League of Women Voters Statement

The League of Women Voters of Athens County is a nonpartisan organization that works to promote political responsibility through active, informed participation of all citizens in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. This guide lists only those candidates who are running in contested races in this election. Questions and word limits are set by the League. Replies are printed as submitted. For space requirements; in some instances, formats were edited for print. A candidate is solely responsible for the accuracy of his/her statements. A candidate's answers are printed with the understanding that the material will not be used in any way that may be deemed to be an endorsement by the League of his or her candidacy or views. In some instances, formats were edited for space requirements; in no instances was content edited. Please visit athenscountytvotes.org for exclusive online candidate questions and responses. Any responses received after the publication deadline will be posted on the athenscountytvotes.org website.

Athen County Commissioner

James L. Pancake

Party: Democrat
Education: Graduate of Nelsonville-York High
Occupation: Retired
Training and Experience:

I have served as a business trustee in York Township for 10 years. I served in the Marines for three years of which one year I was stationed in Vietnam. I have written grants and served on various Boards including the MRFD Board. I have been a volunteer firefighter for over 10 years. I have coached little league baseball and baseball and I have served as the Executive Board of the League local 1466. I retired from American Electric Power where I had 35 years of service and at the time of retirement I was a sanitation technician.

1. What is your position on the Harmony Road "viewshed" controversy? (Hillside across from WalMart)

I do not agree with the way this landowner managed this property. It has caused a once scenic view to be destroyed and in over a year no development has occurred on it. Since tourism is a major industry in Southeastern Ohio it is important that all steps be taken to ensure that landowners understand the importance of maintaining certain properties to enhance our natural beauty. The County Commissioners must investigate tax incentives for landowners who maintain the natural beauty of land located in our view sheds out the beauty of this area.

2. What cuts would you make to balance the county budget given that funding will likely decrease?

Each County Official and department head must identify ways to cut their budgets to assist in the overall balancing of the budget. It will sit down at each level to see what problems will be created by budget cuts and how those might be minimized. We cannot however, ignore that some areas may need increases because of underlying issues in the past or the changing times. It will take a tremendous amount of review to make these decisions.

Larry Payne

Party: Republican
Education: BS Education, Ohio State University
Occupation: Membership Service Coordinator Athens Area Chamber of Commerce
Training and Experience:

I was elected Mayor of Abancy 14 years ago. My economic development experience, currently serving 4th term on the Athens County Port Authority-the economic development entity of the County Commissioners, ATCO - Chairman Board of Directors, 20 plus years on the Athens County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board, 10 years President Athens Farmers Market, Co-Chair Athens County Business Education Partnership, 12 years with the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce, 19 years Columbus Galia of Ohio.

1. What can the Coroner do to support the City-County Health Department and the Emergency Management Agency in the area of medical security?

The Coroner is a physician just like our County Health Commissioner. The Coroner can work with and advise both the Health Department and Emergency Management Agency on ways to reduce or prevent injuries and fatalities. In the event of a county emergency, the Coroner can call in a medical examiner and direct medical responses to the emergency situation. I have spoken in-inter-agency response and can work effectively with other agencies in the event of a county emergency.

2. How do you view the relationship between the Coroner and local law enforcement agencies?

For two reasons the relationship between the Coroner's Office and local law enforcement agencies is very close. The first is that a strong investigative focus on the part of the Coroner greatly assists local law enforcement and the County Prosecutor in addressing crime. The second aspect of this relationship is one of advisor to both law enforcement and to the citizens of our county's emergency preparedness plan to make sure that my office and the county are as prepared as possible. I will also be concerned, as I always have been, with improving the public health of our community by anticipating problems in order to minimize them.

Athen County Coroner

Todd R. Fredricks, DO

Party: Republican
Education: ● BS Biology/Psychology California State University at Chico, Chico, CA
● DO, Osteopathic Medicine, Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine
● Residency Family Medicine Selby General Hospital, Marietta, OH
● Graduate of all Army Officer Professional Education through Command and General Staff College
Occupation: Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, OUCOM
● Family Practitioner, UMA, Parks Hall, Athens, OH
● Colonel, U.S. Army, BMT Flight Surgeon, 7520 TRM CNV, West Virginia Army National Guard
Training and Experience:

● 7 years of Emergency Medicine Experience Rescue from Civic Center Downtown Athens
● 2 Combat Tours of Iraq
● 1 Peacekeeping County Kosovo
● 1 Humanitarian Deployment to Panama
● Numerous peacekeeping deployments for State Emergency Duty in Ohio and West Virginia and training with first responders
● Senior Medical Advisor to US Army Air Ambulance Company

Harold "Clay" Thompson III, D.O.

Education: ● Physician Assistant, UMA, Parks Hall, Athens, OH
● Colonel, U.S. Army, BMT Flight Surgeon, 7520 TRM CNV, West Virginia Army National Guard
Training and Experience:

● Family Practitioner, UMA, Parks Hall, Athens, OH
● Colonel, U.S. Army, BMT Flight Surgeon, 7520 TRM CNV, West Virginia Army National Guard

The Coroner's Office is a physician just like our County Health Commissioner. The Coroner can work with and advise both the Health Department and Emergency Management Agency on ways to reduce or prevent injuries and fatalities. In the event of a county emergency, the Coroner can call in a medical examiner and direct medical responses to the emergency situation. I have spoken in-inter-agency response and can work effectively with other agencies in the event of a county emergency.

The Coroner and local law enforcement agencies must work in a collaborative environment that meets the public good to investigate the cause and manner of death occurring under unusual circumstances. This is because meticulous collection of information between agencies involving such deaths is very necessary. Each agency is responsible for collecting information that must be
1. How do you plan to cope with increased gasoline costs and what alternatives do you see to cruiser patrol?

I would like to continue to promote the videoconference amalgamations and hearings at the Regional Jail in Nelsonville with the Athens Co. Municipal Court. This would save the county money on transportation costs and the deputies do not have to work as the Athens Co. Engineer's office to obtain bulk fuel tanks and buy fuel at bulk government rates. The cruisers would then be updated and maintained at the Athens Co. Highway Garage. I also believe we should follow the lead of other successful counties throughout the United States and develop sub-units in rural parts of the county (i.e., Coshocton, Albany and Nelsonville). This would reduce the response time and fuel costs, plus it would provide the deputy a more localized place to handle administrative responsibilities.

2. What are you going to do as a public official to create a climate in which victims of domestic and sexual violence feel safe and comfortable to come forward?

As your sheriff, we will explore ways to reduce fuel consumption without jeopardizing your safety and safety. The same principles apply to county vehicles as with personal vehicles. They include proper maintenance, reducing speed and proper planning. We will be looking at the fuel efficiency of the cars in the fleet, as well as their impact on the environment and in hybrid vehicles when possible. We will also implement sector patrolling which will reduce mileage driven. I believe in building safe and healthy communities, now and into the future. Athens county economic growth relies on a safe environment for our citizens.

3. In the event of an air strike, what steps would you take to ensure the safety of children?

I believe in building safe and healthy communities, now and into the future. Athens county economic growth relies on a safe environment for our citizens.

Debbie Phillips is a Democratic City Council Member in Athens, representing the 4th Ward. She is the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee. She has served as a member of the Board of Education of the Comprehensive Plan in Athens. Phillips is the Executive Director of the Ohio Valley Small Business Development Center and advocates for high quality education opportunities for all Ohio children. Phillips serves on the Athens Regional Planning Commission and the General Policy Board of the Hills Regional Development District. She is a member of the Near Eastside Neighborhood Association and the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce.

Pat Kelly is a former Lieutenant with the Athens County Sheriff Office and owner of Kelly Investigative Services. Pat serves as an Adjunct Instructor at Hocking College and Washington State Community College and contracts independently with the Institute for Human Services where he has written and teaches curriculum for topics including, Child Exploitation, Deviant Behaviors, Criminal Gangs and Methamphetamine, Heroin and Hard Drugs.

As Sheriff, I will seek these grants to implement this program. The community’s safety priorities and needs have always been my first and highest priority. As your sheriff, one of my primary focuses will be to create a patrol division while organizing and implementing training for the sheriff's office and other law enforcement agencies.

I will also work with the Athens Co. Engineer's office to obtain bulk fuel tanks and buy fuel at bulk government rates. The cruisers would then be updated and maintained at the Athens Co. Highway Garage. I also believe we should follow the lead of other successful counties throughout the United States and develop sub-units in rural parts of the county (i.e., Coshocton, Albany and Nelsonville). This would reduce the response time and fuel costs, plus it would provide the deputy a more localized place to handle administrative responsibilities.

We must work to increase state funding for local schools, especially here in southeastern Ohio, and reduce the reliance on local property taxes here in our area.
1. What is your position on cuts in Medicaid funding? How would you preserve the health care coverage for Ohio's poor?

Medicaid has proven to be a cost efficient and effective system, delivering healthcare services to the poor and disabled without prejudice at the lowest administrative cost. I vigorously oppose cutting funding to the Health Care for All Ohioans Act to establish non-profit universal health care in Ohio. The Act, HB186 and SB186, expands healthcare coverage to uninsured residents and worker without exemption, simplifies collection of funds and dissemination of payments and sets progressive guaranteed rates to businesses and employers in a publicly funded system.

With so many residents of Ohio already without access to health services, the state must maintain or increase funding for Medicaid. Health care is not a privilege, for the working families and seniors of Ohio. I believe that state programs that provide health care to the residents of this area must be strengthened. The burden of providing health care cannot be shifted to the backs of the region's businesses, and state support is the closest way to close gaps in coverage.

2. Do you favor or oppose increased funding for elementary and secondary education?

I support increased state funding while settling the school funding crisis. The primary concern of any funding discussion must be that it is first constitutional so that it guarantees an equal education for every Ohio student. This will be best accomplished in a reestablished local partnership. Any successful funding plan will not be cheap, nor should it be. We must look at the entire education funding as a top priority and act now.

There are few issues more pressing than the need to continue funding public schools in Southeastern Ohio. While my opponent did not address the school funding crisis of the House and Senate, I stood up against the House in their struggle to meet the demands of their budgets, and school buildings continued to crumble without new funding. As a Member of the Senate, I will fight for more funding for Ohio's public schools. I am a strong supporter of Smart Schools. I will do whatever necessary to ensure that we no longer have to choose between higher taxes and schools that can't provide students for the challenges of a 21st century economy.

I favor more funding for education and am proud that my record of support for our schools has earned me the endorsement of the Ohio Education Association. As I believe the federal government to work for our students, I will fight for more funding for Ohio's public schools. I am a strong supporter of Smart Schools. I will do whatever necessary to ensure that we no longer have to choose between higher taxes and schools that can't provide students for the challenges of a 21st century economy.

1. What is your position on the role of the federal government in education? What should the federal government do, if anything, to ensure that every American has access to a quality education?

I believe we should have a single-payer universal health care system for all Americans with no co-payments, no deductibles, no premiums, and no one excluded from coverage. Since everyone will have health care coverage, people can choose and see their own doctors for routine care and encourages doctors to practice medicine of the highest quality; because we should, as we do, secure. Americans should no longer have to worry about losing their jobs if they lose or change their job. Employers should no longer have to worry about legally keeping their businesses open.

The Federal Government should take a leadership role in ensuring health care is available to everyone, but America should not provide the coverage. For Americans without health insurance, many are eligible for some existing government assistance... we need to ensure they are aware and enroll in those.

Cost control is vital; we need to eliminate waste in Medicaid so that limited dollars can be made to the levels of their budgets, and school buildings continued to crumble without new funding. As a Member of the Senate, I will fight for more funding for Ohio’s public schools. I am a strong supporter of Smart Schools. I will do whatever necessary to ensure that we no longer have to choose between higher taxes and schools that can't provide students for the challenges of a 21st century economy.

2. What steps do you propose to strengthen the U.S. Economy?

We need a budget. We need to get back to making stuff, based on real engineering not just financial engineering. We need to launch an E.T. solar panel designing jobs. Our No. 1 resource is our people. Let's put people back to work — retrofitting and repowering America.

Addressing the health care needs of seniors, working families, and veterans to ensure they have affordable, accessible health care is a top priority. It has been a top priority of mine. I believe that we need a Presidential line-item veto to save our society from itself.

The trick, as a conservative Democrat, is to take part in efforts of our local economies.

3. What is your position on the role of the federal government in education? What should the federal government do, if anything, to ensure that every American has access to a quality education?

I’ve been fighting to improve the economy in our region by combining the ingenuity we have here with the innovation we need to attract jobs in emerging technologies like broadband and alternative energy. I believe that we need to capitalize on the natural resources we are blessed with, including our fertile farmland and abundance of coal, to ensure that they continue to be economic engines for our region. Emerging technologies like broadband and alternative energy. I believe that we need to capitalize on the natural resources we are blessed with,

1. What is your position on the role of the federal government in education? What should the federal government do, if anything, to ensure that every American has access to a quality education?

I've established a clear record of accomplishment for Ohio's working families, veterans, and agriculture producers. I've been fighting to expand the SCHIP program so our children have access to the health care coverage for Ohio's poor.

I've been fighting to improve the economy in our region by combining the ingenuity we have here with the innovation we need to attract jobs in emerging technologies like broadband and alternative energy. I believe that we need to capitalize on the natural resources we are blessed with, including our fertile farmland and abundance of coal, to ensure that they continue to be economic engines for our region.
1. What specific actions should the Attorney General take to protect consumers in Ohio?

As the only candidate who has actually worked in the Attorney General’s office as Ohio’s first State Ranger, I already need to know the rules and have not plan to only initiate to grow the office and uphold the standards of professionalism and restore public trust in the office. I also will advocate for wider and better quality legal assistance. It is incumbent upon all judges to ensure that all citizens – as well as those in the legal profession – have access to the courts. I also will protect the authority of our pockets or jobs from our hometowns. "As a society we need to ensure that people have access to quality affordable legal assistance. It is incumbent upon all judges to ensure that all citizens – as well as those in the legal profession – have access to the courts."
A YES vote means approval of the amendment. A NO vote means disapproval of the amendment. A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted. If approved, this proposed amendment shall take effect immediately.

**League Election of Issue 1:**
- The Ohio Supreme Court must make its decision not later than 65 days prior to the election. No additional days shall be allowed for the filing of additional signatures. The Secretary of State shall check the additional signatures not later than 65 days before the election. Any challenges must be filed with the Ohio Supreme Court not later than 55 days prior to the election, and the court must rule on any challenges not later than 45 days before the election. No ruling is made, the petition and signatures shall be presumed to be valid.
- The proposed amendment would give the Ohio Supreme Court sole authority to consider these cases. Currently lower courts may hear these challenges.

**Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:**
1. The earlier deadlines allow more time to determine the validity of the petition and the signatures. This should reduce the number of invalid issues that appear on ballots and reduce voter confusion.
2. The revised deadlines decrease the time for each step of the process.
3. Proceeds from the sale of the publicly funded bonds may be used to benefit private entities.
4. The state may not limit the amounts of the wagers or the hours of operation. The casino may conduct games other than those listed in the amendment.

**Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:**
1. The operator would be required to pay a tax of up to 30% annually on gross casino receipts. "Gross casino receipts" include gross operating revenues of the operator and the Ohio Gaming Commission.
2. All Ohio counties would benefit. Either 5% of the remaining receipts from top 10 counties, or all the remaining receipts, would be distributed among all 88 Ohio counties on a per capita basis, to be used as each county sees fit.
3. The casino may conduct games other than those listed in the amendment.
4. The amendment is unnecessary because current Ohio law already recognizes property owners' property rights under their property, of the water in a lake, or in navigable waters. The rights confirmed by this amendment may be sufficient.

**League Election of Issue 6:**
- This ballot issue proposes a constitutional amendment that would add to funding for The Clean Ohio Program for environmental, revitalization and conservation purposes.
- The rights confirmed by this amendment may be sufficient.
- A NO vote means approval of the amendment. A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted. If approved, this proposed amendment shall take effect 12-01-08.

**League Election of Issue 3:**
- This proposed amendment resulted from the Ohio legislature's passage of the Great Lakes Water Compact this past spring. Some lawmakers feared final approval of the Compact might limit private water rights. The constitutional amendment is intended to recognize that:
  - Property owners have a protected right, the "reasonable use," of the ground water flowing under their property, and of the water in a lake or watercourse that is on or flows through their property. The owner of the lake or watercourse has the right to give or sell these interests to a governmental body.
  - The public welfare supersedes individual property owners' rights. The state and public subdivisions may regulate such waters to the extent the state law allows.
- The amendment would not affect public use of Lake Erie and the state's other navigable waters. The rights confirmed by this amendment may be sufficient.

**Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:**
1. The amendment should be a body of fundamental principles, and should not be amended unless there is a compelling reason.
2. The proposed amendment does not establish prohibitions of the use of 'initiative' and 'referendum' on property rights.

**Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:**
1. The amendment is unnecessary because current Ohio law already recognizes property owners' property rights under their property, of the water in a lake, or in navigable waters. The rights confirmed by this amendment may be sufficient.
2. The proposed amendment does not establish absolute private ownership of water. The state has the right to regulate water use and water quality.

**League Election of Issue 5:**
- Voters are being asked if they want to repeal the legislation's 'repeal of lenders' authority to charge interest that could be described as "exorbitant," as well as forgiving the "yes" votes of 2008, ballot. (A referendum on Section 3, House Bill 545)
- A YES vote will cap the annual interest rate on payday loans at 28% and allow only the new regulations to apply to payday lenders. A NO vote will allow payday lenders to charge up to 391% interest on a $100 loan. Specifically, a NO vote may create a situation in which both the old and new regulations would apply to payday lenders, potentially leading to confusion and abuse. A majority YES vote will allow only the new regulations affecting payday lenders to be in effect, and the changes regulating payday lenders would go into effect immediately.

**Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:**
1. Current lower courts may hear these challenges. Currently, the deadlines are 90 days prior to the election. If necessary, 10 additional days shall be allowed for the filing of additional signatures. The Secretary of State shall check the additional signatures not later than 65 days before the election. Any challenges must be filed with the Ohio Supreme Court not later than 55 days prior to the election, and the court must rule on any challenges not later than 45 days before the election. No ruling is made, the petition and signatures shall be presumed to be valid.
2. Ohio counties will benefit. Either 5% of the remaining receipts from top 10 counties, or all the remaining receipts, would be distributed among all 88 Ohio counties on a per capita basis, to be used as each county sees fit.
3. Licenses to operate casinos will be renewed every five years. It is unknown how many licenses may be renewed.
4. The state may not limit the amounts of the wagers or the hours of operation. The casino may conduct...
Follow these three steps:
1. Find the race you want to vote in.
2. Write in the candidate’s name in the appropriate place.
3. Fill in the oval next to the name you have written.

Both the line for the candidate’s name and the oval must be filled in for the vote to count.

Poll workers are not allowed to remind you that there are write-in candidates; however, if you ask a poll worker for information, they will provide it for you.

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Proponents of the referendum argue that:
1. The new regulations would cap the interest for payday loans at 28%, which effectively ends lenders’ ability to charge up to 391% interest.
2. The loans provide emergency assistance to cash-strapped borrowers who have no other credit options—and the loans are more affordable, if repaid promptly, than bank overdraft fees and credit card late fees.
3. A borrower’s choice is limited if the number of loans available in a year is capped.
4. Ohioans spend money at the casino; they would have spent at other existing Ohio businesses such as restaurants, movies, or sports events, adversely impacting those businesses.
5. The number of gambling addicts in Ohio would increase, and the tax receipts dedicated to providing treatment for addicts (0.3% of gross casino receipts) could be insufficient.
6. Persons must be 21 years old to place wagers at the casino.
7. The casino will create jobs in Clinton County.
8. The casino will stimulate the economy by adding restaurants, hotels and ancillary businesses.

Opponents of the referendum argue that:
1. The 28% ceiling on interest rates will not allow lenders to make enough profit to stay in business; lenders will be forced to close locations, leaving borrowers and jobs will be lost.
2. The loans provide emergency assistance to cash-strapped borrowers who have no other credit options—and the loans are more affordable, if repaid promptly, than bank overdraft fees and credit card late fees.
3. A borrower’s choice is limited if the number of loans available in a year is capped and the amount of each loan are curtailed. Each borrower should have the right to make their own financial decisions without government restrictions.

Important Voter Information is available from the following websites:
- athenscountyvotes.org – the Athens Public Library and League of Women Voters have partnered to provide various voter services to Athens County.
- athensboardofelections.com - Athens County Board of Elections located at 15 S. Court St., #130 in the city of Athens, OH 45701. Phone (740)392-3201, Fax (740)392-3262. Open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.
- www.seorf.ohiou.edu/~voters – The League of Women Voters of Athens County Board of Directors website.
- www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/pollinglocation.aspx?page=361 – The Ohio Secretary of State website.

A replacement of a tax for the benefit of the County of Athens for the purpose of MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF THE ATHENS CITY-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT at a rate not exceeding 0.3 mill for each one dollar of valuation which amounts to $0.03 for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for 10 years, commencing in calendar year 2010.

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

Bailot Language: Shall the term of the office of President of Council of the City of Athens be changed from two to four years, effective on the first day of January following the next municipal election?

League Explanation: The organization of the City of Athens is governed by the Ohio Revised Code. This code creates a mayor form of government, with an elected mayor and a city council. The president of city council is an elected officer who is not a member of the council but presides over its meetings. The Ohio Revised Code provides that the president of council and its members are elected for a two year term. It also permits the voters of a municipality to chose to elect the president of council and/or its members for a four year term.

This proposition would extend the term of the president of council to four years to be elected in the mid-term of the mayor. 

Arguments submitted by the city council in favor of the proposition:
1. This proposition will promote a continuity of experience in the operation of city government by insuring that a new mayor will be working with an experienced president of the council.
2. This will improve the consistency of city government.

Arguments against the proposition:
1. As long as city council members are elected for two year terms it is more appropriate that its president also serve for a two year term.
2. A two year term insures greater responsiveness by the president of council to the wishes of the voters.

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

League Explanation: shall a levy renewing an existing levy be imposed by the Athens City School District, Athens County, Ohio for the purpose of “PROVIDING FOR THE EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT”, in the amount of $3,300,000, and a levy of taxes be made outside of the tax-limit estimation by the county auditor to average 7.28 mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to $0.728 of one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of 4 years, commencing in 2009, first due in calendar year 2010.

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

Follow these three steps:
1. Find the race you want to vote in.
2. Write in the candidate’s name in the appropriate place.
3. Fill in the oval next to the name you have written.

Both the line for the candidate’s name and the oval must be filled in for the vote to count.

Poll workers are not allowed to remind you that there are write-in candidates; however, if you ask a poll worker for information, they will provide it for you.

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.