VOTING RIGHTS ACT SIGNING

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act of 1965 while Martin Luther King and others look on. August 6, 1965.

This publication has been issued by the League of Women Voters of Oxford, a nonpartisan organization, to provide a forum to all candidates on the ballot in Oxford. The materials contained in this publication were assembled in the following manner: questions were selected by the League addressed to the candidates. Candidates were informed that their responses would be printed exactly in their own words and that each would be solely responsible for the contents. Candidates were allowed 500 characters for each question. The League of Women Voters of Oxford in publishing this material neither endorses nor rejects any candidate’s reply. Comments or questions about this publication may be addressed to the League of Women Voters of Oxford, Voters Services, P.O. Box 504, Oxford, Ohio 43056 or email: lwvoxford@gmail.com.
For additional and updated information go to the following websites:
League of Women Voters of Oxford  
www.oxford.oh.lwvnet.org  
Butler County Board of Elections  
www.butlercountyelections.org

Questions:
1. What actions would you take to balance public health and economic recovery in the US, both in light of COVID-19 and for the long term?
2. What is the most important issue facing our country and how do you plan to address it during your first 100 days in office?
3. How will you address racial injustice in our country on day one of your administration?
4. What aspects of our current immigration policy will your administration address first?
5. What will you do over the long term to ensure access to quality healthcare for all?

Donald Trump, Republican

Candidate has not yet responded

Joseph Biden, Democrat

Website: http://www.joebiden.com
Email: info@joebiden.com
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/joebiden
Twitter: twitter.com/joebiden
Instagram: http://www.instagram.com/joebiden
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWNpXitY8eJ-ku6M-v25MKw

Questions:
1. Given our experience with COVID-19, what precautions would you put in place to allow for safe, secure elections whereby voters are not choosing between their health and their right to vote, especially in November? Include how you would fund any necessary precautions and changes.
2. Where do you stand on efforts to protect our water, air, and land? Include how you would address climate change.
3. What would you do to ensure that we have full access to health care, regardless of income, gender, or race?
4. How would you address immigration policy?
5. Do you support universal background checks for gun purchases, including at gun shows? Why or why not?
Questions:
1. In what ways would you change our election system to be prepared for crises that impair the right to vote?
2. COVID-19 has increased the need for reliable internet access at home. Do you believe that internet should be treated as a utility? What is your plan to make high-speed internet access available to residents in our district (including locations that are not cost-effective for internet providers)? What solutions do you propose to prevent the costs of closing coal-fired power plants from being passed on to all electric consumers through their rates?
3. Where do you stand on efforts to protect our water, air, and land? Include how you would address climate change.
4. How would you ensure that state funding for public education is fairly distributed throughout the state?
5. As guaranteed by the second amendment, responsible citizens have the right to own and use firearms. Mass shootings at social events, churches, stores and schools have shown us that there is a need to ensure that weapons are kept out of the hands of people who may cause harm to themselves or others. With common sense laws, like universal background checks and closing gun show loopholes, we can reduce incidents of gun violence, protect ourselves, our community and our children.

George Lang, Republican
Candidate has not yet responded

Kathy Wyenandt, Democrat
Website: http://kathyforohio.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/kathywyenandt
Twitter: twitter.com/kathywyenandt
Education: Fairfield High School, 1992 Miami University, 1997
Qualification/Experience: My professional background is in sales and management. I have a broad range of community leadership & volunteer involvement. I value research, science, and data, as well as building bridges and finding common ground to achieve results.

OHIO STATE SENATOR DISTRICT 4
Term: Four years.
Base Salary: $60,584
Responsibilities: To represent the people of the district and the state of Ohio in dealing with matters not allocated to the federal government.

Question 1: I support automatic voter registration at age 18 and an online absentee ballot application. At the very least, we should add more drop-boxes in each county for application and ballot drop-off, and should move toward adding additional early voting centers. I also support measures that would ensure paid postage on ballot applications and on absentee ballots. We should be doing everything we can to ensure free, fair, accessible, and safe elections.

Question 2: Yes, this pandemic has illustrated many concerns about our digital infrastructure. Currently about 1/3 of households in Ohio lack broadband internet. We need to ensure that the physical infrastructure for reliable internet reaches every household, and that the service is affordable for consumers. House Bill 13 is a good start, as it provides grants for construction. We also need options to ensure that cost is not an obstacle for Ohioans. Our healthcare, education, & the economy depends on it.

Question 3: Climate change is an urgent issue. Ohio needs to embrace clean energy solutions such as solar, wind, & hydropower. I support repealing HB 6 & renewing clean energy standards that support diversifying Ohio’s energy portfolio. I support the H2Ohio plan, which will reduce harmful algal blooms, improve wastewater infrastructure, increase wetlands, & prevent lead contamination. I also support the Clean Ohio Fund, which entails revitalizing brownfields, preserving farmland, & conserving green space.

Question 4: Ohio’s school funding system is unconstitutional because of its over-reliance on property taxes. This leads to inequities between districts. Bipartisan House Bill 305 is a good start. It seeks to diversify the funding to include, perhaps, income taxes, as a way to reduce the reliance on property taxes. The state needs to do its fair share to achieve its constitutional duty to ‘secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state’ and ensure distribution is equitable.

Question 4: I stand for legal immigration, but I also believe in compassion and understanding, and not separating children from their parents and caging them. I do not support a southern border wall, which experts say would be unlikely to reduce illegal immigration or trade. I also support Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), because I stand with young men and women who came to the United States at a very young age. This is the only country they have ever known.

Question 5: As guaranteed by the second amendment, responsible citizens have the right to own and use firearms. Mass shootings at social events, churches, stores and schools have shown us that there is a need to ensure that weapons are kept out of the hands of people who may cause harm to themselves or others. With common sense laws, like universal background checks and closing gun show loopholes, we can reduce incidents of gun violence, protect ourselves, our community and our children.

Kathy Wyenandt, Democrat
Website: http://kathyforohio.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/kathywyenandt
Twitter: twitter.com/kathywyenandt
Education: Fairfield High School, 1992 Miami University, 1997
Qualification/Experience: My professional background is in sales and management. I have a broad range of community leadership & volunteer involvement. I value research, science, and data, as well as building bridges and finding common ground to achieve results.
Questions:
1. In what ways would you change our election system to be prepared for crises that impair the right to vote?
2. COVID-19 has increased the need for reliable internet access at home. Do you believe that internet should be treated as a utility? What is your plan to make high-speed internet access available to residents in our district (including locations that are not cost-effective for internet providers)? What solutions do you propose to prevent the costs of closing coal-fired power plants from being passed on to all electric consumers through their rates?
3. Where do you stand on efforts to protect our water, air, and land? Include how you would address climate change.
4. How would you ensure that state funding for public education is fairly distributed throughout the state?

Chuck Horn, Democrat

Biographical Information:
Website: http://ChuckforOhio.com
Facebook: Chuck for Ohio
Education: UC Bearcat: Economics, Business

Qualification/Experience: 37 years helping people with the Law. At LexisNexis – Led people and managed information technology to solve problems. 25 year West Chester Resident-2 Lakota Band Kids

Question 1: Ohio’s robust vote by mail system positions the state to be able to handle the current crisis. It is the U.S. Mail system that is currently under attack by Donald Trump. Voter purges are suspect and should be subjected to intense scrutiny.

Question 2: I believe that a plan to bring broadband access could be a private initiative that is encouraged by government policies, much like the program which brought Rural Electrification to the heartland and changed peoples lives for the better all over the country.

Question 3: I would first repeal House Bill 6 and start work to restore Clean Government to Columbus. Not subsidizing carbon burning and nuclear sources, we encourage new, well paid jobs in sustainable energy industries which minimize our carbon footprint. The horrible algae blooms on Lake Erie release unsafe toxin concentrations in Lake Erie with scum forming on the water surface causing liver damage, numbness, dizziness, and vomiting. Make industrial agriculture responsible for the true cost of their acts

Question 4: I would focus state funding on core skills like reading and math which are proven to give students better life outcomes, include civics to encourage participatory citizenship. Leave funding for extra-curricular activities and non-core learning to local property taxes. Stop the hemorrhaging of funds to private schools which are not subject to the same testing, rating, teacher certification and open enrollment requirements of public schools. Fund early reading parent outreach for at risk kids.

Michelle Novak, Democrat

Biographical Information:
Website: http://www.MichelleENovak.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MichelleENovak2020
Twitter: twitter.com/MichelleENovak

Education: Bachelors of Science, Corporate Finance; Masters of Public Administration, Political Economy

Qualification/Experience: Community organizer for over 20 years; Member of the Middletown City School District Board of Education 2016-Present; Member of the Ohio School Board Association Diversity & Equity Committee. Black Caucus, & Urban Network; Member of the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Committee.

Question 1: I would push forward legislation that allows absentee ballot requests to take place electronically, add more drop boxes around the county to provide expanded access to voting for remote and vulnerable communities, and extend the amount of time people have to submit their ballots.

Question 2: As a member of a local school board, our district is addressing this equity gap by providing Internet access to families, but it should not be the responsibility of schools. It should be treated as a utility. In conversations with rural, urban, and suburban communities nationwide, I have found that the communities that transitioned best economically and academically in the pandemic, regardless of wealth, had state and federal infrastructure investments in Internet accessibility.

Question 3: I support efforts to protect our water, air, and land by having environmental standards for industry and providing support for clean energy initiatives.

Question 4: I would shift the over-reliance on property taxes to a new funding source. A new school funding formula being assessed now in the statehouse is combining property & income taxes along with calculating the district’s financial capacity. I also think, the state should calculate the minimum cost of educating one child & add equity dollars to take into account poverty & other verified student risk factors which are not already short. As a member of the Ohio House, I would prioritize funding our schools in a responsible manner that focuses on student success in the classroom and not an arbitrary school rating system.
Question 1: During this pandemic, we have seen the consequences for our work productivity and for our children’s education when we do not have universal quality internet access. We need large scale investments from Congress to the Statehouse in expanding broadband capacity to rural communities. Internet providers should be treated as utilities to ensure investment in areas that might not be considered “cost-effective”.

Question 2: During this pandemic, we have seen the consequences for our work productivity and for our children’s education when we do not have universal quality internet access. We need large scale investments from Congress to the Statehouse in expanding broadband capacity to rural communities. Internet providers should be treated as utilities to ensure investment in areas that might not be considered “cost-effective”.

Question 3: As a member of the youngest generation, the long standing consequences of climate change are forefront in my mind. Every policy decision made in all levels of government should be required to consider the costs to our environment and the impact those decisions will have on climate change. Ohio can be a leader in combatting this crisis by encouraging wind and solar energy development. These investments will create high paying jobs that can provide both an economic and environmental benefit.

Question 4: As State Representative, I would vote to support the Patterson-Cupp bill that would invest $1.5 billion into our education system. We cannot spend another twenty years under the same unconstitutional funding system and this legislation would help put us on the right track.

Morgan Showen, Democrat

Education: Lebanon High School Graduate, Currently a Senior at the University of Michigan studying political science and environment.

Qualification/Experience: Morgan led his first congressional office visits before he was old enough to vote, has co-written policy proposals that have been nationally published twice in the last two years, and lobbied state legislators in Michigan while working on congressional and gubernatorial campaigns in Ohio.

Question 1: We need to remove all unnecessary obstacles to voting. To expand our democracy, we need automatic voter registration, expanded drop boxes for absentee voting, pre-paid envelopes for those sending in absentee ballots and requests, and to begin the process for moving to a mail-in voting system for all elections.

Question 2: During this pandemic, we have seen the consequences for our work productivity and for our children’s education when we do not have universal quality internet access. We need large scale investments from Congress to the Statehouse in expanding broadband capacity to rural communities. Internet providers should be treated as utilities to ensure investment in areas that might not be considered “cost-effective”.

JUDGES

Questions for All Judges:
1. List your judicial experience (courts and years).
2. What about your non-judicial legal experience qualifies you to be a judge?
3. Why are you running for this particular court seat?

Sharon L. Kennedy

Candidate has not yet responded

Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court

Beginning: 1/1/21

Term: Six years

Salary: $175,214

Responsibilities: Hears all cases involving questions arising under the Ohio Constitution or statutes; hears appeals from Courts of Appeals decisions. The Supreme Court’s decisions are final except in cases involving the U.S Constitution, statutes, or treaties.

Jennifer Brunner

Biographical Information:
Website: www.jenniferbrunner.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/BrunnerCommittee

Question 1:
• Justice, Ohio Supreme Court 2013 – present
• Appointed January 2013; elected November 2014.
• Serve on seven-member court with statewide jurisdiction over all legal matters, including discretionary and non-discretionary appeals, original actions, death-penalty appeals, and disciplinary matters.
• Serve as frequent presenter before high school, college, law school, legal professional, and general public audiences on matters of access to justice, civic education, law, and campaign policy.

• Appointed by United States Supreme Court Chief Justice Roberts to serve on the Federal Appellate Rules Committee. Judge, Tenth District Court of Appeals 2004 – 2012
• Appointed October 2004; elected November 2004; re-elected November 2010.
• Served on eight-member court with jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and administrative appeals; authored 800 opinions.

• Served as administrative judge (2007 and 2008) and as presiding judge (2009)

Question 2: For more than two decades, I have dedicated my career to public service. Before becoming a judge, I had served as chief legal counsel to the governor, an assistant attorney general, and a state government lawyer. Those years in public service are critical to my understanding of state laws, my adherence to constitutional limitations, and my commitment to careful and efficient decision making on behalf of all Ohioans.

I also have legal experience in the private sector, having worked in a law firm and a large manufacturing corporation. That private experience helps me understand the practical impact of our decisions and appreciate the impact of our judicial rules and procedures.

Finally, as the daughter of a schoolteacher, I appreciate my Ohio roots and education, and I am committed to using my voice as a Justice to be a part of civic education in Ohio. I speak frequently to students, educators, and civic organizations. Since taking office, I have traveled to all 88 counties (I am on my fifth time around), and I have met with individuals, organizations, businesses, and local leaders, all in an effort to serve them better. If reelected, I will continue that level and method of service.

Question 3: I first aspired to be a justice because it offers interesting, challenging, and meaningful work that serves the public interest. I aspire to be reelected to the office because I want to continue that work, both on and off the bench. As a justice, I am able not only to bring attention to needs within the legal profession, the judiciary, and the public as a whole, but also to advocate for change to meet those needs.

In particular, during my next term, I intend to continue the court’s work to improve our efficiency and that of all Ohio courts. I also intend to continue my work with the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation and local legal aid organizations to bring more attention, resources, and innovation to the needs of undeserved Ohioans.

John P. O’Donnell

Candidate has not yet responded

Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court

Beginning: 11/21

Term: Six years

Salary: $175,214

Responsibilities: Hears all cases involving questions arising under the Ohio Constitution or statutes; hears appeals from Courts of Appeals decisions. The Supreme Court’s decisions are final except in cases involving the U.S Constitution, statutes, or treaties.

Judi French

Biographical Information:
Website: http://JusticeJudiFrench.com; FriendsofFrench.com
Facebook: http://Facebook.com/

Education: B.A. (Political Science); M.A. (History); J.D. (Law with honors), The Ohio State University

Question 1:
• Justice, Ohio Supreme Court 2013 – present
• Appointed January 2013; elected November 2014.
• Serve on seven-member court with statewide jurisdiction over all legal matters, including discretionary and non-discretionary appeals, original actions, death-penalty appeals, and disciplinary matters.
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Jennifer Brunner

Biographical Information:
Website: www.jenniferbrunner.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/BrunnerCommittee

Question 1:
• Justice, Ohio Supreme Court 2013 – present
• Appointed January 2013; elected November 2014.
• Serve on seven-member court with statewide jurisdiction over all legal matters, including discretionary and non-discretionary appeals, original actions, death-penalty appeals, and disciplinary matters.
• Serve as frequent presenter before high school, college, law school, legal professional, and general public audiences on matters of access to justice, civic education, law, and campaign policy.

• Appointed by United States Supreme Court Chief Justice Roberts to serve on the Federal Appellate Rules Committee. Judge, Tenth District Court of Appeals 2004 – 2012
• Appointed October 2004; elected November 2004; re-elected November 2010.
• Served on eight-member court with jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and administrative appeals; authored 800 opinions.

• Served as administrative judge (2007 and 2008) and as presiding judge (2009)
and www.facebook.com/JudgeBrunnerforOhioSupremeCourt

Twitter: https://twitter.com/JenniferBrunner

Education: J.D. Capital University Law School, Order of the Curia; B.S. Sociology-Gerontology, Miami, Cum Laude

Qualification/Experience: Judge, Tenth District Court of Appeals, elected 2014, reelected without opposition 2016

Question 1:

• Serve as one of eight judges in jurisdiction of 1.2 million people reviewing cases filed as of right from lower courts at county and municipal level (civil and felony and misdemeanor cases, probate, family law and administrative law), state court of claims cases, administrative law decisions and holding original jurisdiction in government-related cases.

• Participate in three-judge panels that hear oral arguments on cases fully briefed and prepared for review.

• Sit as visiting judge on the Ohio Supreme Court and in other courts of appeals.

• Judge, Franklin County Common Pleas Court, elected 2000, reelected 2002

• Managed regular docket of at least 500 civil cases and 125 criminal cases at any time pending.

• Eliminated docket backlog from 991 cases to 713 cases in one year.

• Conducted trials including three judge panel death penalty trial, criminal trials for aggravated murder, rape, felonious assault, complicity to felony assault, robbery, burglary, and theft, and civil trials including age discrimination, premises liability (slip and fall), auto accident and medical malpractice.

• Taught probation officers of the court and lawyers involved with the Ohio State Bar Foundation curriculum on poverty and working with people in poverty to help them succeed.

Adjunct professor for graduate law enforcement program for Tiffin University, a private Ohio University, teaching law and ethics for law enforcement officers and for undergraduate law enforcement program, constitutional law for law enforcement

Question 2: My 17 years private practice experience with people from all walks of life has helped me better understand how the law affects people, in a wide variety of life situations. To be a lawyer is a calling to serve society and to uphold and protect the rule of law. I have worked for clients ranging from economically disadvantaged single mothers to one who was running for president (Jerry Brown in 1992).

In 2011, I drafted a statewide referendum petition for a coalition of voting rights activists, labor organizations, state and local political party organizations and faith-based and other nonprofit organizations who gathered more than 400,000 petition signatures to place voting rights referendum on statewide ballot; in 2012-2013 I developed a multi-state and federal executive agency government affairs practice focused on matters before the FCC and state public utilities commissions relating to low income telephone government programs.

I started my own law firm from the corner of my bedroom when our children were 7, 4 and 2, growing it to 32 people after ten years. Other experience includes serving as general counsel for a computer firm and a trade association, serving as campaign finance counsel for numerous state and local labor unions, corporations, national and state associations, candidates, caucuses and political action committees on state and federal election law, and representing neighborhood groups and developers on zoning, referendum and initiative election issues. Past experience also includes representing judges and judicial candidates before the Supreme Court concerning compliance with the Code of Judicial Conduct. Hold experience in drafting state legislation and administrative rules in areas of election law, local option elections, campaign finance, and ethics laws. Served as administrative partner of law firm.

Question 3: I love the law, I love Ohio and I enjoy helping people. I am privileged, having traveled to every county in this state when I served as Secretary of State, to have worked with Ohio’s 88 county boards of elections as we together served Ohioans.

I chose to run for the Ohio Supreme Court for three reasons: First, I want to be a part of a court that ensures that the first decision interpreting the state constitution’s new provisions for fair districts for Congress and the Ohio General Assembly, when challenged — and they will be — is fair and according to state constitutional requirements. As Secretary of State, my office sponsored a public contest to draw districts to show we could end gerrymandering. We used a formula that served as a basis for developing the state constitution’s formula for fair districts. We proved it could be done. Nothing is more basic to the health of Ohio’s democracy than fair districts, and I want to participate in any review of that process occurring after the 2020 census. I want to use my experience to the benefit of the court and the people of the State of Ohio.

Second, there are important issues such as when a police office can make an individual get out of their car, under what circumstances criminal records can be expunged, when someone’s home can be taken through foreclosure or when is it appropriate for legislative caps on damages (such as rape of a child by a trusted pastor) to be overcome. These issues are just a few that affect everyday people in Ohio, though many citizens often don’t realize how much they are affected by just the words of the state’s highest court.

Third, I have found that when there is a political balance on an appellate court, there is less a tendency to “group think.” Better decisions are likely to emerge when they involve the give-and-take of views and the softening of others through reasoned and respectful discussion and decision making. Currently, the political balance of the state’s high court is a state of unbalance with 5 Republicans and 2 Democrats. A 4-3 balance would, in my view, create some of the best decisions possible from the court. I hope to help provide that balance with my election.

JUDGE OF THE TWELFTH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS

Beginning: 11/1/21
Term: Six years
Salary: $152,850

Responsibilities: The Court of Appeals is essentially a Court of Review. It hears appeals from the Common Pleas, County, and Municipal Courts. Decisions are final except in cases involving constitutional questions, cases of felony, cases in which it has original jurisdiction, and cases of public or great general interest.

Matthew Byrne

Biographical Information:
Website: https://matthewbyrneformcourtofappeals.com/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/
matthewbyrneformcourtofappeals
Twitter: twitter.com/ByrneForJudge

Education: J.D. from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law / B.A. from Xavier University

Question 1: I am a first-time judicial candidate.

Question 2: I practice law at a large national law firm, Jackson Lewis P.C., where I represent businesses ranging from small family-owned companies to large international corporations in both federal and state courts, at both the trial and appeals court levels. My practice involves significant civil matters, including complex wage and hour class actions, discrimination cases, non-compete claims between businesses, tort claims, and much more. My skill in representing clients in these important cases has been recognized by Super Lawyers magazine, which has included me in its “Ohio Rising Stars” attorneys list (an honor given to only 2.5% of Ohio lawyers) every year since 2012.

I am a member of my firm’s Wage and Hour Practice Group and its General Employment Litigation Practice Group. I also admitted to practice in Kentucky, and maintain an extensive practice there in addition to my Ohio practice. I have also been admitted to appear pro hac vice in court or represented clients in administrative agency actions in more than twelve states.

My practice leaves me uniquely qualified to appeals court work, in that in addition to my appellate litigation experience, the types of cases that I handle in trial courts are heavily focused on research and writing regarding contested legal issues. Appeals courts, unlike trial courts, are solely focused on this type of legal work.

In addition, my career-long involvement in the Federalist Society, including as the president of the Federalist Society’s Cincinnati Lawyers Chapter for five years, demonstrates that I have the right judicial philosophy for the job. In that role I organized numerous substantive, in-depth discussions/debates of important legal issues, and I helped organize a statewide legal conference on a variety of emerging legal issues in Ohio. These events were attended by and featured numerous lawyers, judges, legislators, and even the United States Solicitor General. Simply put, I’ve spent most of my career both thinking about and practicing the skills one needs to be an effective court of appeals judge.

Question 3: I am running for this seat because I care about having highly qualified judges on Ohio’s courts, because I care deeply about limiting judicial overreach on the bench, and because I will enjoy the reading, research, and writing work performed by court of appeals judges. We need two things from court of appeals judges: (1) demonstrated legal excellence, and (2) a judicial philosophy that appreciates
and understands that judges are judges, not legislators, and must avoid judicial overreach by deciding cases solely based on the facts and law presented to them. I meet both these criteria. I think it is important that people act on their convictions and serve their community; accordingly, I decided to run for the 12th District Court of Appeals.

**JUDGE OF THE TWELFTH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS**

*Beginning: 2/9/21*

**Robert A. Hendrickson**

Candidate has not yet responded

**JUDGE OF THE BUTLER COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS**

*Beginning: 11/1/21*

**Term:** Six years  
**Salary:** $140,550

**Responsibilities:** To preside at trials of both civil and criminal cases; to supervise the jury commission, grand jury, and other departments of the court.

**JUDGE OF THE BUTLER COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS**

*Beginning: 1/2/21*

**Daniel E. Haughey**

Candidate has not yet responded

**JUDGE OF THE BUTLER COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS**

*Beginning: 2/9/21*

**Michael A. Oster, Jr.**

**Biographical Information:**

**Education:** J.D.; University of Cincinnati College of Law, with Honors; B.A. Malone College

**Question 1:** Judge, Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division, 2011-present. Elected by fellow judges to serve as Administrative Judge of the Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division, November, 2016-December, 2018. In addition to regular duties, presided over the Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division’s Felony Nonsupport Court from October, 2014-present.

**Question 2:** Prior to taking the bench in 2013, I served as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for many years. As an Assistant Prosecutor, I represented various county agencies and prosecuted cases in the Butler County Juvenile Court and the General Division of the Butler County Common Pleas Court. For thirteen years I was a trial prosecutor in the Child Assault Division of the Prosecutor’s Office. I prosecuted child homicide, physical abuse, and sexual abuse cases in the General Division of the Butler County Common Pleas Court. In 2011, I became the Division Chief of the Child Assault Division of the Prosecutor’s Office. I was honored to receive a Meritorious Service Award from the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association in 2012. My experience as a trial lawyer on numerous, serious felony cases in the very court where I currently serve as a judge uniquely prepared me to become a trial judge. Judges must be competent to rule on evidentiary and procedural issues during a trial. As a trial lawyer, I became experienced with the rules which govern trials and I am now able to use that knowledge and experience to make the necessary rulings as a trial judge. Moreover, judges must be fair and impartial. Prosecutors have an ethical obligation to seek the truth. My experience in focusing on the truth as an assistant prosecutor conditioned me to sit as a fair and impartial judge.

**Question 3:** I am running for reelection to my judicial seat. I was able to argue 10 times before the Supreme Court of Ohio, tried multiple capital murder cases, while also being nationally awarded for my work on capital murder cases, allowing me to exceptionally satisfy even the most difficult role that a Judge will have in the criminal justice system.

**JUDGE OF THE BUTLER COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS (JUVENILE DIVISION)**

*Beginning: 12/21*

**Term:** Six years

**Question 1:** I am running for reelection to my judicial seat. I was able to argue 10 times before the Supreme Court of Ohio, tried multiple capital murder cases, and was one of only two attorneys in the nation to be awarded the Board of Directors’ Appellate Award for Outstanding Advocacy in Capital Cases in 2011-2012 from The Association of Government Attorneys in Capital Litigation (AGACL).

The experience in the prosecutors office greatly prepared me for my role as a Judge. For example, the Court of Common Pleas is the trial court, it is important to note that I have successfully tried the most difficult and complex cases that arise in the Common Pleas Court, capital murder cases. Not only are these cases legally complex, but a defendant is given a heightened level of Due Process. It is in these cases where a trial Judge is truly challenged to satisfy their role and ensure justice for all. My experience in prosecuting three capital murder trials, while also being nationally awarded for my work on capital murder cases, will allow me to exceptionally satisfy even the most difficult role that a Judge will have in the criminal justice system. I am uniquely qualified in this way.

**Question 3:** I am choosing to seek re-election to my judicial seat to have a continued impact on the community, serve the public, and become the first line of defense to the Constitution. All Judges should strictly adhere to and follow the Constitution. This is accomplished when a Judge strictly reads the Constitution without adding, subtracting, or modifying this seminal document. Any Judge that deviates from the Constitution or attempts to change the law to their whims must be reversed. As a Common Pleas Court Judge, I will serve the public and will strictly protect the Constitution as written. Finally, I wish to continue the work with Veterans. It has been my unique Honor to work with and aid our Veterans, and when re-elected, I will continue this important work.

**Jennifer McElfresh**

**Biographical Information:**

**Education:** J.D., University of Cincinnati; B.A. with Honors, Certificate in Business Spanish, University of Cincinnati

**Question 1:** Judge, Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division, October, 2013-present. Elected by fellow judges to serve as Administrative Judge of the Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division, November, 2016-December, 2018. In addition to regular duties, presided over the Butler County Common Pleas Court, General Division’s Felony Nonsupport Court from October, 2014-present.

**Question 2:** Prior to taking the bench in 2013, I served as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for many years. As an Assistant Prosecutor, I represented various county agencies and prosecuted cases in the Butler County Juvenile Court and the General Division of the Butler County Common Pleas Court. For thirteen years I was a trial prosecutor in the Child Assault Division of the Prosecutor’s Office. I prosecuted child homicide, physical abuse, and sexual abuse cases in the General Division of the Butler County Common Pleas Court. In 2011, I became the Division Chief of the Child Assault Division of the Prosecutor’s Office. I was honored to receive a Meritorious Service Award from the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association in 2012. My experience as a trial lawyer on numerous, serious felony cases in the very court where I currently serve as a judge uniquely prepared me to become a trial judge. Judges must be competent to rule on evidentiary and procedural issues during a trial. As a trial lawyer, I became experienced with the rules which govern trials and I am now able to use that knowledge and experience to make the necessary rulings as a trial judge. Moreover, judges must be fair and impartial. Prosecutors have an ethical obligation to seek the truth. My experience in focusing on the truth as an assistant prosecutor conditioned me to sit as a fair and impartial judge.

**Question 3:** I am running for reelection to my judicial seat. I was able to argue 10 times before the Supreme Court of Ohio, tried multiple capital murder cases, while also being nationally awarded for my work on capital murder cases, allowing me to exceptionally satisfy even the most difficult role that a Judge will have in the criminal justice system. I am uniquely qualified in this way.

**Visit VOTE411.org for important election information.**
Questions:
1. Do you support the development of regional services such as Police, Fire, and EMS dispatch?
2. What do you see as the priorities for development within the unincorporated areas and incorporated areas of Butler County?
3. What are the responsibilities of the county commissioner regarding the containment of COVID-19?

T.C. Rogers, Republican

Biographical Information:
Website: http://tcrogers.org
Facebook: Tim C. Rogers
Twitter: twitter.com/TCCommissioner

Education: University of Cincinnati
BBA 1970
Qualification/Experience: This would be my third term as Commissioner. My business experience as a Builder/Realtor prepared me to take the Butler County finances from 93 million in debt to zero this year with a Aaa rating. And we have made our Children Services department a model for the state of Ohio

Question 1: I believe thru the advent of mutual aid practices the consolidation of 911, Swat, EMS, and large fire incidents have provided a platform of trust to further cooperate in different levels of services that allow jurisdictions to feel comfortable sharing some functions while still per serving their constituents expectations.

Question 2: My expertise in marketing vacant land or buildings have many times helped local governments secure development deals that have produced several win-win situations for their communities

Question 3: Our Commissioners have worked diligently to secure the resources to provide the supplies needed to address this pandemic. Our efforts have successfully put together the hospital, health department, and EMS to the levels of readiness that prepares our County for the most extreme cases. We are continuing our most complete levels of communication to anticipate the unexpected.

Donald Dixon, Republican

Biographical Information:
Website: http://DonaldDixon.org
Education: Graduated from Fairfield High School
Attended Ohio State

Qualification/Experience: 10 years as Fairfield Township Trustee. Served 17 years as Butler County Commissioner.

Question 1: The concept of regional safety services has been talked about for many years. However there has never been a study that proves combined services would work in our county. Butler County is recognized as one of the best safety service provider in the state and I see no reason to change.

Question 2: The first priority for unincorporated areas should be to create areas of different zoning categories to provide for continuing operating revenue for their government operations as well as smart residential development areas. Implementing a solid plan for infrastructure by cooperating with adjoining governmental entities to makes utilities affordable. Lastly for both areas taxes must remain low as it the major issue to attract new residents and tax generating companies.

Question 3: The responsibility of a County Commissioner is to communicate and cooperate with our local and State Health Commissioner and Governor. To provide the necessary funding to the health department to acquire additional personal and other services needed to keep our citizens safe and healthy. The county commissioners must lead the way in helping form a public awareness campaign to help eliminate this terrible virus and provide scientific guidance for the good of all are citizens.

Michael T. Gmoser, Republican

Biographical Information:
Website: http://www.butlercountyprosecutor.org
Education: B.A.; Miami University ('68) J.D.; Salmon P. Chase College of Law ('73)

Qualification/Experience: Asst. Butler County Prosecutor; ('74-'82) Defense Attorney and Trial Lawyer; ('82-'2011) County, Prosecutor, ('11-present) Bar Ethics and Grievance Committee; 36 years and 6 years as Co-Chair

Question 1: 1. Diligent and competent prosecution of all cases and issues. 2. Continued dedicated prosecution of crimes against the elderly. 3. Continued support of all prosecution and education efforts to fight against scams and drug abuse.

Question 2: By a hands approach to prosecution management and by hiring the best qualified attorneys to work with me and my policies and procedures. As a consequence, I have the best prosecutor's office in the State of Ohio. To assist in keeping it that way, I continue to be TOTALLY self-funded
Question 3: Candidates for employment are screened by me personally to insure my policy of equal treatment in all respects.

Mary Swain, Republican

Biographical Information:
Website: http://www.maryswain.com
Facebook: Mary Swain “Keep Mary As Our Clerk of Courts”
Twitter: twitter.com/MarySwain2020

Education: Certified Court Manager
Certified Court Executive (see answer to question 1 below)

Qualification/Experience: 22 years Gen. Div. Common Pleas Ct., where I was promoted to Mgr. and Ct. Adm. and Transcription Services. Attended Court Management and Court Executive Programs, a partnership between the Ohio Supreme Court Judicial College and National Center for State Courts’ Institute for Court Management, making me both a Certified Court Manager and Certified Court Executive. I have currently served more than 10 years as the Clerk of Courts and seeking my 3rd full term in Nov.

Question 2: Excellent question, as this is a difficult balance for Clerks of Courts. The majority of our documents are considered public. However, there are statutes, local rules, and case law governing what may not be considered public. Though, it is much more complicated than this, the obvious example would be Social Security numbers. My commitment is to allow as much access to information as permitted by law, while securing protection through proper redaction and sealing of records as required.

Question 1: How has your training and experience prepared you to serve as Butler County Clerk of Courts? Please be specific in relation to the broad scope of the Clerk’s duties.

2. How would you balance freedom of information with the protection of individual privacy?

BUTLER COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS
CLERK OF COMMON PLEAS
Beginning: 114/21
Term of Office: Four years
Salary: Based on population

Responsibilities: To enter judgments and transfer automobile and water craft certificates of title.

Questions:
1. How has your training and experience prepared you to serve as Butler County Clerk of Courts? Please be specific in relation to the broad scope of the Clerk’s duties.
2. How would you balance freedom of information with the protection of individual privacy?

BUTLER COUNTY RECORDER
Beginning: 114/21
Term of Office: Four years
Salary: Based on population

Responsibilities: To record deeds, mortgages, plats, liens, and other written instruments.

Questions:
1. How would you improve the operation of the office of the Butler County Recorder?
2. What do you think is your greatest challenge of record keeping in Butler County today and in the foreseeable future?
3. How are records stored? What percentage of records are digital?

Danny N. Crank, Republican

BUTLER COUNTY SHERIFF
Beginning: 114/21
Term of Office: Four years
Salary: Based on population

Responsibilities: To provide services to the courts, to oversee county jail, and to act as chief law enforcement officer in the county.

Questions:
1. What are your top priorities for the office of the Sheriff?
2. What special training, if any, should county law enforcement undergo related to mental and behavioral health?

Richard K. Jones, Republican

BUTLER COUNTY TREASURER
Beginning: 9/6/21
Term of Office: Four years
Salary: Based on population

Responsibilities: To collect taxes in the counties and its subdivisions, disburse expenditures and invest the county’s funds.

Questions:
1. What safeguards would you implement to ensure accountability to taxpayers?
2. How would you navigate stock market fluctuations created by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Nancy Nix, Republican

Biographical Information:
Website: http://butlercountytreasurer.org
Facebook: Butler County Treasurer Nancy Nix

Education: MBA from Miami University. BS in Accounting and Marketing, double major, from Truman State University, Kirksville, MO.

Qualification/Experience: Certified Public Accountant. Former Banking Manager. Former Vice Mayor and City Councilwoman.

Question 1: My office constantly strives to provide financial accountability and companies in speeding up the recording process and making the real estate closing process seamless.

Question 3: The records in the recorder’s office are permanent records and date back to 1797. Documents from 1987 to present are digital and we are in the process of scanning records back to 1980. Our goal is to eventually have all of the records digitized. In addition to the historical books and digital images onsite, all records are preserved and stored on microfilm, in a secure, out of state location, in case of an unexpected emergency.

Butler County Recorder’s Office is to scan and provide 40 years of images that are searchable from our online search site. This has never been as important as it has this year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are scanning our documents in house, and our effort, thus far, has resulted in title exams being completed from home or work offices without needing access to our physical office.

Question 2: The recorder has the important task of recording and protecting the vital records pertaining to ownership of real estate and to all encumbrances or liens upon it. The continued adoption of new technology is essential in running a successful office. As the first county recorder in Ohio to provide eRecording, promoting the use of this technology is advantageous to attorneys and title
quality customer service to taxpayers at the lowest possible cost. We are responsible for the collection of > $500 million in property taxes and investments > $230 million, and we receive clean audits each year. We have reduced staffing from 26 employees to 13, a huge savings to taxpayers. In 2012, I instituted the county land bank which has received millions in federal and state blight funding.

**Question 2:** We are in frequent communications with our bond portfolio managers to maximize interest revenues amidst falling fed funds rates. We are always seeking ways to increase bond market holdings rather than bank holdings, while keeping enough funds on hand to pay the county’s bills. Our investment priorities are safety, liquidity, and return, in that order. COVID has seriously impacted the county’s interest revenue projections; therefore, we must be highly vigilant in finding additional return.

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**BUTLER COUNTY CORONER**

*Beginning: 11/4/21*

*Term of Office: Four years*

*Salary: Based on population*

Responsibilities: To determine the cause of death of persons dying in a violent or suspicious manner and to issue death certificates.

**Questions:**

1. **What impact has COVID-19 had on your office and what improvements are needed when planning for the future?**

2. **How has the opioid crisis impacted the county coroner position?**

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**Lisa K. Mannix, Republican**

**Biographical Information:**

*Education: Doctor of Medicine - University of Cincinnati*

*Qualification/Experience: Serving as Butler County Coroner since 2012*

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**LOCAL BALLOT ISSUES**

**Issue 33:**

*Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal)*

Butler County

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Butler County for the purpose of operating mental health service programs and maintaining and operating mental health facilities by the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board at a rate not exceeding one (1) mill for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to ten cents ($0.10) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of five (5) years, commencing in 2021, first due in calendar year 2022.

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**Issue 34:**

*Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal)*

Butler County

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Butler County, Ohio, for the purpose of providing and maintaining senior citizens services at a rate not exceeding one and three-tenths (1.3) mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to thirteen cents ($0.13) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of five (5) years, commencing in 2020, first due in calendar year 2021.

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For the Tax Levy

Against the Tax Levy
**BALLOT CHECKLIST**

United States President
- Donald Trump, Republican
- Joe Biden, Democrat

US Representative to Congress House District 8
- Warren Davidson, Republican
- Vanessa Enoch, Democrat

Ohio State Senator District 4
- George Lang, Republican
- Kathy Wyenandt, Democrat

Ohio State House District 51
- Sara Carruthers, Republican

Ohio State House District 52
- Jennifer Gross, Republican
- Chuck Horn, Democrat

Ohio State House District 53
- Thomas Hall, Republican
- Michelle Novak, Democrat

Ohio State House District 54
- Paul Zeltwanger, Republican
- Morgan Showen, Democrat

JUDGES
- Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court
  Beginning: 1/1/21
  - Sharon L. Kennedy
  - John P. O’Donnell
- Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court
  Beginning: 1/2/21
  - Judy French
  - Jennifer Brunner
- Judge of the Twelfth District Court of Appeals
  Beginning: 1/1/21
  - Matthew Byrne
- Judge of the Twelfth District Court of Appeals
  Beginning: 2/9/21
  - Robert A. Hendrickson
- Judge of the Butler County Court of Common Pleas
  Beginning: 1/1/21
  - Jennifer McElfresh
- Judge of the Butler County Court of Common Pleas
  Beginning: 1/3/21
  - Daniel E. Haughey
- Judge of the Butler County Court of Common Pleas
  Beginning: 2/9/21
  - Michael A. Oster, Jr.
- Judge of the Butler County Court of Common Pleas
  (Juvenile Division) Beginning: 1/2/21
  - Erik D. Niehaus
- Judge of the Butler County Court of Common Pleas
  (Probate Division) Beginning: 2/9/21
  - John M. Holcomb

BUTLER COUNTY
- Butler County Commissioner
  Beginning: 1/1/21
  - T.C. Rogers, Republican
- Butler County Commissioner
  Beginning: 1/3/21
  - Donald Dixon, Republican
- Butler County Prosecutor
  - Michael T. Gmoser, Republican

Butler County Clerk of Courts
- Mary Swain, Republican

Butler County Sheriff
- Richard Jones, Republican

Butler County Recorder
- Danny N. Crank, Republican

Butler County Treasurer
- Nancy Nix, Republican

Butler County Engineer
- Gregory J. Wilkens, Republican

Butler County Coroner
- Lisa K. Mannix, Republican

ISSUES
- Issue 33: Mental Health
  - Yes
  - No
- Issue 34: Senior Services
  - Yes
  - No

**ELECTION DAY PROBLEMS?**

Report an election issue by calling:

- 1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)
- 1-888-API-VOTE (Asian multilingual assistance)
- 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español)
- 1-844-YALLA-US (Arabic)

WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, IN ORDER TO
FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION, ESTABLISH JUSTICE,
INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY, PROVIDE FOR THE
COMMON DEFENCE, PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE,
AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY TO OURSELVES
AND OUR POSTERITY DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS
CONSTITUTION FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
We are grateful to the supporters of the League of Women Voters of Oxford Education Fund for making the Voter Information Guide possible.

Oxford Polling Places:
Polls Open
6:30 am to 7:30 pm

Verify your polling place before you head to the polls:
https://elections.bcohio.gov/where_do_i_vote

The Oxford League welcomes persons who identify with any or no political party, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, culture, and religion who believe that government can make a difference to improve the lives of all residents. As a national, state, and local organization, the League pursues all constitutional avenues to ensure that citizens seeking rightly to vote have the access and means to vote. The League invites you to join us. For further information and a membership form, please go to our website: https://my.lwv.org/ohio/oxford.