorney to explain existing protections, potential changes, enforcement, and costs. I would also listen to local landlords and tenants. Before adding regulations, we should determine whether existing laws are sufficient. My priorities are fairness, property rights, and responsible, limited government.

Popp: I would be open to discussing this issue with the court and ensuring both landlords and tenants have an opportunity to be heard. Contracts should be clear, lawful, and reasonable for everyone involved. Before considering changes to current statutes, I believe it is important to listen to those directly affected. I also believe mediation can be an effective alternative to the court system, helping resolve disputes fairly and affordably. My goal would be to explore practical solutions that protect the rights of both parties while reducing unnecessary time, expense, and stress.

Board of Education



Adam Brickler



Crystal Collins



Lyen Crews

All three candidates running for seats on the Woodford County Board of Education in the Tuesday, Nov. 3 General Election participated in the Q&A. The candidates were asked three questions, with each response in 100 or fewer words. Adam Brickler and Crystal Collins are vying for the District 2 seat on the Board of Education. Lyen Crews is running unopposed for the District 5 seat. Current District 5 board member Sarah McCoun chose not to seek reelection.

Why do you want to serve on the Woodford County Board of Education?

Adam Brickler, District 2: I want to work with the community, Superintendent, and staff to provide the quality education our children deserve. I will continue to listen to all stakeholders and lead in a professional and respectful way. My focus will be on student achievement and supporting a school system that responsibly uses the funding we have, while honestly acknowledging areas the funding falls short. I want to help everyone understand the needs of the schools and why their support is so important. Being on the board means working with everyone to keep WCPS strong.

Crystal Collins, District 2: I want to serve on the Woodford County Board of Education because I care about our students, teachers, families, and taxpayers. My experience in education, ministry, and community service has taught me the importance of listening, serving, and working together. I want to bring a fresh perspective, ask thoughtful questions, and promote transparency and accountability in how public funds are spent. I believe we can support strong educational opportunities while being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. I may not have every answer, but I am willing to learn, listen, and work collaboratively to put students first.

Lyen Crews, District 5: I am running to restore faith and trust in Woodford County Public Schools and its Board of Education. Having observed insufficient budgetary oversight and unprofessional conduct by Board members during the previous superintendent's tenure, I know our district deserves better. My technical expertise and professional demeanor will provide the balanced leadership needed to navigate complex financial decisions and keep the focus on student success. This community shaped my own achievements, and I want to give back. With three grandchildren just beginning their education here, I am deeply invested in ensuring our schools provide an outstanding foundation that prepares all students.

What personal/professional experiences, skills and knowledge do you possess that will make you an asset on the Woodford County Board of Education?

Collins: My experience in education includes serving as an administrative assistant, art teacher, and assisting with music, physical education, and chapel. I have experience managing budgets through education, children's ministry, and leading a summer camp for five years. My volunteer service with the Woodford County Fire Department since 2018 has strengthened my teamwork and commitment to the community. As a parent and grandparent, I understand the importance of putting children first. I bring practical experience, a willingness to learn, strong communication skills, and a commitment to asking questions, promoting traceability, and being accountable to students, families, teachers, and taxpayers.

Crews: I am a CPA with extensive financial and governance experience in education and nonprofits. I began my career auditing nonprofit hospitals and colleges, later serving as CFO of four hospitals and vice president for finance at two colleges. For the past ten years, I have led the Coalition for College Cost Savings, helping more than 900 nonprofit colleges and universities reduce costs by leveraging their combined purchasing strength. I am a lifelong Woodford County resident and graduate of its public schools. My two children and five grandchildren have benefited from, or are beginning their journeys through, Woodford County Public Schools.

Brickler: I work with companies and industries all over the country to educate them on roles focused on Human Resources, Payroll, and Employer Taxes. By collaborating with people with various backgrounds and personalities, it has prepared me to engage with those that are involved with our school system. It has also prepared me to stay focused on our goals and block out the distractions that try to pull that focus away from our students and staff.

What is the biggest challenge facing Woodford County Public Schools and what will you do as a board member to address that challenge?

Crews: The greatest challenge facing our district is restoring public trust, which was eroded during the previous superintendent's tenure by the Board's irresponsible fiscal decisions and a lack of decorum at board meetings. Trust is earned through actions, not words. To rebuild it, I will champion complete transparency, maintain absolute respect for all stakeholders, and strictly scrutinize expenditures. I will leverage my professional expertise to advise and approve—not micromanage operations—while actively collaborating with administration. Above all, I will remain accessible to constituents, ensuring your voices are heard as we work together to rebuild a responsible school system.

Brickler: The reduction in state funding and barrel tax. State funding is calculated using our local property assessments. When assessments go up, state funding for schools goes down. The theory is that local taxes should be enough to almost fully support the schools. In reality, this isn't always the case. With rising costs of insurance, utilities, fuel, building repairs, etc., those fixed expenses are outpacing our current revenue. We had to make millions in painful cuts over the last year, including many jobs. My goal is to educate the community on why supporting our public schools builds a strong Woodford County.

Collins: I believe one of the biggest challenges facing Woodford County Public Schools is balancing the need for quality education with responsible, transparent spending. As a board member, I would work to better understand the budget line by line, evaluate spending priorities, and ensure resources directly support students and teachers. I would listen to parents, educators, and taxpayers before making decisions and ask questions when something needs clarification. My goal is not simply to spend more, but to make sure we are using the funds we have wisely, planning for the future, and putting students' educational needs first.

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Serving on BOE gives Lyen Crews opportunity to 'do something'

By Bob Vlach
Woodford Sun staff

After he heard that Sarah McCoun was not going to run for another term on the Woodford County Board of Education (BOE), Lyen Crews kept a promise he made to himself.

He would run for a seat on the BOE because of what he had witnessed before McCoun and KT Gould were elected, telling himself, "Woodford County doesn't deserve this."

When Crews watched BOE meetings, he did not appreciate how board members treated each other when they disagreed.

Crews said he also questioned some of the financial decisions leading up to building a new Woodford County High School, including former Superintendent Danny Adkins' decision to move the Central Office/BOE on Pisgah Pike to the old high school on Frankfort Street.

Crews, who was born and raised in Woodford County and is running unopposed for McCoun's seat on BOE (District 5), said he wants to help navigate Woodford County Public Schools "through these financial issues," specifically a multi-million-dollar budget deficit that led to cuts in staffing and operating expenses.

"Boards need to be policy-setting boards. They don't need to be operational boards. I fervently believe in that. *I fervently believe in that*," said Crews, who noted he has reported to boards for years during a career in finance, mostly working for nonprofits.

"The (school) board ... has too little time to chase down rabbit holes. We have to look at the big pictures," said Crews.

"I just think they're in a precarious financial situation right now." He added, "It's going to take some years to fix this."

Crews is a 1980 graduate of WCHS, where his mom, Faye Daniel Crews, a nurse, taught health careers classes. His grandfather, Walter Crews, served on the BOE, and he has grandchildren in Woodford County schools, he said.

"When I look at my three grandchildren," he said, "that's my reason" for wanting to help fix the school system's precarious financial situation because "my goal is to make the Woodford County school system the envy of the state. That's my goal."

Crews said he understands the importance of having a solid kindergarten through 12th grade education because of his finance career, specifically his many years working for colleges and universities.

He chose a career in finance after saying he did not want to become a certified public accountant like his dad. Once he got into the career, he discovered, "I love … everything about accounting. Accounting is the language of business," so he became a CPA.

Crews said he was chief financial officer at four hospitals, including the former Woodford Memorial Hospital when efforts were ongoing to keep the hospital open. He has also worked in finance at two colleges, including a financially-stressed Midway College (now Midway University) from 2000-13.



Lyen Crews

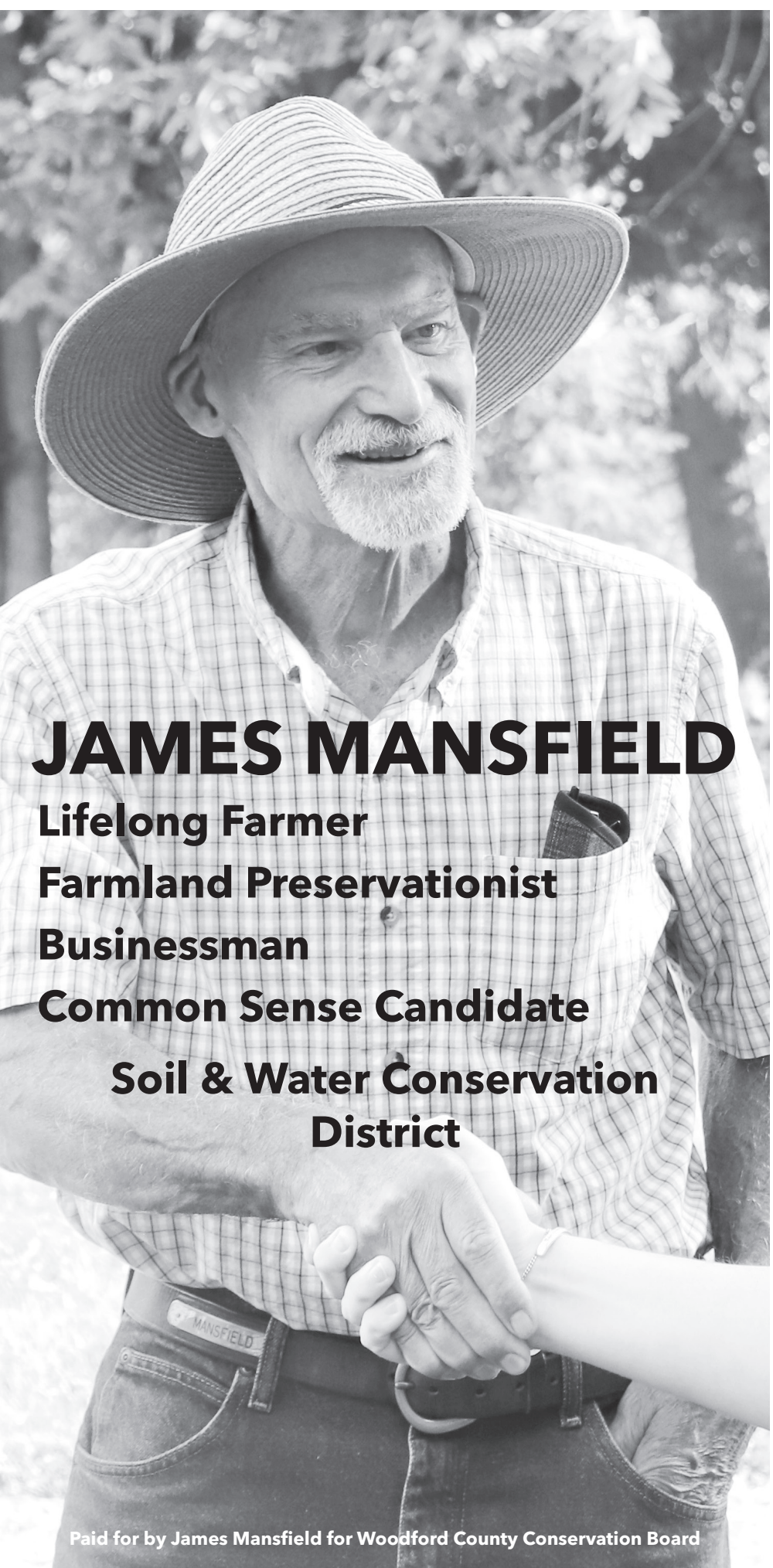
For the last 10 years, Crews said he has been president of a consortium of 900 private, nonprofit colleges across the country that makes purchases as a group to reduce costs.

Running for a public office is not foreign to Crews. He ran against Carl Rollins for a seat in the state House in 2008 after telling his daughter, "If you keep complaining about and don't do something about it, then you need to shut up." So he ran for a state office, losing "a very close election," he adds. He and John-Mark Hack then lost to James Kay in a special election in 2013 to fill the remaining term of Rollins.

Losing twice was enough, until this opportunity to serve on the BOE arose, and he saw an opportunity to do something.

With his responses to a Q&A for BOE candidates in this special section, Crews included this statement: "I want to thank Sarah McCoun for her service to Woodford County and the Woodford County Board of Education. Unfortunately, Ms. McCoun chose not to run for re-election. Her steadfast desire to improve Woodford County Public Schools, her respectful, professional approach to others, and her fiscally responsible opinions and decisions—even when in the extreme minority—will be missed."





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The Woodford Sun is seeking a reliable, independent, self-motivated individual with strong verbal communication skills. Must have a reliable mode of transportation as this job will require cold-calling various local businesses.

Responsibilities include prospecting, building relationships with new advertisers, and selling advertisements.



If you are interested in this position and would like more details, please reach out to lucie@woodfordsun.com.

JUDGE
Continued from p. 1

those experiences together as Judge-Executive. Before increasing funding or widening eligibility, I would review who the current program reaches,

Kay: Yes, I strongly support our Young and New Farmer Grant program, which our Fiscal Court created as a model for Kentucky. Farming is both the economic foundation and the beating heart of Woodford County. We are establishing our county as Kentucky's premier cattle hub by securing the UK Meats Lab and the Cattlemen's Livestock Innovation Center. While Washington plays politics and hurts farmers with trade wars, tariffs, hemp regulation, imported beef and foreign wars, we are standing by our agricultural community, FFA, 4-H, and ag educators. Everything starts with our land. Once paved over, it is lost forever. Today, new farmers face record-high land prices and soaring costs. Our grant program delivers vital capital to help them survive and establish roots. I fully support expanding this program with additional funding as budgets allow. We should broaden eligibility to include first-generation farmers, beginning cattle producers, specialty crop growers, and multi-generational farm families transitioning operations to their children. Paired with strong partnerships through the UK Extension Office, 4-H, and FFA, we can ensure the next generation of Woodford County farmers thrives.

Midway recently adopted a Landlord-Tenant ordinance which incorporates a Kentucky statute that provides significant protections to tenants and a non-court process to resolve disputes. Would you support the Fiscal Court adopting such an ordinance?

Duckworth: I do not believe county government needs to take the lead on every issue between landlords and tenants. My starting point is to ask whether existing state laws can address the problem before adding another layer of local government. People deserve safe, habitable housing. No landlord should neglect a property or put tenants' health and safety at risk. Property owners also deserve respect for their investment, and tenants have responsibilities they must uphold. There is a balance to strike, but more government is not automatically the answer. If Midway's ordinance works well for its residents, that is good. However, what works for a small city may not be the right approach for Versailles, our rural communities, or Woodford County as a whole. We should evaluate the actual need rather than assume one approach fits everyone. Before supporting a county ordinance, I would ask the County Attorney to explain the protections already available under Kentucky law, where gaps exist, and what additional responsibilities the county would assume. I would also want clear answers about enforcement, dispute resolution, staffing, and costs. We must listen to landlords and tenants and consider whether new requirements could increase rents, discourage property maintenance investments, or reduce

Kay: The core issue is ensuring our neighbors have a safe, stable, and affordable place to live. As a former State Representative and attorney, I am familiar with the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (URLTA). I commend Mayor Vandegrift and the Midway City Council for tackling this issue. The best path forward for our community on URLTA is working together. If I'm re-elected, we will bring the Fiscal Court and our partners in Versailles and Midway, along with local property owners and tenants to build common-sense rules that fit our community. We must protect renters from unsafe conditions and bad landlords. We must also make sure that all of our neighbors, especially those struggling right now, can keep their homes and afford to live here. Our Fiscal Court tackled this head-on by launching Kentucky's first-of-its-kind Affordable Housing Program, providing critical needs assistance, emergency eviction and foreclosure relief alongside dedicated legal support so no family is displaced during hard times. Furthermore, our historic partnership with Habitat for Humanity and local builders will create new, affordable single-family homes for working families. We didn't just talk. We delivered real solutions to keep families in their homes during these tough times.

PURSUANT TO KRS 424.290, "MATTERS REQUIRED TO BE PUBLISHED," THE FOLLOWING RACES AND QUESTION WILL APPEAR ON THE VOTING MACHINES AND PAPER BALLOTS IN THE PRECINCTS LISTED IN WOODFORD COUNTY FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION, NOVEMBER 3, 2026.

STRAIGHT PARTY
- ☐ Republican Party
- ☐ Democratic Party
- ☐ Kentucky Party

UNITED STATES SENATOR
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Andy BARR — Republican Party
- ☐ Charles BOOKER — Democratic Party
- ☐ Christopher CAMPBELL — Kentucky Party
- ☐ Write-in

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE in CONGRESS 6th Congressional District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Ralph ALVARADO — Republican Party
- ☐ Zach DEMBO — Democratic Party
- ☐ Jay J BOWMAN — Independent
- ☐ Pete LYNCH — Kentucky Party
- ☐ Write-in

STATE SENATOR 12th Senatorial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Amanda Mays BLEDSOE — Republican Party
- ☐ Write-in

STATE REPRESENTATIVE 56th Representative District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Daniel A. FISTER — Republican Party
- ☐ David GRAVES — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

PROPERTY VALUATION ADMINISTRATOR
(Vote for One)
- ☐ John Paul COYLE — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

COUNTY JUDGE/EXECUTIVE
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Michael DUCKWORTH — Republican Party
- ☐ James KAY — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

COUNTY ATTORNEY
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Carmine G. IACCARINO — Republican Party
- ☐ Cassie W. BARNES — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

COUNTY CLERK
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Amanda CENTERS — Republican Party
- ☐ Jackie ANTHONY — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

ALL PRECINCTS

SHERIFF
(Vote for One)
- ☐ John WILHOIT — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

JAILER
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Sean WILLIAMS — Republican Party
- ☐ Michele Shryock RANKIN — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CORONER
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Penny BAKER — Republican Party
- ☐ Write-in

COUNTY SURVEYOR
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

ALL PRECINCTS

MAGISTRATE 1st Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Donald MITCHELL — Republican Party
- ☐ Liles TAYLOR — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 1st Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

NORTHSIDE SCHOOL COUNTY

MAGISTRATE 2nd Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Chris HOOTEN — Republican Party
- ☐ John GENTRY — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 2nd Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

MILLVILLE FIREHOUSE

MAGISTRATE 3rd Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Darrell VARNER — Republican Party
- ☐ Amy Thomas IWAHARA — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 3rd Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

HIGH SCHOOL COUNTY

MAGISTRATE 4th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Teresa HUDDLESTON — Republican Party
- ☐ Kelly CARL — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 4th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

MIDDLE SCHOOL

MAGISTRATE 5th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ William DOWNEY — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 5th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

COURTHOUSE

MAGISTRATE 6th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Michael B. GAMPPER — Republican Party
- ☐ Larry BLACKFORD — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 6th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Ryan SCOTT — Republican Party
- ☐ Write-in

HUNTERTOWN CHURCH OF NAZA

MAGISTRATE 7th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Mary Ann GILL — Republican Party
- ☐ Joe JOHNSON — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 7th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Write-in

SYCAMORE FIRE HOUSE #3

MAGISTRATE 8th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Joshua D. KIGHT — Republican Party
- ☐ Linda Shryock POPP — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

CONSTABLE 8th Magisterial District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Jeff BOWMAN — Democratic Party
- ☐ Write-in

THE JACK JOUETT HOUSE

NONPARTISAN JUDICIAL BALLOT
(Vote for One in Each Division)

JUDGE of the COURT of APPEALS 5th Appellate District 1st Division (Unexpired Term)
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Lucy Ferguson VanMETER
- ☐ Will MOYNAHAN
- ☐ Write-in

DISTRICT JUDGE 14th Judicial District 1st Division
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Bolton BEVINS
- ☐ Write-in

DISTRICT JUDGE 14th Judicial District 2nd Division
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Sarah Hays SPEDDING
- ☐ Write-in

NONPARTISAN BALLOT

SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUPERVISORS
(Vote for Three)
- ☐ Brad CARMICKLE
- ☐ Curtis CONGLETON JR.
- ☐ James MANSFIELD
- ☐ Robert RICHARDSON II.
- ☐ Jesse I. DAHL
- ☐ Write-in

ALL PRECINCTS

NONPARTISAN "SCHOOL CANDIDATES"

MEMBER BOARD of EDUCATION 2nd Educational District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Adam BRICKLER
- ☐ Crystal COLLINS
- ☐ Write-in

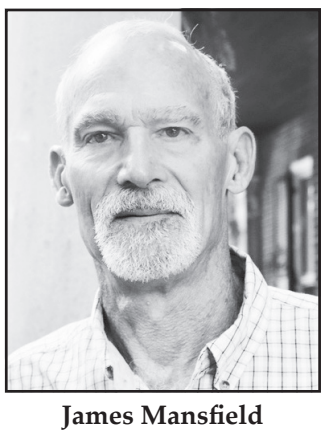
PART OF MILLVILLE FIREHOUSE, MIDDLE SCHOOL, COURTHOUSE, AND THE JACK JOUETT HOUSE

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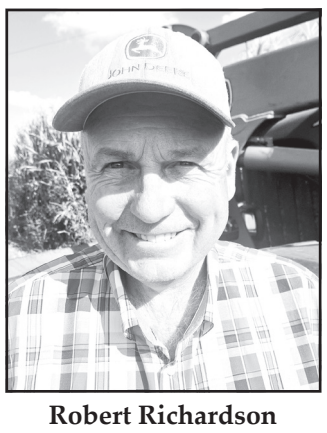
Woodford County Conservation District Supervisor

Photo not available

Jesse Dahl



James Mansfield



Robert Richardson

Why do you want to hold the office as a supervisor on the Board of the Woodford Conservation District?

Jesse Dahl: I have spent my life working with the land, both as a farmer and through my career managing gardens and natural areas. As a father of five children growing up in Woodford County, protecting our natural resources is also personal to me. I am running for Conservation District Supervisor because I want to give back to our community and help protect our farmland, soils, streams, and forests. I believe that through education, responsible stewardship, and practical conservation efforts, we can make a meaningful difference and preserve the natural resources that make Woodford County special for generations to come.

James Mansfield: Only recently have I seen the Conservation District promote farmland preservation as part of their mission to conserve water and soil. Last year I founded a nonpartisan citizens' working group that succeeded in getting P & Z and the Fiscal Court to change ordinances to better protect farmland and open space. As a farmer who has preserved our land grant farm with a permanent conservation easement, my intention is to help broaden the Board's involvement in keeping Woodford County rural. I would join the Board in their important work preserving Woodford County's precious resources.

Robert Richardson: I have over 47 years of farming experience and three terms as chair of the Farm Service Committee. I have a deep understanding of our local farmland. I am personally and professionally invested in the long-term vitality of Woodford County's farms. I intend to use my experience to make informed, and practical decisions that support our local producers, protect the soil, and water resources for future generations.

What new program do you believe the WC Conservation District should offer to the community?

Dahl: I believe our conservation district should help establish a Farm Link program for beginning and retiring farmers. With the average age of American farmers increasing and farmland prices in Woodford County rising, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young and beginning farmers to get started. A Farm Link program could connect retiring landowners with the next generation of farmers seeking opportunities to farm. By partnering with Extension, FSA the conservation district could serve as the backbone of this effort, connecting people with land, knowledge, available grants, funding opportunities, and other resources needed to keep local farmland in production.

Mansfield: I will learn all I can about the current programs, many of which I have used and really appreciate. A new program suggestion is a cost-share to clean up sinkholes on private land which leach into underground streams that empty into our creeks and rivers. I've used the Conservation District programs to fence livestock away from streams, put livestock waterers in every field, and to cross-fence large pastures for rotational grazing, which helps with good ground cover, water absorption, and improved forage nutrition. Also, what can we do to help young farmers, smaller farms, and landowners in Woodford County?

Richardson: The new program I think would help the most is to expand water access for livestock, by spring water development and installation of additional water lines. Reliable water access is critical for sustainable grazing management and for long-term productivity of our farms. By investing in these infrastructure improvements, the District can help producers better manage their land and enhance animal welfare.

Do you support the 30,000 Trees Initiative and do you think more can be done to plant trees in the county?

Dahl: Yes, I support the 30,000 Trees Initiative, and I believe we can do even more to increase tree planting across the county. Trees provide tremendous benefits, including increased property values, reduced energy use, erosion control, cleaner air, and important wildlife habitat. With almost 20 years of experience as an arborist, I believe successful tree planting is about more than the number of trees we put in the ground. We need to make sure those trees survive and thrive. Education on proper watering, mulching, pruning, and long-term maintenance should be a major part of that effort.

Mansfield: Yes! It's wonderful to have a goal. Are we keeping track of how we are doing with tree survival? Offering workshops on planting and care of new trees would help with success. Topics would be location, soil amendments, pest problems, water needs. Combining the Tree Initiative with the existing programs for stream buffers, pollinator habitats, rain gardens and The Backyard Conservation program would strengthen each element and make a unified program. Woodford County cities and suburbs would become a key part in growing and preserving the greenspace people enjoy.

Richardson: Yes, I support the 30,000 Trees Initiative. I believe that integrating more tree plantings throughout our county's watershed is a vital step toward improving soil stability, enhancing water quality, and increasing biodiversity. While the current initiative is a great start, I am confident that we can do more by focusing on strategic planting locations, we can maximize the environmental benefits for our community, protect our natural resources, and ensure a greener, more resilient landscape for people to enjoy for years to come.

RHETORIC

Continued from p. 1

Schools' finances on the district's website, Gould says, "Everybody's really able to say what they want. There's no checking your sources or fact-checking, necessarily, on social media. ... Anybody can post anything, and that information is not always correct."

Vandegrift describes responding to questions and concerns expressed by residents of Midway on social media as being "mayor in the new world. I don't think you can be an effective mayor and not be engaging with social media..." Later adding, "It's the closest thing I can get to a public opinion poll," although he acknowledges "it's not scientific like a public opinion poll."

In an environment where our sources of information are so fragmented, a lot of people are making money by "spreading misinformation on the internet, which is pretty sad," retired journalist Jamie Lucke says. She spent more than 30 years at the *Lexington Herald-Leader* before concluding her 50-year career in journalism as the founding editor-in-chief of the nonprofit *Kentucky Lantern*.

Lucke says social media platforms are driven by algorithms that reward the sensational and push the same information (and misinformation), which reinforces what someone has already been told.

Because social media can reinforce a person's beliefs and views, retired University of Kentucky journalism professor and longtime journalist Al Cross says, "It's all the more important now that people consider the source. That's been good advice ever since humans began communicating, and (that advice is) better than ever. You've got to consider the original source of the information and be careful about your information consumption."

It troubles Vandegrift that "people are willing to say things through a keyboard that they are not willing to say to your face."

Unlike a face-to-face conversation, everybody is watching a conversation unfold on social media, Gould says. So "people may behave in a way that they may not normally behave ...," she adds.

Vandegrift says he disagrees with a lot of what's posted on Woodford News Watch, which he is quick to point out "is not a news site." However, "I want to see what they're saying," he adds, because "too many of us put ourselves in echo chambers, and social media has made it very easy to do that ... and it's dangerous to America; and it's part of why we have the (political) divide we have right now."

Vandegrift and Cross say social media is also a valuable tool for governments and others to get information out to people quickly.

In Midway, social media pages inform residents about road construction and give updates on storms, tourism, special events and new businesses in town. Those are examples of social media being "one of the most easiest and effective ways to get your messages out there these days," Vandegrift says.

However, as a journalist who provides insight into elections on TV and in columns, Cross understands the danger of voters being misinformed during political campaigns.

"I'm very concerned that the dominance of social media has led to much misinformation about political issues, and even in some cases disinformation where people and campaigns are trying to actively mislead voters," says Cross.

With candidate debates and forums for state and federal offices disappearing as a way to inform voters, Vandegrift says debate "can happen online. And that could be a good application of social media. We just can't call each other names, and we can't take the personal shots at each other," which create a toxic environment.

Because information, misinformation and disinformation can be spread so easily during this era of social media, Cross says he is reminded of words attributed to Mark Twain, but more likely originating from satirist Jonathan Swift, "A lie can make its way around the world, while the truth is still getting its pants on."

While doing research for his recently published book, *Empire of Ink,* Newspaper historian Alex Wright says he learned, "The truth was always disputed." And he says, "People struggling to know who to trust," is a consistent theme throughout his book about newspapers in the 1800s.

DEBATE

Continued from p. 7

and convicted sex offender Jeffery Epstein. Alvarado didn't directly name but seemingly referred to former Lexington Mayor and Kentucky Transportation Secretary Jim Gray's support of Dembo, and his family business, Gray Construction, which has has built data centers.

In response, Dembo said he has never met Hoffman and cannot speak to PACs as a candidate. Federal law prevents PACs from coordination with campaigns. He later said he was honored to have Gray's endorsement.

Asked if he had conversations with Gray about data centers after the debate, Dembo said he only knows Gray through being the mayor of Lexington and overlapping in the Beshear administration.

"That's how I've known him. That's how he made the decision to endorse me. I know him as a public servant," Dembo said of Gray.

Democrat Zach Dembo speaks to reporters after a Fox56 debate. (Kentucky Lantern photo by McKenna Horsley)

Asked if Alvarado would have voted to release the Epstein files in Congress — an issue that ultimately ignited Trump to primary U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie in the 4th Congressional District this year — Murtaugh said he would have supported the release.

"So long as the victims and their names are not revealed," Murtaugh added.

WKYT will livestream a forum next week between Alvarado and Dembo during a Tuesday forum at Estill County High School.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3. Early voting in Kentucky begins Thursday, Oct. 29.

The Woodford Sun
Community Newspaper

CONTINUED

MEMBER BOARD of EDUCATION
5th Educational District
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Lyen C. CREWS II.
- ☐ Write-in

PART OF COURTHOUSE, HUNTERTOWN CHURCH OF NAZA, SYCAMORE FIRE HOUSE #3, AND THE JACK JOUETT HOUSE

NONPARTISAN CITY BALLOT

MAYOR
City of Midway
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Grayson VANDEGRIFT
- ☐ Write-in

CITY COUNCIL
City of Midway
(Vote for up to Six)
- ☐ Ian VanSTEENBERGH
- ☐ Harvey COUCH
- ☐ Kaye Nita GALLAGHER
- ☐ Logan NANCE
- ☐ Zachary RANKIN
- ☐ Mary C. RAGLIN
- ☐ Ray ADEE
- ☐ Steve SIMOFF
- ☐ Write-in

PART OF NORTHSIDE SCHOOL COUNTY

MAYOR
City of Versailles
(Vote for One)
- ☐ Jason DEVORE
- ☐ Nick GREEN
- ☐ Cory COOLEY
- ☐ Fred SIEGELMAN
- ☐ Laura DAKE
- ☐ Write-in

CITY COUNCIL
City of Versailles
(Vote for up to Six)
- ☐ Gary W. JONES
- ☐ Chantel BROWN-BINGHAM
- ☐ Lisa C. JOHNSON
- ☐ Emily PORTER
- ☐ Ann MILLER
- ☐ Mary Ellen BRADLEY
- ☐ Joe BELFORD
- ☐ Aaron SMITHER
- ☐ Brad FISTER
- ☐ Fred J. POWERS JR.
- ☐ Write-in

PART OF MILLVILLE FIREHOUSE, HIGH SCHOOL COUNTY, MIDDLE SCHOOL, COURTHOUSE, HUNTERTOWN CHURCH OF NAZA, AND SYCAMORE FIRE HOUSE #3

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 1

Are you in favor of limiting a Governor's ability to grant pardons or commute sentences by prohibiting him or her from granting pardons or commuting sentences during the time period beginning 60 days prior to the general election at which the Governor is elected, and ending when the Governor is sworn in for that term by amending the Constitution of Kentucky as stated below?

It is proposed that Section 77 of the Constitution of Kentucky be amended to read as follows:

(1) The Governor shall have power to:

(a) Remit fines and forfeitures; and

(b) Commute sentences and grant reprieves and pardons, except:

1. In case of impeachment; or
2. For the period beginning sixty days prior to the date of the gubernatorial election and ending the fifth Tuesday succeeding the election.

(2) The Governor shall file with each application therefor a statement of the reasons for his or her decision thereon, which application and statement shall always be open to public inspection.

(3) In cases of treason, the Governor shall have power to grant reprieves until the end of the next session of the General Assembly, in which the power of pardoning shall be vested; but he or she shall have no power to remit the fees of the Clerk, Sheriff, or Commonwealth's Attorney in penal or criminal cases.

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

ALL PRECINCTS

Re-elect

Michele Shryock RANKIN

Woodford County Jailer

"Everybody is Somebody's Somebody"

– Jailer Michele Rankin



Re-elect

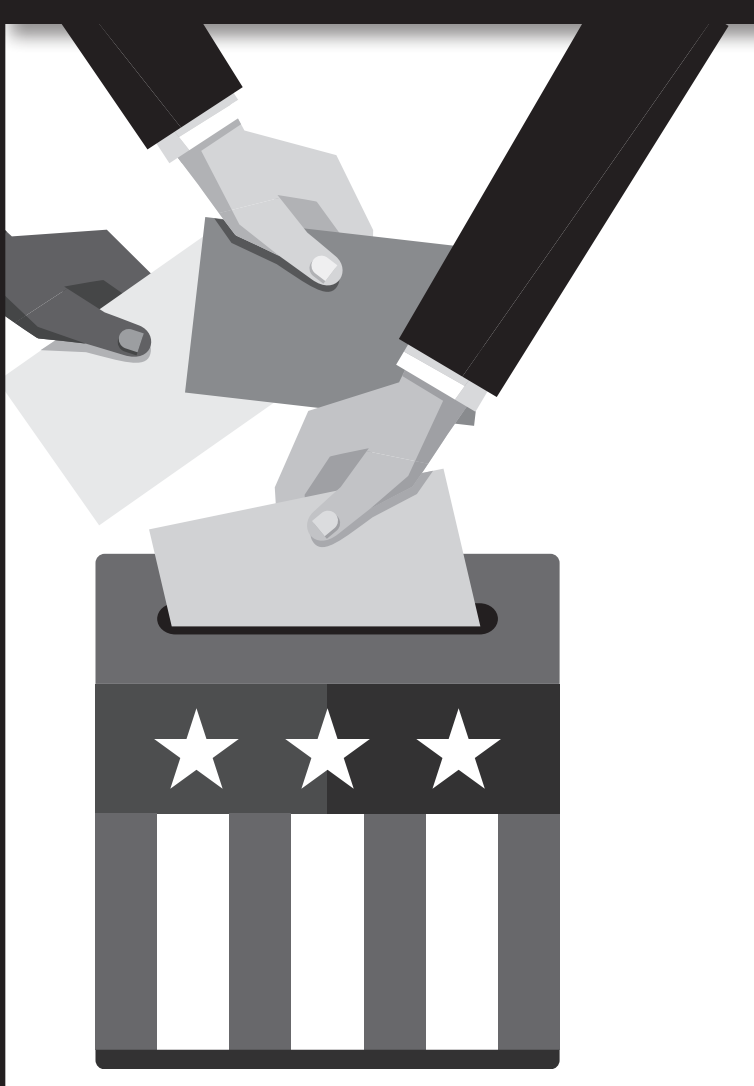
Michele Shryock

RANKIN *for*

Woodford County JAILER ★

PAID FOR BY MICHELE SHRYOCK RANKIN

Your Vote Matters!



Early Voting

at Falling Springs Recreation Center

Thursday, October 29th, 6 am to 2 pm

Friday, October 30th, 10 am to 6 pm

Saturday, October 31st, 9 am to 5 pm

Election Day

November 3, 6 am to 6 pm

4 VOTING CENTERS:

Falling Springs Recreation Center
275 Beasley Drive, Versailles, KY

Northside Elementary School
500 Northside Drive, Midway, KY

Millville Firehouse
60 Watts Ferry Road, Frankfort, KY

Nonesuch Firehouse
4485 Fords Mill Road, Versailles, KY

The Woodford Sun
Community Newspaper

184 South Main Street • Versailles, KY 40383
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TIME FOR FRESH THINKING AND A NEW APPROACH!

VOTE CARMINE IACCARINO FOR COUNTY ATTORNEY

With 16 years of legal experience, Carmine practices constitutional law and employment law and has experience in District Court, Circuit Court, the Court of Appeals, Kentucky Supreme Court, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He has advised governors, the Attorney General, and Supreme Court justices, and served as General Counsel and Chief of Staff to the Attorney General. Endorsed by Commonwealth's Attorney Kelli Kearney, he will STAND UP FOR YOU!

Carmine's Promise to You as County Attorney

Protect Woodford County
Partner with law enforcement, stand with victims, and prosecute dangerous and repeat offenders effectively.

Demand Accountability
Give county leaders independent legal advice—not political cover—and address problems before they become costly lawsuits.

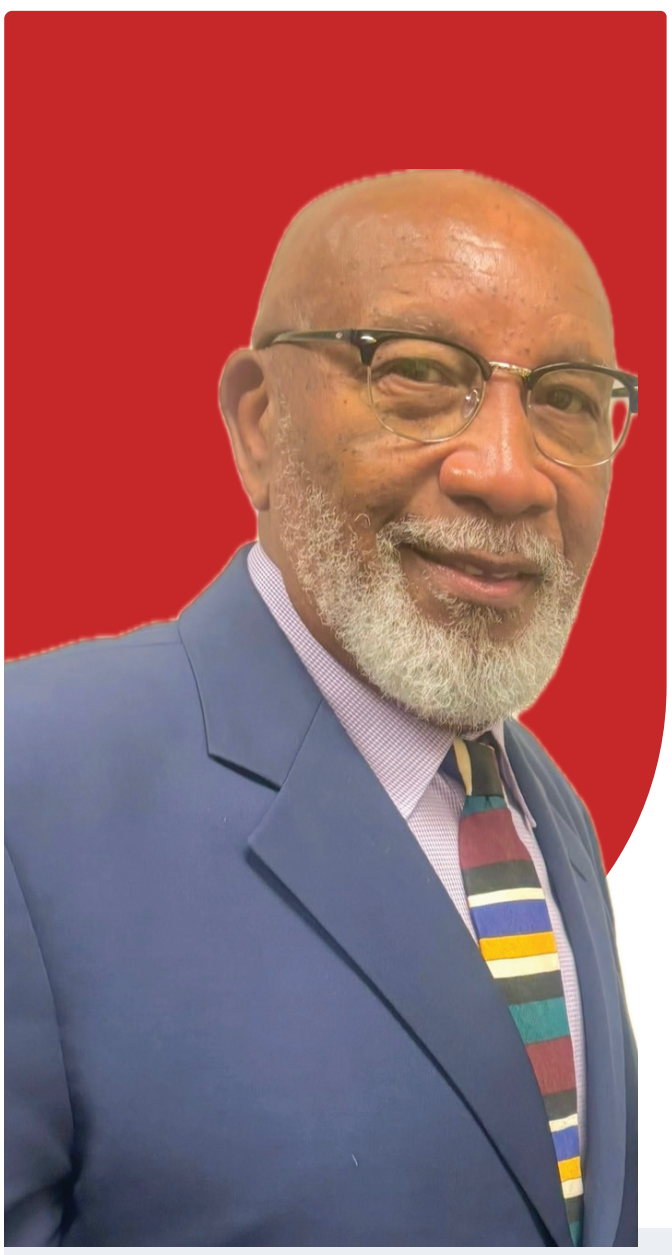
Deliver Equal Justice
Apply the law fairly and firmly, treating everyone with dignity and no one with favoritism.

Modernize the Office
Use better technology, stronger case management, and clear communication to deliver efficient, responsive service.



As your County Attorney, Carmine will bring independent judgment, substantial experience, and a commitment to public service for all of Woodford County.

Paid for by Carmine for County Attorney Campaign



Re-elect

Larry Blackford

Magistrate, District 6

"I am not seeking your vote as a politician, but your support as a servant and leader committed to you and the community."

- A servant leader, not a politician; listens and responds to constituents
- Proven history working for District 6 and Woodford County
- Provides transparent updates on Fiscal Court meetings, county budgets and important community issues

Larry's Vision for Woodford County

- **Repairing and repaving more roads**
- **Strengthening ordinance codes and enforcement**
- **Encouraging partnerships between Neighborhood Watch and local authorities**
- **Improving drainage in neighborhoods to reduce flooding**

Connect to Larry

Paid for by Larry Blackford for Magistrate, District 6

VOTE

★ FOR MAYOR OF VERSAILLES ★

CORY COOLEY

2026

Family



Service



Community



- **If elected, I will...**

work WITH Versailles citizens on growth, focusing on what we are comfortable with.
keep logic and effectivness in every decision that affects OUR tax dollars.
bring creative ideas and fresh eyes on old problems for the FUTURE of Versailles.

I humbly ask for your vote this November 3rd.

CooleyForMayor.com

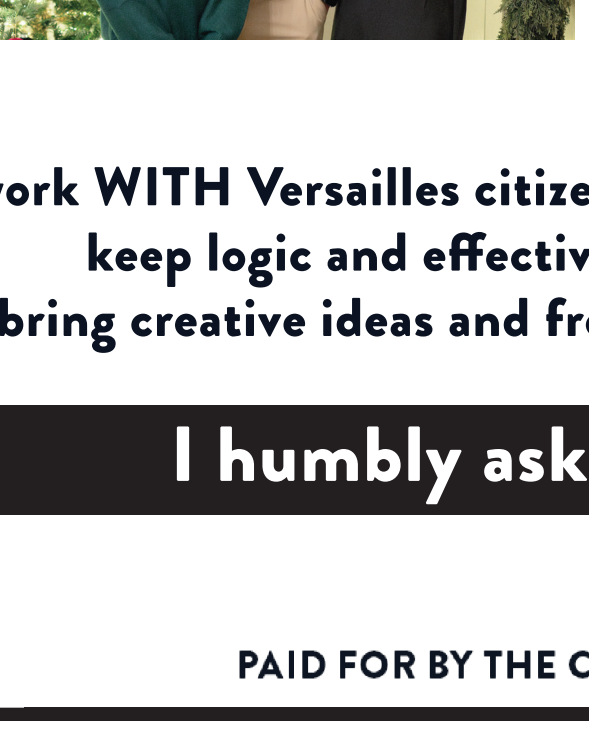
PAID FOR BY THE CORY COOLEY FOR MAYOR OF VERSAILLES CAMPAIGN

ELECT

JUDGE LUCY FERGUSON VANMETER

ENDORSED BY KENTUCKY F.O.P.

COURT OF APPEALS



Experience that Matters!

- Fayette Circuit Court Judge (2018-Present)
- Former Equity Member, Stoll Keenon Ogden, PLLC (2001-2018)
- Highest AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated by *Martindale-Hubbell®*
- Practiced law before all levels of Kentucky's State Court System
- Handled cases in over 50 Counties in Kentucky
- University of Kentucky Rosenberg College of Law (2001, with honors)
- DePauw University (1997, with honors)
- Native of Paris, Bourbon County
- Member, Christ Church Cathedral
- Married to Larry VanMeter, four step-children & five grandchildren



"I'm voting for Judge Lucy VanMeter because she is **kind.**"

LORA KNIGHT



LucyVanMeter.com

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Lucy Ferguson VanMeter. Lindy Karns, C.P.A., Treasurer.

Laura DAKE

Elect Laura Dake for Mayor of Versailles



Visit lauradakeformayor.com or find me on Facebook at Laura Dake for Mayor.

I am proud of my accomplishments in my two years as mayor. The city is run efficiently and effectively and supported by more than 120 dedicated employees who provide critical services. My relationship with the department heads is strong, and the city and county work well together. The city is hosting more events than ever before – they are family-friendly and free. We are improving our infrastructure and focusing on safety. I am practical, collaborative, and solutions oriented. I listen, consider the needs of the community carefully and work diligently and thoughtfully to address those needs.

As Mayor, I:

As mayor, I:

- Successfully advocated for no data centers in Woodford County;
- Secured more than $700,000 in grant funding for city projects;
- Found a new tenant for the "old Kroger" building, which will be a family fun center and retail space;
- Spearheaded two projects to improve walkability on Wilson Avenue and on Beasley Drive;
- Elevated "The District" with more community events than ever;
- Increased communication with residents (social media; city e-newsletter; "Two Minutes with the Mayor");
- Prioritized public safety with a fully staffed police department, a new Traffic Unit and a new fire engine under contract.

I have a Level III – Master in City Governance from the Kentucky League of Cities. I have taken more than 100 hours of approved courses, including ethics, so I better understand the issues affecting cities and can make more informed decisions.

If elected to a full term, I will continue to work to:

- Create well-paying jobs without damaging Woodford's irreplaceable landscape;
- Maintain a fiscally responsible city budget;
- Explore ways to improve housing affordability in the city;
- Work on solutions to address traffic issues and roadway concerns;
- Communicate with residents and work with community volunteers to address our challenges;
- Improve quality of life across every neighborhood in the city.

Paid for by Laura Dake for Mayor. Connie Kupets, Treasurer

Laura DAKE #5 on the ballot For Mayor of Versailles

LEADERSHIP- *IS IN THE DETAILS*

RE-Elect

Ann Miller

Versailles City Council



SERVANT LEADERSHIP & SOLUTIONS THAT WORK

** DRIVEN & INNOVATIVE * FOCUSED ON SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES **
** STRIVES TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY WELL-BEING * WORKS FOR FAIRNESS & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL **

Goals

- Repurpose empty & blighted buildings.
- Long-Range planning for sustainable growth.
- Support Park & Rec initiatives as well as ensure accessible public facilities for all.
- Strengthen downtown events, cultural programs & community traditions.
- Strengthen partnerships with local & state business leaders & advocate for affordable, high-quality city services.
- Uphold ethical leadership, transparency, and fiscal responsibility at City Hall.

Proven & Experienced Leadership

- Served 14 Years on Versailles City Council
- Elected Mayor Pro-Tem by Council (2 Terms)
- Nominated by the Kentucky League of Cities, Appointed by Two Kentucky Governors to the GIAC Board (3 Terms)
- Co-Chaired the $6.5 Million Public Safety Building Project: New Police Station
- Co-Chaired the Downtown Pavilion & Outdoor Marketplace Project

Ann Miller

Trusted, Strong & Willing to Ask the Tough Questions

Paid for by Ann Miller for Versailles City Council

CASSIEFORWOODFORD.COM

THE ONLY CANDIDATE

FOR COUNTY ATTORNEY ...

who has served as an Assistant County Attorney.

Serving Woodford County in this role since 2019.

with prosecutorial experience.

Experience as both an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney and an Assistant County Attorney.

with experience in Woodford District Court.

Familiar with the local court where the County Attorney's office handles much of its work.

who has worked closely with local law enforcement and court officials, and earned their trust.

who practiced law in Woodford County before election year 2026.

Versailles law practice since 2008 and service as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney and Assistant County Attorney.

with experience before local boards and governing bodies.

Including Fiscal Court, Versailles City Council, Planning and Zoning, and the Board of Adjustments.

with experience in juvenile cases involving status, public offense, and dependency, neglect, and abuse.

with experience in Casey's Law and disability guardianship proceedings.

who, as a small business owner in Versailles, has experience running an office.

Bringing firsthand experience managing an office and its day-to-day responsibilities.

The only candidate who is ready to serve on day one.

Prepared to step into the role with experience in the community, the courts, and the work of the County Attorney's office.



Vote

GENERAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 3, 2026

2026 CASSIE BARNES

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Paid for by Cassie Barnes for Woodford County Attorney,
Joseph M. Hoffman, Treasurer 100 United Drive, Suite 4B, Versailles, KY 40383