



2016 VOTER GUIDE GENERAL ELECTION

Marion County, Florida



Welcome to the League of Women Voters of The Villages / Tri-County Area 2016 General Election Guide

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization of women and men whose purpose is to engage voters in the political process by promoting informed and active participation in government. The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates or political parties. Through education and advocacy, the League of Women Voters promotes good governance.

The Voter's Guide was created by the League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area. The purpose of the Guide is to assist voters in their ballot choices.

All qualified candidates were contacted and asked to complete a questionnaire.

Candidate responses are included as submitted. They have not been edited, nor have spelling and grammar corrections been made.

If a candidate completed the questionnaire, the *What's on My Ballot* section contains a link as well as the page number where the responses are located. If a candidate chose not to respond, "No Response" will appear next to the candidate's name in the *What's on My Ballot* section.

The candidates' views expressed within do not represent those of the League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area.

To contact the LWV of The Villages / Tri-County area, go to

www.lwvtrifl.org

WHAT'S ON MY BALLOT

Click on candidates' names to go to their responses.

NOTE: "WRI" after a candidate's name designates Write-In. The names of these candidates will not appear on the ballot; you must enter the name in the space provided.

Page

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT (Vote for One)

Donald Trump (REP)
Hillary Clinton (DEM)
Gary Johnson (LIB)
Jill Stein (GRN)

UNITED STATES SENATE (Vote for One)

For information on this statewide race click on

<http://thefloridavoter.org/us-senate-candidate-guide/>

Marco Rubio (REP) (*Incumbent*)
Patrick Murphy (DEM)
Augustus Sol Invictus (LIB)
Paul Stanton (LIB)
Basil Dalack (NPA)
Jon Friend (NPA)
Tony Khoury (NPA)
Steven Machat (NPA)
Bruce Nathan (NPA)
Charles Tolbert (NPA)
Howard Knepper (WRI)
Robert Kaplan (WRI)
Bradley Patrick (WRI)
Angela Marie Walls-Windhauser (WRI)

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2 (Vote for One)

NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in Congressional District 2.

Neal Dunn (REP)
[Walter Dartland](#) (DEM)
[Rob Lapham](#) (LPF)
Antoine Edward Roberts (WRI)

No Response
7
9
No Response

WHAT'S ON MY BALLOT

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REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 3 (Vote for One) <i>NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in Congressional District 3.</i>	
Ted Yoho (REP) (Incumbent)	No Response
Kenneth McGurn (DEM)	No Response
Randall C. Duvall (NPA)	No Response
Tom Wells (NPA)	No Response
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 11 (Vote for One) <i>NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in Congressional District 11.</i>	
Daniel Webster (REP)	No Response
David Koller (DEM)	No Response
Bruce Ray Riggs (NPA)	No Response
FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 8 (Vote for One) <i>NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in FL Senate District 8.</i>	
Keith Perry (REP)	14
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FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 12 (Vote for One) <i>NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in FL Senate District 12.</i>	
Dennis K. Baxley (REP)	16
Elizabeth Kathryn McNutt (WRI)	No Response
FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT 23 (Vote for One) <i>NOTE: This race will appear on your ballot only if you live in FL House District 23.</i>	
Stanley E. McClain Jr. (REP)	No Response
Rick Perry (DEM)	18
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER (Vote for One)	
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SHERIFF (Vote for One)	
William "Billy" Woods (REP)	25
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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1 (Vote for One)	
David Moore (REP) <i>(Incumbent)</i>	29
John H Townsend IV (NPA)	31
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 3 (Vote for One)	
Jeff Gold (REP)	33
Joe Brown (WRI)	No Response
Richard N Brown II (WRI)	No Response
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 5 (Vote for One)	
Michelle Stone (REP)	35
James L. Taub (WRI)	No Response
James Dale Touchton (WRI)	No Response
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Vote for One)	
Heidi Maier (REP)	No Response
Pamela J. Archer (WRI)	No Response
Kelly E. Taub (WRI)	No Response

MERIT RETENTION: *Florida law requires Florida Supreme Court and Court of Appeals justices to be placed on the ballot every six years so voters can determine whether the judges should remain on their courts for another term. The appearance of a judge on the ballot does not indicate anything about his or her performance or actions as a judge.*

FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

NOTE: *Because these justices are on all ballots in Florida, they appear in the Florida LWV's Voter Guide, not this guide which only covers local candidates. Click on the following link to see that information.*

<http://bereadytovote.org/voter-guide-to-supreme-court-justices/>

(RETENTION: Vote "Yes" or "No" for each of the following justices)

Charles Canady *(Incumbent)*
Jorge Labarga *(Incumbent)*
Ricky Polston *(Incumbent)*

WHAT'S ON MY BALLOT

Page

DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS, 5th APPELLATE DISTRICT

(RETENTION: Vote “Yes” or “No” for each of the following incumbents)

[Jay Cohen](#) (Incumbent)
James Edwards (Incumbent)
Brian Lambert (Incumbent)
Vincent G. Torpy, Jr. (Incumbent)

37
No Response
No Response
No Response

FLORIDA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

NOTE: For information on the following amendments to the Florida Constitution click on

[http://bereadytovote.org/2016-florida-constitutional-ballot-amendments/.](http://bereadytovote.org/2016-florida-constitutional-ballot-amendments/)

(Vote “Yes” or “No” on each amendment)

No. 1: Solar Energy

No. 2: Medical Marijuana

No. 3: Tax Exemption for Disabled First Responders

NOTE: Amendment 4 was on the Primary ballot.

No. 5: Homestead Exemption for Low-income Seniors

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2



WALTER DARTLAND (DEM)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Walter Dartland was born in Detroit, Michigan, of immigrant parents and graduated from Cass Tech High School. He received a full scholarship to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic (RPI) Institute in Troy, NY where he earned a B.S in Mechanical Engineering. After graduation and Marine Corps Basic School at Quantico, he joined the US Marines as a 2nd Lt. Upon completion of active duty he served in the Marine Corps Reserves and retired as a Major. Dartland graduated from Law School at the University of Michigan.

He was elected prosecutor in the Upper Peninsula Michigan, and had private law practices in Michigan and Florida. He served as Miami- Dade County Consumer Advocate and as Deputy Attorney General to Bob Butterworth. Dartland is married to Diana Walworth Dartland and has 3 adult children and 3 grandchildren.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Served on the National boards of the Consumer Federation of America, Coalition against Insurance Fraud and Common Cause. He was president of Florida Common Cause and the Consumer Counseling Service of the Southeast and Vice-president of Friends of Lake Jackson. He is a life member of the Marine Corps League.

An estimated 300,000 people, in the United States, have died from gun violence between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you believe the Second Amendment leaves any room for limits on gun rights, such as a ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

The Federal Government does have the right and responsibility to help curb gun violence. An Appeals court has already upheld one states ban on the possession or sale of over 100 types of weapons with military features as well as a ban on high capacity magazines. 40% of all gun sales are made via the gun show loop hole which must be closed. Sales by private parties should include a background check. In 2015, Terror Watch listees applied to buy firearms 244 times. After a background check, 91% were approved. A longer waiting period will allow a thorough, timely and effective review of an applicant's eligibility. Waiting periods are a proven cooling off devise in consumer transactions and will save lives if applied to gun sales. Armor piercing bullets and large capacity magazines, should not be sold to non-military users. Congress is currently being held hostage by a small but vocal set of voters who refuse to allow the Congressmen they hold captive to discuss the facts and evaluate reasonable public policy that respects individual's rights and lowers the staggering death toll attributable to the inappropriate use of guns. This paralysis is occurring in spite of the fact that 90% of US citizens (75% of NRA members) support background checks.



REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2

WALTER DARTLAND *(continued)*

Some 30 million Americans remain uninsured. Would you support or oppose the Affordable Health Care Act as currently written? Explain why you would support its continuation or what kind of plan, if any, should replace it.

I support the AFC because it has helped millions of families-- about 9 million more in 2014 than in the prior year to obtain health care coverage. AFC like any other insurance policy is a safety net to prevent financial disaster. It is a fact that people with health insurance can better survive illness and injury that could result in loss of employment and an increase in debt default. Complex legislation such as AHC will have flaws that become apparent over time and the flaws should be factually analyzed and fixed. My goal would be to focus on insuring as many people as possible, at affordable rates. I support aggressive prosecutions to stop the epidemic Medical Provider price gouging and fraud that has cost the taxpayer over \$60 Billion. Ultimately, a single payer system is more cost effective providing better care at a lower cost.

Some presidential candidates have said they would favor getting rid of the US Department of Education. Explain what kind of role you believe the Federal Government should play in education and what Federal education policies you would support or oppose.

Quality Education for all students should be a national priority. The better educated our citizens, the more prosperous our Country and better the US is able to compete internationally. That means efforts to provide quality education should be made at all levels of government: Federal, state as well as local school districts. The Federal involvement can best be focused on identifying effective programs around the country and around the world and providing that information to states and the local districts so that successful programs may be emulated. The Federal government is a logical place to establish nationwide goals that are competitive with those of countries with superior educational performance.

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REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2



ROB LAPHAM (LPF)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Occupation: Retired, 2010-present.
Education: Felsted School, Felsted, Essex, England, 5 GCE 'O' Levels, 1958-1961; Trinity College, Hartford, CT, Economics, Degree not completed, 1961-1963.
Professional Experience: 1993-2009 co-founder and Vice President Business Development, DataFlow/Alaska, Inc., Anchorage, AK; 1988-1992 owner, Education Systems of Alaska and Jostens

Learning/Alaska, Inc.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

11/2015-4/2016 member Executive Committee, Libertarian Party of Florida (resigned to campaign for office); 2016 Candidate, US House of Representatives, FL-02
2010-2015 member State Libertarian Executive Committee of Libertarian Party of Texas including volunteer service as Ombudsman (2010), Executive Director (10/2010-12/2011), IT Project Manager (2012-2014), Candidate, US House of Representatives, TX-22 (2014)
2010-2015 served in various officer capacities at Libertarian Party of Fort Bend Coun No.

An estimated 300,000 people, in the United States, have died from gun violence between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you believe the Second Amendment leaves any room for limits on gun rights, such as a ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

No.

While not supported by the 2nd Amendment I do favor more thorough background checks, including closing the "gun show loophole". However, background checks will be less effective without a comprehensive psychological evaluation were to be required for each prospective gun owner -- an invasion of privacy that I do not support.

Wholesale gun bans are ineffective; policing would violate the 4th Amendment.

If guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns.



REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2

ROB LAPHAM *(continued)*

Some 30 million Americans remain uninsured. Would you support or oppose the Affordable Health Care Act as currently written? Explain why you would support its continuation or what kind of plan, if any, should replace it.

I oppose AHA.

I do not want any one plan to replace it, but I do support multiple free market approaches including deregulation of health care providers, voluntary co-ops, enabling purchase of medical insurance across state lines and allowing an individual to place a reasonable level of funds in a pre-tax health savings account.

If elected, I will sponsor and work tirelessly to pass legislation to get the federal government out of the health care business so that it can be dramatically more effective, safer, easily affordable, and far more responsive to individual needs.

Specifically:

- End all federal mandates on individuals and businesses to buy medical insurance.
- End all coverage mandates and restrictions on health insurance that prevent companies from selling policies that customers want to buy. Enable purchase of medical insurance plans across state lines.
- End government guarantees, subsidies and bailouts of insurance companies, including "risk corridors."
- End all federal laws and regulations that restrict use, or that drive up the cost, of drugs, medical supplies and equipment, and other health care products and services. This includes ending all regulatory powers of the Food and Drug Administration.
- Require states receiving federal Medicaid funds to similarly end all state mandates and regulations on medical care.
- Give veterans total control over their health care (separate subject)

Some presidential candidates have said they would favor getting rid of the US Department of Education. Explain what kind of role you believe the Federal Government should play in education and what Federal education policies you would support or oppose.

36 years ago the U.S. Department of Education came into being. During the period they spent \$1.5 trillion. <<http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/history/edhistory.pdf>>

We spend way more per student than any other country.

What results did we get? Here's a recent survey. It ranks our kids 36th in the world:

http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fnycentral.com%2Fnews%2Flocal%2Fnew-survey-ranksus-students-36th-in-the-world---how-do-weimprove%3Fid%3D978874&h=oAQFw88_KAQEXULzpfll0bl7-Dc4xaDysCBHnLuyR4Ke5lg&enc=AZPz9Clew5n2L7qArDRTF6uAOeiv517-i8_cH5qiPBXuf6MdgNB0-PZG2Mwpig0B5uR23Q8wxIEbdyNxYuJocL0EJAQszJqAoJJqR4V8MhJVtgVoODE60HTF3pYabKNHjp6H_FtbUAhYs6WcrT1OJ34uJvnmNgtu0gZDJZu74kVrmNolwencHE4SHubcgFNI&s=1

I did not find our students' ranking back in 1980 when the Dept. of Education started, but as recently as 20 years ago there is evidence to support that we were ranked 1st.

<<http://www.historynet.com/was-the-usa-ever-no-1-in-education.htm>>



REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2

ROB LAPHAM *(continued)*

What to do about yet another abysmal failure on the part of our federal government?

Terminate the Dept. of Education. Close it down. Block grant the \$50+ billion to the states -- under any formula Florida will receive more than \$1 billion - and phase it out over 5 years.

Education is a local responsibility. The federal government has no business in education, constitutionally or otherwise. Certainly not with your tax dollar.

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FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 8



KEITH PERRY (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I was born in Tallahassee, and had the privileged of being raised here in Gainesville. My dad was a professor at UF, and my mother a nurse at UF Health. After graduating Buchholz High School at 18 I started Perry Roofing. Along with running Perry Roofing, I am the founding President of House of Hope – Transitional Housing Program for recently released prisoners.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Boys and Girl Club Home Builders Association
Kiwanis Salvation Army
House of Hope

An estimated 300,000 people in the United States have died from gun violence, between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you support or oppose a state ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

I am always open to looking into any regulation that does not impede on a constitutional right.

Since over 500,000 working poor Florida citizens remain without health insurance, would you support tapping Federal dollars to cover these people? If not, what kind of plan do you support?

No. Medicaid is one of the worst programs in our country. It costs billions of dollars with very, very, poor health outcomes. More local control of the system would be a step in the right direction.

What is your view on the State vs. Local community responsibility for funding public education?

Funding for public education is one of my highest priorities. The state can help even the playing field with statewide due to some counties being poor. With an environment not conducive for success in some children, public education may be the only choice for them. I also believe that Arts & Music should be a core part of the educational experience.

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FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 8



ROD SMITH (DEM)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Education: University of Tulsa, 1971 Bachelor of Arts; University of Florida College of Law, 1975 Juris Doctor

History: I was state attorney of the 8th Judicial Circuit from 1992 to 2000 and state senator 2000-2006.

Occupation: I am currently an attorney in the Gainesville area.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Over the years, some of my active involvement has included, serving on the Alachua Library Board, coaching youth baseball and softball, and participating in youth livestock fairs and on their board of directors.

An estimated 300,000 people in the United States have died from gun violence, between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you support or oppose a state ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

I support stronger background checks. I do not support a ban on commonly used semi-automatic weapons. I would support greater background checks and training requirements for people who have assault weapons.

Since over 500,000 working poor Florida citizens remain without health insurance, would you support tapping Federal dollars to cover these people? If not, what kind of plan do you support?

Yes, I wholeheartedly support this and my opponent, Keith Perry, has opposed and still opposes it.

What is your view on the State vs. Local community responsibility for funding public education?

It's a shared responsibility. But I believe that the state ultimately bears a greater burden because too many communities, particularly in the poorest areas of the state, are unable to provide the kind of quality public schools that the future demands.

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FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 12



DENNIS BAXLEY (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

City of Residence: Ocala
Occupation: Funeral Director & Consultant
Spouse: Micheline "Ginette" Begin of Québec, Canada
Child(ren): Micah, Justin, Damon, Jeffrey, Renée
Grandchild(ren): Jacob, Joshua, Martha, Katherine, Hazel, William, Makayla, Kate Lynn
Education: Central Florida Community College, A.A., 1972; Florida State University, B.S., Sociology/Psychology, 1974; Miami-Dade

Community College, A.S., Funeral Service Degree, 1975

Born: August 22, 1952, Ocala, FL

Religious Affiliation: Southern Baptist

Recreational Interest: fishing, listening to Gospel music, reading

Elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2010, reelected subsequently

Florida House of Representatives, 2000-June 26, 2007

Speaker pro tempore, November 21, 2006-June 12, 2007

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

First Avenue National Bank, founding Chairman

Florida Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, board member

Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys

Gideons

Lions Club

Marion County Children's Advocacy Center, Kimberly's Center for Child Protection, board member

Marion County Children's Alliance

Bellevue Rotary, past President

The Vine Community Church, Elder, 2010

An estimated 300,000 people in the United States have died from gun violence, between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you support or oppose a state ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

Oppose any more gun laws

Since over 500,000 working poor Florida citizens remain without health insurance, would you support tapping Federal dollars to cover these people? If not, what kind of plan do you support?

No. I favor private market solutions.



FLORIDA SENATE DISTRICT 12

DENNIS BAXLEY *(continued)*

What is your view on the State vs. Local community responsibility for funding public education?

It is a shared responsibility.

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FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT 23



RICK PERRY (DEM)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I am a native Floridian and was born in Winter Haven. I have resided in Ocala since 1985 and I am a lawyer who practises in the area of commercial bankruptcy law.

I graduated from the University of Florida in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science Degree. In 1983 I graduated from law school at Nova Southeastern University and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1984.

Kathy Perry is my caring wife who puts up with my shenanigans. We have a four year old grand daughter who lives with Kathy's daughter (my step-daughter) in Arizona.

I like to hunt; and, I like to fish. I own a shotgun, a canoe and, a mess of fishing rods. I have been hunting and fishing in the Ocala National Forest for more than 50 years. My last goal in life is to save Silver Springs and restore the Ocklawaha River.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

President - Board of Directors of the Marion County Bar Association

President - Board of Directors of The Centers

Member of the Fifth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee

An estimated 300,000 people in the United States have died from gun violence, between 2004 and 2014. Here, at home in Orlando, the June 12 nightclub shooting saw 49 people killed, and 50 more wounded. Do you support or oppose a state ban on assault weapons and/or more thorough background checks? Please explain your position.

I do not think a state ban on assault rifles is practical at this point in time. There is no consensus in defining what is an assault weapon. Further, the leadership in the Florida legislature cowers at the thought of opposing the NRA and will not permit a vote on the issue.

I do support more thorough background checks and closing the gun show loop hole which permits sales without background checks.

The only practical way to decrease gun violence in Florida at this point in time is to increase funding for mental health. Many (but admittedly not all) of those involved in mass shootings have a history of mental illness. Funding for mental health by the Florida legislature is abysmal. However, there is growing bi-partisan support for increased funding due to recent gun violence.



FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT 23

RICK PERRY *(continued)*

Since over 500,000 working poor Florida citizens remain without health insurance, would you support tapping Federal dollars to cover these people? If not, what kind of plan do you support?

I support expanding Medicaid in Florida. Four billion dollars each year is available from the federal government for the expansion of Medicaid and the Florida legislature has refused to act on it because it is part of "Obamacare". Those four billion dollars are from taxes paid by Floridians into the federal treasury. The failure to expand Medicaid means that the working poor have to rely on local hospitals for their care. Because the poor cannot pay....the cost is passed on to those of us with private health insurance and drives up our health insurance premiums.

What is your view on the State vs. Local community responsibility for funding public education?

I believe the State needs to suck it up and do it's part. It isn't. The result is an underfunded public education system.

The Florida legislature needs to give up on its fascination with the charter school industry. In particular, the for-profit charter school operations need to be eliminated. They are the newest piglet sucking cash out of the state treasury.

The Florida legislature needs to quit imposing unfunded mandates on school districts. If it is something which needs to be done....funds need to be made available.

The tax base of the Florida school districts is primarily limited to property taxes. It is not fair that property owners bear an unfair burden of taxation when it comes to funding the schools. It is the responsibility of the Florida legislature make sure proper funding available to eliminate that unfair burden.

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CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER



DAVID ELLSPERMANN (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I started my career as a public servant. I was in law enforcement, the Executive Director at the Public Defender's Office, and Executive Director of the State Attorney's Office.

I am an accountant by education turned police officer with a Master's degree in Criminal Justice, who has experience as an executive within many aspects of our judicial system, and a heart and mindset for serving.

My experience and education enabled me, as your Clerk, to position Marion County for an increased bond rating to AA-, which impacts our local economy significantly. I was recognized as Florida's Clerk of Year an unprecedented two years and then a third. I was the first Clerk in Florida to redact personal information from public records and have received a clean audit of the county's budget and processes each year I have been in office.

My motivation? My hometown. Protecting your privacy, your property, and your tax dollars.

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Criminal Justice Administration (Rollins College)
Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting (University of Georgia)
Certified Public Manager (Florida State University)
High School (Vanguard High School)

EXPERIENCE

Marion County Clerk of the Court & Comptroller
Office of the State Attorney, Executive Director
West Central Florida Driver Improvement, Executive Director
Office of the Public Defender, Executive Director
Ocala Police Department, Patrol & Investigations
University of Georgia Police Department, Patrol & Investigations

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Full listing at www.electellspermann.com

- Article V Indigent Services
- Blessed Trinity Parish Council
- Chamber & Economic Partnership
- College of Central Florida Foundation
- Economic Development Council
- FL Supreme Court Treatment-Based Drug Court Steering Committee
- FL Supreme Court, Courts Technology Commission
- Hospice
- March of Dimes Regional Executive Board



CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

DAVID ELLSPERMANN *(continued)*

- Marion Co. Cancer Society
- Marion Co. Credit Union
- Marion Co. YMCA
- Special Olympics
- United Way
- Volunteer Senior Services

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

My experience and education have prepared me specifically to serve you as Clerk of the Court and Comptroller.

Marion County has been my home since I was two years old when my family moved here to work on my uncle's horse farm. My wife, Jayne, and I have been in public service since we moved here to begin our life together. Our married daughters and five grandchildren now call Marion County home. I have great motivation to keep our community strong and economy healthy.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Office is a complex agency. I am your Chief Financial Officer, Budget Officer, Internal Auditor, County Recorder, Clerk to the Court, and Ex-Officio to the Board of County Commissioners.

The office performs a wide range of financial information management for our Marion County government and judicial system, including overseeing the county's budget of \$552 million, a current investment of funds balance at \$229 million, and 250,000+ pages recorded each year.

I respect that the impact of the Clerk's duties on your rights and property make accountability, education and experience essential. I have a proven performance history and relevant professional experience and education to serve you as Clerk and Comptroller. I am a dedicated community volunteer and leader within local and state organizations. I remain ready and qualified to serve you. Please vote to re-elect me, David Ellspermann. Thank you for your consideration. www.electellspermann.com

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

Focusing on the health of our economy is paramount. As Comptroller, Chief Financial Officer and Budget Officer for the county, I must continue to maximize revenues and mitigate tax increases for our County; which also includes upholding my commitment to manage the safety, liquidity and the yield of funds invested. Having recently worked to convince the S&P to upgrade our county bond rating from A- to AA-, our county is poised for opportunities if our financial position and processes remain consistent and trusted moving forward.



CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

DAVID ELLSPERMANN *(continued)*

Now is also the time to have a respected public administrator proficient in finance and courts systems representing you in Tallahassee as Florida Clerks pursue changes in legislation. If court fees are paid in Marion County, and the services are provided in Marion County, then the fees should return to Marion County instead of the state's general revenue budget. I am a current board member of the Association of Florida Clerks & Comptrollers taking this action.

Determining effective technology solutions to perform Clerk's duties is an ongoing responsibility. As a Clerk committed to customer service, technology is utilized to create efficiencies and allow the office to do more with (at times shrinking) resources. Our efforts have earned Marion County positive recognition state and nation-wide. Innovation will also be important as I continue to work with the Florida Supreme Court to complete implementation of paperless court operations using e-filing.

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CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER



CYNTHIA ANNE MOODY (DEM)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I was born and raised in Ocala, Florida in 1959. I married Otto Hoel in 2005 and have two grown sons.

I am a graduate of The College of Central Florida and am currently enrolled there and in the final stages of receiving my Bachelor's degree in business and organizational management. I am studying under the finest professors in this area that bring to the classroom the newest, most updated styles of leadership and management skills.

In 1997 I became employed by the clerk of the court eventually working in nearly every division of the clerk's office. In 2007 I moved to the state court division and worked as a judicial assistant to the circuit judges. I am currently a typist as I had to resign my position with the state court system to run for this clerk of the court position.

I have been a leader for Weight Watchers. I have been a small business owner opening A Body Affair. I have been a CPT and nutrition specialist.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

I have volunteered for the Humane Society, the Rape Crisis center, delivering bread from Publix to the homeless, the Salvation Army, and soup kitchens.

I have been associated and/or active with the following organizations: BAS Network, CJSA, JAAF, MCLSA, Boys and Girl Scouts of America, PTO, Life South, Democratic Womens Club of Florida, Marion County Democratic Women's Club, Toastmasters, F.L.A.G.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

I believe that my 19 years of employment in the court system and my education prepare me for this position. I have worked in nearly every division of the clerk's office on the front lines. I began in the County Civil/Summary Claims division where I also dealt with passports and evictions. After a year I became deputy clerk and moved to the Felony division where I was the evidence coordinator as well as the appellate clerk. At that same time I also worked with the felony cases.

I have processed cases, closed cases, processed payments, billed clients. I have worked with misdemeanor, traffic, official records, circuit civil, probate, mental health, family, adoption, juvenile dependency, juvenile delinquency cases and Jimmy Ryce cases. I have worked with the jury division and I have worked with the judges, judicial assistants, public defender, state attorney, all entities that utilize the court system and most of the local attorneys.

I understand the court system and the idea of putting the right people in the right positions. I understand that an employer has a duty to take care of employees first and those employees, in turn, will take good care of its citizens. I understand the importance of continuing education.

I understand the attitude one must have while working in this system.

I am comfortable dealing with confrontational people. And I am comfortable dealing with the judges.



CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

CYNTHIA ANNE MOODY *(continued)*

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

If elected to this office, I would address the following:

The payment plan per FS 28.246 the current administration offers sets defendants up to fail causing them to recycle through the system and jail, costing the taxpayer.

I would establish a new plan that works with the defendant to get him/her out of the court system entirely, keeping them out of jail and working, not suspending license, and doing all we can to help them as they go through the process of repaying their debt to society.

Domestic violence victims deserve a safe secure and relatively private place FS 741.30 when they must come into the courthouse to fill out paperwork and wait for judge's response.

I would relocate the domestic violence division to a safe, secure and relatively private area of the courthouse and install alarms/panic buttons, assist the victims and keep them comfortable and make sure they are aware of all services available to them so they do not feel they must return to the dangerous situation. Always make sure staff knows that only the judges are to make the decision of whether a victim has a case or not. Staff should never make that decision.

Current administration purchased a new case management system and prematurely went live with this new system causing problems to most users. I would put in place a team to handle the daily crisis and I would also put in place a team of stakeholders to find the resolution and implement it as soon as possible.

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SHERIFF



BILLY WOODS (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I was born in 1968 in Ocala, FL becoming a 5th generation Marion County resident. My father served the City of Ocala Fire Department for 32 years and 16 of those years as the city's Fire Chief. My mother has been a school teacher for 43 years. I met my wife in high school in 1986 but it wasn't until 1998 we were married and now we have two sons. My education includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration (Summa Cum Laude) with secondary education in Business Management with Accounting, Principles of Management, Math of Finance, Employment Law, Collective Bargaining, Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Theory and Practice of Corrections, Race & Ethnic Relations and Criminal Justice Organization and Administration. I obtained my Traffic Crash Reconstruction / Homicide Investigator Certification at the University of North Florida. Other education and experience include; certification with the FDLE Executive Senior Leadership Program – Class #15, certification with the Leadership of Ocala/Marion Class XXVII – Class President, President on the State Board for the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute Association (FCJEIA). I have worked with the City of Ocala Police Department for over 26 years to include: Patrol Officer, Street Crimes Unit, Drug Unit, Traffic, Investigations – Traffic Homicide, Patrol Sergeant, Special Operations/Administration Sergeant and Watch Commander/Administration Lieutenant.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

1. My community involvement includes:
 - a. Event Chair for Relay for Life of Ocala (American Cancer Society)
 - b. Ambassador for the Ocala Police Department with the March of Dimes
 - c. Educator for Home School students within Marion County for Drivers Training and Traffic Safety
 - d. Board Member for the Fallen Officer Memorial Committee
 - e. Board Member of the Friends of the Ocala Christmas Parade Committee
 - f. Board Member for Marion Senior Services

Moderator for the Victim Impact Panel within the Courts

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

I have grown up in an agency, Ocala Police Department, whose culture is one of serving where integrity, courage and character lead ones professionalism. I have the law enforcement experience with administrative skills and the education in criminal justice administration and business management. I have never been part of the internal politics nor part of the archaic form of management that has plagued the Marion County Sheriffs office for many decades.



SHERIFF

BILLY WOODS *(continued)*

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

First are the fiscal issues that currently exist within the Sheriff's office starting with the poor starting pay to the insufficient funding to purchase body cameras and equipment for newly purchased vehicles. I will stop and reduce the over growth of upper management. Top-Heavy management is cumbersome and comes with a high cost of overhead within a budget. That high cost can be used to purchase needed equipment, filling vacant positions and providing pay incentives in order to retain experienced deputies on the road and in corrections. Second, is keeping "Boots on the Ground" and bringing the agency back to the basics of patrolling the streets, starting with the re-allocation of man-power from newly created units. Restructuring of management within the organization will provide additional funding to help correct the pay disparity which currently exists within the organization. Maintaining the uniformed deputy positions is what reduces the response times when you or your children call for help. Lastly is the professionalism within the Jail. This starts by stop using the jail as a dumping ground for deputies that have unsatisfactory conduct where remedial training and further assessment can bring them back to the professionalism and standards that is expected within our profession. This will give them back their pride and character they had when they first decided to begin their journey as a Marion County Corrections Officer.

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SHERIFF



DENNIS P. MCFATTEN JR. (DEM)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Dennis McFatten attended the Marion County Public School System and graduated from Vanguard High School in 1985. He enlisted in the Army and after completing his required commitment, joined the U.S. Army Reserve 351st Military Police Company where he was deployed to the Persian Gulf as part of Operation Desert Storm. He later was hired as a Corrections Officer with the Florida Dept. of Corrections. Dennis was then employed with the Marion County

Sheriff's Office for 21 years, starting in June of 1994.

Dennis McFatten retired from the Marion County Sheriff's Office as a Captain in June of 2015. Prior to his promotion, he served as an Administrative Lieutenant for 11 years, as a District Commander. He was appointed as the Commander of the Rapid Response Team (Mobile Field Force) and took this team of dedicated men and women to represent Marion County during the 2012 Republican National Convention.

Over his career, he's served in several positions within the agency, too include Corrections Officer, Patrol Deputy, DARE Officer, Patrol Sergeant, District Lieutenant, Watch Commander, Reserve Commander, Commander of the Mobile Field Force/Search and Rescue, and Commander of the Emergency Squad.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Past-President, Past Vice-President and current Board Member of the Rotary Club of Belleview, Belleview Chamber of Commerce, Vice-Chair of the Governor's West Ocala Neighborhood Revitalization Council, Little league football and baseball coach, Belleview-Santos Historical Society, Deacon and Sunday School Teacher at Progressive Union Church, Leadership Ocala/Marion Board of Regents, The Community Network and Crime Stoppers Board Member.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

My years of experience from all my previous positions makes me qualified to lead the men and women of the Sheriff's Office as it's next Sheriff. The common sense approach to making decisions based on ethical principles and what's best for the agency and the citizens of this county is what makes me qualified. Entrusting those around me with the ability to perform their jobs and not micromanage their work, will allow them to develop into the leaders we need to help lead and guide the agency in the future.

I've worked my way up through the ranks and have held positions both in corrections and patrol, too include supervisor positions. I know the needs of the agency, since I retired in June of 2015. I truly believe that I'm a candidate that is seeking the position to truly bring about positive change and a better quality of life for all people. I'm not looking for power or political influence over others.

I'm the only sheriff candidate who served in the military, too include being a combat veteran. During my deployment, I was shot by friendly fire and by God's grace, I was wearing my flak jacket. This life experience opened my eyes to honoring God and respecting all human life. I'm dedicated to public service and commit to serving all people regardless of race, religion, gender, or social status, over several terms as long as the employees and citizens would have me.



SHERIFF

DENNIS P. MCFATTEN JR. *(continued)*

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

Three most important issues are: Ethical Leadership, Protecting and Serving, and the Budget.

From an Ethical Leadership standpoint, no organization can truly function without having a set of standards and morals that are in-line with the simple premise of treating others as you would want to be treated. For the last 8 years or so, the intimidating and numbers driven administrations have sanctioned a selfish and non-caring attitude that has been forced on its people. However, the men and women of the MCSO should be able to perform their duties knowing they have the support of the administration when they're doing the right thing. Therefore, I must provide them with a stable and non-threatening work environment.

Protecting and serving internally and externally is the job of the Sheriff. Not only am I tasked with keeping the citizen safe, but I also have to provide the men and women with a safe work environment. Meeting both of those goals will help to re-establish the trust we once had between the community and law enforcement. If the administration work hard for the employees, the employees will work hard for the people.

Finally, we have to work with the County Commissioners so that they will trust that we're being fiscally responsible with the tax payer money. By eliminating any non-essential positions and finding waste, we can begin to move towards providing competitive pay to our employees.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1



DAVID MOORE (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

David Moore is a man of integrity, a true conservative leader who lives what he believes. Integrity is doing what is right even when no one is watching. He is a local business owner with a BA in Business and a Masters in Leadership with 14 years of experience in the Finance industry. He also is a Real Estate Agent with Weichert Realtors Hallmark Properties. David Moore is willing to stand alone for what is right!

David Moore was raised here in Central Florida, and it is here that he and his beautiful wife chose to raise their wonderful son. After his father passed away, he made the commitment to take care of his elderly mother in her senior years.

"His education and experience makes him uniquely qualified to handle the challenges that the Marion County Commission faces during these challenging economic times. His dedication and consistent principles will allow him to serve the people of Marion County."

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

David Moore is the Youth Pastor at Wyomina Park Baptist Church, a board member of the Centers and of the Early Learning Coalition. David and his beautiful wife are volunteers with Special Olympics. He is also a precinct committeeman with the Republican Executive Committee and a member of the Silver Springs Shores Republican Club.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

My background in finance has prepared me to be able set prioritized budgets that put our public safety needs first. As a local business owner I understand the challenges small business face and use that experience to keep the playing field level for our businesses and move out of the way of private enterprise. The government should not pick winners and losers. I understand the truth that the government does not create jobs the private sector does, so I seek to promote job growth and allow the private sector to grow and thrive.

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

1. The reason government exists is to protect the public. Public safety services such as Fire Rescue, Law Enforcement and 911 Communications are paramount to the people of Marion County. Emergency services should not be reduced. There are many things within the budget that are far less important than the safety and health of Marion County citizens. David Moore was one of only two Commissioners to support our Law Enforcement Officers and he is the only current Commissioner to do Fire Rescue Ride-a-Longs.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1

DAVID MOORE *(continued)*

2. Government doesn't create jobs, the private sector does. The way to create better paying jobs is by removing the road blocks to doing business such as eliminating excessive regulations. By bringing an "open for business" atmosphere to Marion County the unemployment rate has been cut in half since I took office. Our County was in double digit unemployment and our policies have attracted national and regional companies like Fed Ex, while encouraging our local businesses to grow and thrive.

3. When the County Commission decided to cut \$400,000 from the Libraries budget, I was the lone voice fighting for our Library System. "Cutting libraries in a recession is like closing hospitals during a plague", it is the wrong thing to do. Libraries are an investment in the people of Marion County and the future of our community. I will continue to fight for our Library system and work to return it to being the best system in the State of Florida.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1



JOHN H. TOWNSEND IV (NPA)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I was born on October 10th, 1968, in Billerica, Massachusetts. My father, John H. Townsend III, was an electrical engineer for Martin Marietta, and my mother Patricia was a teacher for the Middlesex County school district. In 1981, I moved to Ocala, Florida, where I attended Ward Highlands Elementary, Fort King Middle School, and Forest High School. Following high school, I pursued a career in the construction business. After gaining years of experience, I established Southwest Steel Group, a manufacturing company, in 2006. I found success in my trade and developed leadership skills while operating the business. Tragically, in 2013, I lost my wife and son in a horrific car accident at the hands of a distracted driver. Lives were saved through the accident, however, as both my wife and son were organ donors. I have since toured the country giving speeches for TransLife, a group that emphasizes the importance of organ donation. In 2015, I bought Marion Metal Works, a company over \$1.2 million in debt, and turned it into a profit-making business. I intend to use the same business principles that I used to turn the business around to turn the county in the right direction.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

I am a board member of several local charitable organizations, including the Nick Oelrich Golf Classic benefiting organ donation and Florida Kids Helping Kids. I also tour the country giving speeches about the importance of organ donation for TransLife.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

The single major experience that prepared me to be a county commissioner was overcoming the challenge of turning a business in massive debt to a profit-making one. I developed the virtue of patience during that time, and the experience strengthened my confidence in my skills. Through proper budgeting and hard work, I was able to put Marion Metal Works back on its feet. I believe I can use the same principles to put Marion County back on its feet.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1

JOHN H. TOWNSEND IV *(continued)*

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

. First Responders: Did you know that employees of the Marion County Fire Rescue are among the lowest paid in the entire country? Firefighters and EMTs are crucial to the health of a community, yet they earn only slightly more than the minimum wage. So, as a result of low wages, Marion County loses hundreds of Fire Rescue workers to higher paying counties every year. This issue raises several questions. Who is there to come to a citizen's aid when he suffers a heart attack? How long will it take? It's a scary thought, but it is a real issue. One of the main reasons I'm running for County Commissioner is to get the men and women of the Marion County Fire Rescue the money they need to take care of their families.

2. County Budget: Marion County's budget problem is very similar to the budget problem in Washington D.C. The government, here in Marion County and D.C., spends money in unnecessary areas. As a commissioner, I will investigate the budget and crack down on wasteful spending and corruption. I will use the same skills I used when I acquired a business millions of dollars in debt to turn the county's funding problems around.

3. Workforce Education: Workforce education programs are an excellent opportunity for students to develop skills to use in their careers. If elected county commissioner, I promise to ensure that workforce education programs are well-funded and able to prepare students for the future.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 3



JEFF GOLD (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Jeff Gold retired after 30 years combined supervisory experience with the Marion County Sheriff's Office and Marion County Fire Service. Jeff continues to serve the community on the Bomb Squad and SWAT Team as the only retired member on either team. An avid learner, Jeff's doctoral studies and Bachelor's degree are in Business Management and he has a Master's degree in Criminal Justice and two Associate of Science degrees in Fire Science and Emergency Medical Services. Jeff and his wife Shawn are both successful

business owners and she is also a nurse and instructor. Jeff has been a contract advisor and instructor for over a decade for colleges, public safety agencies, and the US Military. Jeff's work experience in both the private and public sector has been mostly in management and he has worked on multi-million dollar budgets and written grants saving taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars and most importantly, lives through the reduction of response time for rescue services.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Jeff and his wife's businesses are members of the South Marion Chamber of Commerce. They are both active in the church and community and volunteer services to teach CPR and First Aid to citizens and groups such as Habitat for Humanity, school children, and others. Jeff has also volunteered to teach women's self defense classes and firearms safety classes throughout the community. Jeff is also a member of several alumni associations and the VFW.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

Jeff Gold has worked his entire adult life in the public service field dealing with the most difficult of people and circumstances, many times in life threatening situations. He is the recipient of two Medals of Valor and two Purple Hearts from his law enforcement career. Jeff has an uncanny ability to work with everyone, especially those that others cannot. His negotiation skills in both business and public safety have led to his success as a business owner and one of the most decorated first responders in Marion County's history. Staying active in the community by working with those of all age groups, Jeff, 51, is in touch with all members of the community from those just graduating high school to those celebrating retirement. Finally, Jeff's education, business backing, knowledge of specialized topics that matter the most to citizens, and his ability to know when to listen, makes him the most qualified and well rounded candidate for Marion County Commission, District 3.

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

1. Maintaining the high quality of Public Safety workers to ensure that if you ever need to call 9-1-1, the best professional responder is there to assist you in minutes, not hours! This will be achieved by utilizing my knowledge in public safety, which no other candidate has, to spend YOUR tax dollars appropriately and reduce workforce vacancies.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 3

JEFF GOLD *(continued)*

2. Working with the Chamber and Economic Partnership to bring businesses, jobs, and most importantly, assist current businesses to flourish in our community to continue our current tax rate and not raise property taxes.

3. Improve current infrastructure of roads public services to keep our community safe and reduce risks. This will be done by monitoring the sales tax revenue and ensuring that the money is spent fairly and where it is needed.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 5



MICHELLE STONE (REP)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

I have 35 years of financial services experience, 26 years in the Ocala market; including nearly 20 years with SunTrust Bank where I held the office of Senior Vice President and Ocala City President. My managed service area spanned Alachua and Marion counties and included sixteen full service banking centers. I currently manage large commercial banking relationships as a Commercial Loan Officer for Gateway Bank.

During my career I have served in various capacities overseeing all aspects of banking services to help personal clients, small businesses and owners meet their financial aspirations. I have been recognized with various achievements and awards.

I'm a graduate of the Florida School of Banking at the University of Florida and have earned the American Institute of Banking Diploma along with various other banking related seminars and classes to remain up to date in best practices. I hold a State of Florida Life & Health Annuities License and Series 6, Series 26 and Series 63 licenses.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Leadership Ocala Marion Graduate and Former Board of Regents, Ocala Sunset Rotary Club and Paul Harris Fellow Member, United Way Vision Council, Republican Federated Women, Hospice Board Member, 2014 American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Chair, American Heart Assoc. Go Red for Women, Ex. Committee, ALS Walk Team Leader, March of Dimes Coordinator, 23 yr. Meadowbrook Church Volunteer, Former Marion Sr Services Board,

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

I have a proven, successful professional history as an executive banker. I am skilled at managing multiple teams and priorities. I'm known to put in the time needed to understand issues and provide solutions.

I'm also the most community-minded candidate as I have personally invested many resources and thousands of hours over the past 26 years in our community by working to improve the position of those that need help, encouragement and a hand-up from their current condition.

If elected to this office, what do you see as the 3 most important issues? How will you deal with them?

1. Steward our tax dollars to provide sustainable funding for quality of life issues. i.e. First Responders, roadways, etc. Prioritize budget.
2. Protect our water resources. Learn all I can, meet with stakeholders, insure we do everything we can to protect our water and other natural resources.
3. Provide accountability and transparency in order to restore public trust in our elected officials. Include more commissioner commentary on what is being done and what our next steps are during public meetings. I'll also provide monthly Town Hall meetings throughout District 5.

Addressing these issues above will foster an environment that will bring improved economic growth.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 5

MICHELLE STONE *(continued)*

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DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS, 5TH APPELLATE DISTRICT



JAY P. COHEN

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

Judge Cohen graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English in 1974, and a Juris Doctor degree in 1978. Judge Cohen participated in the honors program as an undergraduate and both taught and supervised the teaching of legal research and writing while in law school.

Beginning his career in Sarasota County, Judge Cohen moved to Orlando in 1980 where he prosecuted for two years. In 1982 he entered private practice. Judge Cohen handled the defense of criminal cases, juvenile dependency, as well as domestic relations, before branching out into personal injury.

Appointed to the County Court bench in 1990 by Governor Martinez, Judge Cohen served in the traffic, criminal, and civil divisions, initiating a highly successful volunteer-based mediation program. In 1993, Judge Cohen was appointed to the Circuit Court bench by Governor Chiles. Judge Cohen was assigned to the domestic relations, juvenile, criminal, and civil divisions in both Orange and Osceola counties. Judge Cohen was appointed to the appellate court by Governor Crist.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Active in his community, Judge Cohen has participated in many civic and charitable endeavors such as Kiwanis, Greater Orlando Chamber of Commerce Drug Free Task Force, Downtown Orlando Partnership, University of Florida Gator Boosters, and Habitat for Humanity.

Describe a particular quality or experience or ability that has prepared you for this office.

Judge Cohen served on the Florida Bar Criminal Rules Committee from 2002-2008 and was vice chair from 2005-2008. He was a member of the Florida Bar Criminal Law Section Executive Committee from 2006-2008. He also served on the Florida Supreme Court FCTC Privacy and Court Records Report Implementation Workgroup. He is the current Chair of the Florida Supreme Court Criminal Court Steering Committee and serves on the Commission on District Court of Appeal Performance and Accountability. Judge Cohen taught frequently for both the Conference of Circuit Court Judges and Advanced Judicial Studies program and speaks at seminars for both the Florida and Orange County Bar Associations. Topics have ranged from evidence, sentencing, and legislative and rule updates, as well as various topics related to appellate practice.

Judge Cohen was a member of the American Inn of Court from 1995-2000, serving as President from 1997-1998. He was a member of the Central Florida Woman Lawyers Association for approximately 20 years.

He has published articles on County Court Mediation, The Standard of Review in Cases Involving Improper Prosecutorial Comment, Criminal Law for the Bridge the Gap Manual as well as materials for numerous course teachings. Since joining the appellate court, Judge Cohen has authored over 400 opinions.



DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS, 5TH APPELLATE DISTRICT

JAY P. COHEN *(continued)*

What do you believe is the most important quality for a judge?

At the appellate level, the most important qualities for a judge are having an open mind, being able to read briefs and listen to arguments without prejudice, and the ability to write clearly and concisely.

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