

This guide is presented to inform the voters of Montgomery County about the candidates and offices in the November 4, 2008 General Election. The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or political party. Questionnaires were sent to all candidates for opposed offices. The League does not take responsibility for the contents of any candidate's replies. *Replies were not edited or corrected by the League except when the answer exceeded the word limit allowed.* Answers exceeding the word limit allowed were cut off and indicated by *Candidates' spelling and grammar were not changed or corrected.*

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

DISTRICT 8

Questions asked of candidates for U.S. House of Representatives office:

1. Please describe the training and experience that qualify you for this office.
2. What is your position on the renewal of the federal "No Child Left Behind" Act, and what changes would you propose, if any?
3. What policies do you support to ensure that the United States has enough energy to supply its needs?
4. What actions do you support to improve the delivery and financing of health care in the United States?
5. What factors do you believe were instrumental in creating the economic crisis? Do you believe that the recently enacted \$700 billion "rescue" bill adequately addressed these factors? What further measures, if any, do you believe are required to revitalize the economy and to ensure that similar crises do not occur in the future?

Name: Kevin Brady – R – Incumbent

1. Chamber of Commerce executive, 18 years. Texas House of Representatives 1991-1996. U.S. House of Representatives 1997 to present. Senior member, influential House Ways & Means Committee. GOP Deputy Whip. Honors include: Five Outstanding Young Texans, 10 Best Legislators for Families and Children, Hero of the Taxpayer, Small Business Champion and Super-Friend of the Seniors. Lives in Montgomery County with wife Cathy and two young sons. Commutes to work in Washington each week
2. Safe schools with qualified teachers and involved parents are critical. Every child, regardless of income, should have the chance at a quality education. As a parent with children in our public schools I support renewal of NCLB but with reforms: less bureaucracy and paperwork, aligning the accountability measures so parents and schools understand which measurements matter, flexibility in assigning qualified teachers and more resources for our special needs children. Results matter.
3. America should take responsibility for producing 2/3 of our daily energy needs which will reduce our dangerous dependence on foreign oil. The solution is to use less energy but find more sources here in America. I support conservation, more research into clean technologies and renewable energy like solar, wind, biofuels and nuclear energy. I help lead the effort in Congress to explore for more oil and gas in our deep ocean waters and Alaska.
4. Doctors and patients, not federal bureaucrats or lawyers, should make health care decisions for your family. To make health care more affordable and cover the uninsured, I propose creating a "worker backpack" so families can get the same tax break companies receive to choose a health care plan that fits their needs - and can travel with them from job to job throughout their lifetime. To learn more, Google *50 Ideas to Improve Health Care*.
5. Greed drove it all - risky borrowers, predatory lenders and irresponsible Wall Street financial institutions. Their bad decisions now threaten the jobs and retirement savings of families here in Montgomery County. The bailout was only an urgent, short-term effort to get the credit economy unfrozen. Future reforms should include down payments and verifiable income for home

borrowers; lenders retaining a stake in their loans; more capital, less leveraging and smarter regulation of complicated financial instruments.

Name: Kent Hargett – D

1. My background includes two years of military education, experience in the Middle East during the Civil War in Lebanon, working from 1982 until the end of the Reagan administration on the staff of a conservative think tank, and two years as a member of a planning and zoning commission.
2. Teachers tell me this program is very awkward to work with. I am not yet sure what to do about it.
3. First I support the procurement of energy resources from the western hemisphere. The Persian Gulf is far too volatile to count on for essential resources. Then I support the development of electrically powered urban regional transportation, on a massive scale. The way to security for our “gas powered” economy is to drastically reduce the number of gallons necessary to power it.
4. I support expanding and adapting the Federally Qualified Healthcare Center system so as to provide primary care to those of modest income and the poor. This would answer the emergency room problem and perhaps motivate the private sector insurers to manage their business in a more customer friendly way.
5. I understand this was caused by failures of regulation in lending, creating securities, and rating. No. The thing to do is to try to save what is left of the economy. Right now I think stimulus efforts are nonsense. I think it might work for the government to buy the mortgages, cheap, and get them away from Wall Street and Treasury, perhaps to HUD. Then make loans to some banks to restore credit, and let...

Name: Brian Stevens – L

1. The Constitution lists the requirements for the U.S. House of Representatives as 25 years of age, 7 years a citizen and resident of the state elected in. The requirements are minimal because the founding fathers believed they should apply to the common man and not the elite and powerful. It is my intention to serve my constituents and country, return to private sector, and not become a career politician.
2. Education should be a state, local, and personal responsibility and should not be dictated by bureaucrats in Washington. The department of education should be eliminated and these funds distributed to the states. I support private and home schooling initiatives as competition should only help to improve the public education system. I commend all teachers and educators for their hard work and dedication to our future.
3. Most candidates agree we should increase domestic production while developing alternative energy sources, as do I. However, this plan is risky; if economical alternatives are not found and we deplete our own resources, we may become even more dependent on foreign supplies. One option may be to use MORE foreign energy now while developing, but not producing, our own supplies which will weaken the influence of foreign producers in the future and strengthen our leverage.
4. We have a health care system that is a hodgepodge of government, employer, and private components resulting in duplication, inefficiency, and fraud. Our health care must be integrated into a comprehensive, efficient and effective system. I support a national referendum on whether this system should be private, employer or government based. Individuals would then have an option to participate in the new system or stay in their current plan.
5. The causes are clear, 1% Federal Reserve interest rates resulted in banks making risky loans which were further leveraged by greedy WallStreet Bankers. The rescue plan does

nothing but bailout those responsible, open the door to socialism, and jeopardize our future. I was against the bailout upon enactment and have been proven correct by the subsequent deterioration in the markets and economy. I would restore confidence in the system by holding those responsible accountable.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 18

Questions asked of candidates for State House office: 1. What are your credentials and qualifications for this office?

2. What are the top three issues that the Texas legislature needs to consider and what would your legislative proposals be to address them?
3. If you were to prioritize state-funded programs, what are the top three programs that you believe should continue to be funded with state revenues and why? What programs would you eliminate from further state-funding, if any?

Name: John Otto – R – Incumbent

No response

Name: Arlan Foster – D

1. I didn't serve three tours in Vietnam to allow my country, and our economy, to go down the tubes without a fight. I have been serving and defending the public for over 30 years, first as a peace officer then as a corrections officer. This election is a choice for voters between me serving them, or the incumbent serving himself and the super-rich special interests who are serving themselves at the public trough.
2. Redistricting reform -- we must take the power of politicians to draw their own district lines away from them and their parties, in favor of a non-partisan process like Iowa's. Stopping the largest tax increase in Texas history, the Governor tried to sneak through privatizing roads and then tolling them. Energy independence can only be achieved through the proliferation of solar energy and the "green revolution", which will bring needed jobs to tens of thousands!
3. Fund -- for a short period -- the proliferation of solar energy, which will create jobs and these incentives will no longer be needed in a few short years. Increase funding for children's healthcare, disabled and elderly, who will continue to be hurt in this economic downturn. Immediately halt the biggest waste of taxpayer money -- by far -- for a project no one supports -- the Trans-Texas Corridor, involving billions of dollars. Audit TxDOT for real.

CHIEF JUSTICE, 9TH COURT OF APPEALS DISTRICT

Name: Steve McKeithen – R – Incumbent

DISTRICT JUDGE, 9TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Name: Fred Edwards – R – Incumbent

DISTRICT JUDGE, 410TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Name: Mike Mayes – R – Incumbent

DISTRICT JUDGE, 418TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Name: Tracy A. Gilbert – R - Incumbent

DISTRICT JUDGE, 435TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Name: Mike Seiler – R - Incumbent

DISTRICT ATTORNEY, 9TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Name: Brett Ligon – R

JUDGE, COUNTY COURT AT LAW No. 5

Name: Keith Mills Stewart - R - Incumbent

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Name: David K. Walker – R – Incumbent

SHERIFF

Name: Tommy Gage – R – Incumbent

COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR

Name: J.R. Moore – R – Incumbent

COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT No. 1

Name: Mike Meador – R – Incumbent

COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT No. 3

Name: Ed Chance – R – Incumbent

CONSTABLE, PRECINCT No. 1

Name: Don Chumley – R – Incumbent

CONSTABLE, PRECINCT No. 2

Name: Gene DeForest – R – Incumbent

CONSTABLE, PRECINCT No. 3

Name: Tim Holifield – R – Incumbent

CONSTABLE, PRECINCT No. 4

- Questions for Candidates for the Constable office:
1. What are your credentials and qualifications for this office?
 2. What are the three top issues facing the constable's office and/or the regional or national criminal justice system, and how will you address them, if elected?
 3. What measures will you implement, if elected, to enhance crime prevention, especially with respect to juvenile crime?

Name: Kenneth "Rowdy" Hayden – R

1. I have prepared to be Constable of PCT 4 for over 20 years. Over the last 18 years, I have gained necessary experience in a variety of disciplines in law enforcement. I have professionally served Montgomery County in law enforcement for over 16 years. Presently I serve in the District 3 Patrol Division. I have served as Deputy Constable, as an investigator and have worked in the District Court, obtained advanced certifications in law enforcement.

2. • Realign Constables office priorities, in line with the needs of the citizens. Protecting neighborhoods while people work and sleep will be a priority. 24/7 coverage. The mission refocus will be to protect and serve. Highway interdiction will be redirected to zoned defense of neighborhoods.

- Management of resources, motivation of officers, a mission with purpose in the face of difficult economic times.

- Leverage resources and improve cooperation with other agencies to improve response times.

3. • Re-Focus and Re-Deploy Department Resources away from the highways and into the neighborhoods. Refocus the Departments Mission to one of ... Protect and Serve

- Increase Personnel, Increase Neighborhood Patrols. Institute 24 hour/7 day a week service.
- Get PCT 4 it's fair share of resources.

- Improve Training and Cross training,

- Improve cooperation with other agencies to improve response times and services.

- Assign a liason to the school districts and work with the Montgomery County Narcotics unit.

Name: Cole Lynn Bishop – D

1. I have 70 college hours towards my Criminal Justice Degree and two years of experience in the Pct. 4 Constable Office. Voted "top gun" at the Police Academy in 2005. Many felony and misdemeanor arrests while working in the Constable's Office. I have many years experience accompanying my dad, Constable Bishop, on calls and dealing with the public.

2. (1) Professionalism in the field. Police officers have to realize they have to be positive roll models off-duty as well as on. I will be one of these role models.

(2) Loyalty. Officers in this Department should be interested in their community, willing to give heart and soul to make it a great place to live and raise a family.

(3) Duty. This Department will be the leader in enforcement and prevention of all crime committed within...

3. Measures to be implemented to enhance crime prevention, especially with respect to juvenile crime. 24 hour patrol with marked patrol vehicles. We will work closely with school and community leaders to have a positive impact on our youth, and will make an effort to get, and keep, our children involved in positive and productive ventures and programs.

CONSTABLE, PRECINCT No. 5

Name: David Hill – R – Incumbent

CONROE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE SPECIAL ELECTION

Conroe ISD Trustee, Position 2

- Questions for Board of Trustee position: 1. What is the role of a member of the school district's Board of Trustees and what are your qualifications for this position?
2. What are the three top issues facing the school district and, if elected, how would you address them?
 3. What actions would you recommend for your district in order to attract and retain excellent teachers within your district?

Name: Clarence Lewis, Jr.

1. The Board of Trustees is the educational policy making body for public schools and a guardian of public trust. I have had experience in policy making decisions on numerous boards in church, public and private sectors.

I have the understanding necessary to meet the challenges that this position requires. I have the professionalism to make such decisions. I am a commonsense businessman and a effective communicator which also enable me to work with the leadership...

2. If elected I will study the issues carefully and work with the leadership team to address the issues at hand.

(1) Taxes: This is a complex issue and several factors impact projected tax increases, Appraised values, bonds sold at a given time and interest rates. The economic impact on the nation will also determine if the taxpayers get their money's worth. Fiscal efficiency.

(2) School finance: Maximize educational funding work with the State to ensure better school...

3. My recommendation for CISD to attract and retain competent teachers would be to (a) reduce their workload (b) rehire prior teachers on contract (c) protect their salaries and benefits. (d) promote programs to reward specially trained teachers

designed for special needs and programs for academic performance.

Name: Joe Michels

1. The Board member's role is to establish policy, lead by example, and make wise decisions. This includes: stressing a curriculum that will prepare students for the future; attracting/retaining good teachers; providing facilities, programs, technologies, and materials; and providing moral leadership.

I am a long time District resident who has worked across economic, political, geographic, and racial boundaries in government, business, and volunteer organizations. I am uniquely qualified to respond to these responsibilities. As a...

2. Education, planning, & teachers – all done with wise stewardship.

First: provide our kids a superior education. Focus on a curriculum and educational tools that give kids the skills to flourish in a challenging future.

Second: plan for a rapidly growing population. Build right sized schools in the right locations. Build wisely – use multi-school campuses when possible, use proven designs, and adapt to population shifts.

Third: intensify our efforts to attract and retain great teachers. We...

3. Offer salaries that draw teachers here and don't drive them away. Provide the equipment, labs, texts, computers, and other tools to let them teach most effectively. Support them in their classroom experience, demanding discipline and respect from all students. Recognize our teachers and honor them both in our District and in our local neighborhoods. We must help enhance the respect and reputations our teachers have in our community.

Name: Chris Irish

1. They set educational goals; focus on student outcomes, demanding better education, providing direction, and determining district effectiveness and efficiency. The Board is responsible for evaluating and selection of Superintendents as well as to levy and collect taxes and issue bonds. I am a young, enthusiastic business professional, parent of three children, elected community board member, with a consistent track record of leadership and service in our community.

2. Responsible use of community resources while dealing wisely with an ever increasing population creating overcrowding. Support open discussions regarding overcrowding and costs associated with different proposals. Personal Responsibility, restrain poor behavior and support our teachers and employees ability to focus on those there to learn. Support families by avoiding contradicting values taught in the home. Increase communication by bringing the board meetings to the community; be willing to outline specific needs and where moneys are...

3. If we support the community we strengthen the family. Strong families build strong schools and attract excellent teachers like we have in CISD. Insure salaries are not weakened by speculative spending outside the classroom. Involve the teachers in the planning process of our schools so it reflects the needs of the teachers to best educate our children.

Name: Ed Blackburne

No response

WILLIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE
GENERAL ELECTION

Willis ISD Trustee, Position 2

- Questions for Board of Trustee position:
1. What is the role of a member of the school district's Board of Trustees and what are your qualifications for this position?
 2. What are the three top issues facing the school district and, if elected, how would you address them?
 3. What actions would you recommend for your district in order to attract and retain excellent teachers within your district?

Name: Larry Allen

1. A major duty is to set the tax rate. I pledge to reduce the rate. A few years ago Willis's tax rate was below Conroe's but now Willis's tax rate is 10 cents more than Conroe's. Over my term I want to return the tax rate to no more than Conroe's rate, restore the shorter school day we've had until this year and reduce our first grade failure rate which is double the state average.
2. I want to reduce the tax rate, shorten the school day and teach and pass our first graders. The state average is 6.4% for first grade failure and Willis fails 13.6% of our first graders according to the latest available information from the Texas Education Agency. It doesn't have to be this way. Let's teach and pass our first graders and help prevent them from becoming school dropouts later on.
3. We need to eliminate the pay cap. Our most experienced teachers do not receive pay raises along with less experienced teachers because Willis has a pay cap for these experienced teachers. It doesn't have to be this way. It's fine with me for an experienced teacher to make more than a principal- after all, no NFL coach makes as much as his star players!

Name: Dan Dominey

1. To adopt policies that provide standards and boundaries within which the district must operate which includes finances. To participate in the selection and ongoing evaluation of the superintendent. I feel that my financial and banking background will be beneficial for the district as well as our tax payers.
2. Taxes
Teacher Pay
Longer School Day
I believe these are all areas that need to be addressed by the board. Our district has a \$42 million budget. With a degree in accounting and finance and 30 years of banking and management experience, I feel like I am qualified to address these issues.
3. Longevity and merit pay in order to retain excellent teachers. Modern technology and support for all teachers. Favorable working conditions are key to retaining good employees.

Name: Sue Ann Powell

1. The role of a member of the Board of Trustees is to become an effective member of the Trustee team, along with the Superintendent, to oversee the progress and success of the school district, following the guidelines of the Texas Education Code.

Qualifications:

- *38 years in public education as teacher and counselor*
 - *Trained in communication, listening and mediation skills*
 - *Willing to devote time and effort toward achieving the goal of excellence for Willis ISD*
2. 1) Attracting and retaining highly qualified, dedicated teachers.
 - *Providing salaries comparable with neighboring districts.*
 - *Providing optimum facilities, resources and support for teachers.*
 - *Addressing greatest needs of teachers.*

- *Providing school environment conducive to teaching and learning by supporting strong discipline practices and technological support.*
- 2) Planning for student growth by projecting future property, technological and facility needs; ensure prudent use of financial resources.
 - 3) Preparing students for the job market by offering on-site vocational classes or through internships.
- 3.
- *Providing salaries comparable with neighboring districts.*
 - *Providing optimum facilities, resources and support for teachers.*
 - *Addressing greatest needs of teachers.*
 - *Providing school environment conducive to teaching and learning by supporting strong discipline practices and technological support.*

Willis ISD Trustee, Position 6

- Questions for Board of Trustee position:
1. What is the role of a member of the school district’s Board of Trustees and what are your qualifications for this position?
 2. What are the three top issues facing the school district and, if elected, how would you address them?
 3. What actions would you recommend for your district in order to attract and retain excellent teachers within your district?

Name: Beverly Ann Vornsand

1. In effective School Systems, the Superintendent and Board of Trustees function as a “Team of Eight”. The School Board is the corporate policy making body for the district—the Superintendent and Staff provide leadership to cause Board policy to be implemented.

My qualifications:

- Retired educator for 28 years in Texas Public Schools
 - Served one year as a Trustee in Willis ISD
 - Pledge to continue to fulfill my responsibilities to Board and community
2. I feel most current issues will be resolved by:
 - Acquiring more property to build schools for anticipated growth in Willis area.
 - Opening of Elementary School #5 this fall and construction in District from the last bond issue is nearing completion.
 - Willis ISD is rated Superior Financially for the sixth consecutive year. Willis ISD is financially sound!

3. One of the goals of Willis ISD is to attract and retain exemplary employees who are compassionate, caring, professional and inspiring role models. Willis schools provide a climate that is conducive for learning with facilities that are safe, attractive and capable of meeting future educational needs of all students. At this time the goals are being met by one of the finest professional administrative staffs and classroom teachers available. Willis ISD continues to give salary...

Name: Rusty Fincher

1. The role of a school district's Board of Trustees should be to set forth policy and procedure in the best interest of the children, employees and tax payer. As a public servant, I am in constant contact with the general public, other parents and teachers in the district and can stay informed with issues that affect our district.
2. In my opinion, the top three issues in our district would be that our children receive a quality education, the growth of our district and a quality working environment for the employees of our district. Our children are our most precious resource and our future and our teachers and administrators do an excellent job educating them. However it takes parent involvement at home for success. With sound financial decisions our district will continue to grow...
3. The standard answer for this question is a higher pay scale, however a quality working environment promotes satisfied employees which in turn increases productivity

Willis ISD Trustee, Position 7

Name: Rebecca Broussard

WILLIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE
SPECIAL ELECTION

Willis ISD Trustee, Position 5, Unexpired Term

- Questions for Board of Trustee position:
1. What is the role of a member of the school district's Board of Trustees and what are your qualifications for this position?
 2. What are the three top issues facing the school district and, if elected, how would you address them?
 3. What actions would you recommend for your district in order to attract and retain excellent teachers within your district?

Name: Cliff Williams

1. You have to work cooperatively with Superintendent to set policies and procedures for the district while maintaining fiscal responsibility for the taxpayers. My business background provides me with experience dealing with school districts through funding, grants, and construction that allows a first hand knowledge of what a district faces. A graduate of Willis ISD, Texas A&M University, and an active member of the community, I have the heart and knowledge to make the district exemplary.
2. Willis ISD must insure sure that TAKS scores continue to rise while striving to be an exemplary school district. We must make sure the curriculum is tightly aligned and make sure that teachers and administrators are working together to improve these scores. We need to re-evaluate the extended day and make sure it's properly utilized for the students and administration. We need to be fiscally responsible while making decisions that impact our children and community.
3. The district must evaluate the salaries that we provide our teachers and insure that it is equal to other districts, while also providing incentives to teachers who have other certifications in the education field. Also we must provide the teachers opportunities to grow within the district. Finally we have to re-evaluate the 30 year cap, in order to keep teachers who want to stay and continue to make a difference for our children.

Name: S. Carl Everett

1. The role of a member of the WISD Board of Trustees is one of "Trust". If elected, the voters will have placed and intrusted me with a position that represents them. I am to work closely with the other Trustees and as a Board we will work together as a unit to approve School Budget, Tax Rates, Special Projects and Personnel Matters.

I am qualified for Position 5 because I have a mind for business...

2. First, is personnel salaries. The overall goal is for WISD to be recognized for a superior quality of education recieved by its students. We must be able to compete with other districts salary structures in order to obtain the best administration and teachers.

Second, more parental involvement is needed. As a Board, we must address ways of involving the parents of our students in their education process.

Third, future growth. We must be able to...

3. The actions that I would recommend to attract and retain teachers would be to offer competitive salaries, professional and state of the art working environment and continuous support from the Board.

Name: Joey R. Ashton

1. I believe that being an elected member of the school board is to direct the district upon the right path to ensure growth, stability, ensure a fiduciary responsibility and secure our educators to allow them to accomplish academic excellence. To further elaborate, if elected I will do everything within my power to retain quality educators and focus upon the issues that have been neglected in the past. My Qualifications can be viewed at www.ashton4wisd.com.

2. The three top issues are:

1. Educators pay
2. Academics
3. An open door policy and Better communication from the board to the District.

If elected I plan to do a salary survey of comparable districts to bring our educators to those levels.

If elected I propose to allocate more funds to create programs to ensure that our children are receiving the best education possible.

If elected I propose that the board be transparent and have an open...

3. The most important issue is pay. The second is adequate materials to help ensure that our educators can achieve educational excellence. The classroom should be properly equipped with the necessary provisions to educate and expand the minds of our youth to challenge them to make it to the next level. Our class rooms should be our first priority. If elected that will be my primary focus. Our Children come first!

Name: Mike Nell

1. The role of a school board member is to do everything possible to ensure that students are provided with a quality education. In addition, school board members do not have any operating power unless we are acting in quorum on school district business. As a successful and experienced local business person with a child in the WISD, I am qualified to serve on the WISD Board of Trustees.

2. The first issue is growth and how to handle the changes that come with increased development. Naturally, the second concern is the tax rate and luring businesses to the district as well as families who want to locate here. In order to appeal to families and businesses we must continue to provide a high quality education. In addition, we must strive to hire highly qualified teachers and make working conditions better than surrounding districts.

3. The first recommended action would be to study the WISD campuses and their staffing allocations in order to compare with other districts in regard to allotment of personnel. Schools that are understaffed have overstressed people working who cannot perform their job adequately. The second recommended action would be to study the faculty payscale compared to neighboring and comparable districts. In order to compete with other districts, we must provide quality working conditions and competitive salaries.