



## **Albany County Wyoming 2018 General Election**

### **Voter Guide**

**Prepared by Laramie League of Women Voters**

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## **2018 General Election Introduction**

The League of Women Voters, in a 50-year partnership with the *Laramie Boomerang*, prepares this Voter Guide. It may be taken into the polling booth on Election Day.

### **Candidate Responses**

All candidates were mailed three questions in a letter sent in mid-September to the address provided when they filed for office. If an email was provided, a duplicate was sent there. The first question was the same for all candidates. Candidates had 100 words maximum per question. They were given a deadline.

Responses over the word limit were shortened by cutting up from the bottom to the closest complete thought within the word limit; candidates were notified of that policy. Three dots (part of a sentence cut) or four dots (a full sentence or more was cut) at the end of a response indicates that cutting was done. There was no editing except to add periods where they were missing. If a response to a question had several short paragraphs, they were combined into one paragraph as the guidelines requested. Otherwise, statements here are in the candidate's own words, exactly as submitted.

### **Preambles**

Each race has a preamble stating salary, term of office and other pertinent information about the office. A candidate who did not respond is named in the preamble. Several did not reply by the deadline despite follow-up phone calls and emails.

### **Tuesday, November 6, 2018**

Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day, which is Tuesday, November 6, 2018. Polling places are listed on the County Clerk's "Election" website at [www.co.albany.wy.us/clerk](http://www.co.albany.wy.us/clerk). Call the Clerk's Office at (307) 721-2546 if unsure of the place or whether or not you are registered. You must be at the correct polling place based on where you live in order to receive a ballot.

### **Voter Registration**

If you voted in the 2016 General Election or the 2018 Primary, you are still registered to vote, unless you have moved or changed your name in the meantime. Registration is at the County Clerk's Office either in person, by mail, or at the polls on Election Day. Check the Clerk's website for eligibility to register and what you need to bring with you.

### **Absentee Voting**

Absentee voting has begun. You can go to the County Courthouse and cast a ballot and/or to register at the same time. You cannot pick up an absentee ballot for another person without a signed form from that registered person requesting one. Those already registered can request a ballot in person, by phone or by sending an email or letter to the Elections Office in the Courthouse (525 E. Grand Avenue, Suite 202, Laramie WY 82070; email: [elections@co.albany.wy.us](mailto:elections@co.albany.wy.us)).

## **Write-in Votes**

Ballots contain space for write-in votes for all offices except Judicial Retentions. The largest number of votes determines who wins. State law requires that there must be at least 25 write-in votes for the same name in order for it to be counted for state offices, however, for city councils three write-ins are the minimum. Special districts do not have a minimum set by law, but in case of a tie vote the state statute says: "it shall be broken by lots cast by the canvassing authority."

## **Accommodating All Voters**

The County Clerk's staff makes every effort to assure that voters with disabilities of any type are accommodated. There are special voting stations with equipment for the visually impaired. If the voter's car has a handicap sticker, special parking places are available at polling places. The election staff will even bring ballots to cars if they are notified. Call the Clerk's Office at the number above to request special arrangements.

## **Lodging and "Fifth-penny" Taxes**

Renewal of two existing tax measures is on the ballot. Look for two different "Viewpoints" articles stating the reasons that some voters may have for voting for or against either of them. The Lodging Tax is a Special Purpose Tax paid only by people who rent temporary lodging in Albany County (not apartment renters). The "Fifth-penny" tax changes the 4% statewide sales tax to a 5% tax in Albany County, used for local revenue. Both have been in place since the 1980s because Wyoming State government cannot fully support cities, towns or tourism activities with the revenue it receives.

## **Forum Videos**

Several forums for local races hosted by the LWV and the Albany County Public Library have been held. They are posted at <https://www.youtube.com/user/WYLWV>. Other Leagues in the state host forums for state -wide offices and post them <https://tinyurl.com/y7ugrayw>; is the site for the Campbell County LWV; <https://www.facebook.com/League-of-Women-Voters-Cheyenne> for the Cheyenne LWV, and for Jackson Members At Large : [www.tclib.org](http://www.tclib.org) .

There is another for candidates for Wyoming Governor scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 25 at 5:15-6:45 p.m. at the UW A & S Auditorium, with a number of campus groups as co-sponsors. It will also be posted on YouTube.com.

## **About the League**

The LWV is a nonpartisan membership organization with units at the local, state and national level. There are Leagues in all 50 states and some US territories. The League was founded in 1920 when the Women's Suffrage Association changed its name to the League of Women Voters following ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution giving women the right to vote. Despite the name, the League is open to everyone age 16 or over. This Voter Guide was prepared with assistance of the Laramie LWV and the Wyoming LWV. Some of the results are posted on VOTE411.org, a website for all US voters.

## United States Senate

*Salary for U.S. Senators is \$174,000 per year plus some benefits. Members who are congressional leaders receive more salary. An annual allowance is provided all Senators to defray office expenses including staff. Term of office is six years with no term limits. No response was received from Joseph Porambo (L) of Casper.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**John Barrasso (R):** Nothing has prepared me more for serving Wyoming than the years I spent as a doctor, a state legislator and volunteer. These experiences and jobs prepared me to contribute conservative solutions to the broad set of issues and challenges we face. They taught me the important lessons of hard work and community that lead to solutions closest to the people. These jobs taught me to listen first. Most importantly, I learned why it is so critical that we guide our own future and not leave decisions about our lives, our resources, our freedoms to Washington.

**Gary Trauner (D):** I have deep experience in the private sector: co-founder of a Wyoming-based Internet Service Provider, co-founder of a Wyoming-based financial services Trust Company, and COO of St. John's Medical Center. I have served my community: former elected Chair of the School Board, current elected Chair of a Water & Sewer District, founding Board member, ED and coach for one of the largest youth sports programs in Teton County. However, the most important attributes I possess for US Senate are common threads throughout all of my endeavors: leadership ability and integrity, both of which are in short supply in Washington.

### **How can we get back to Congress doing its job, and not letting administrative agencies write all the rules?**

**John Barrasso (R):** The Constitution makes clear that the federal government is to provide a common defense and to ensure its citizens rights. Not interfere with your life. We've seen the federal bureaucracy grow too encompassing. We've seen Washington not listening and not working. As a result, often federal agencies issue one size fits all rules. Time and again we see this approach fail. I believe in government of, by, and for the people. I believe a smaller government creates more jobs and interferes less with personal freedoms. I believe when we downsize government, we are safer, more prosperous and live more free.

**Gary Trauner (D):** There is no magic formula for having Congress perform its Constitutional duties, including writing legislation that provides specific direction to federal agencies. It takes leadership, integrity, and a willingness to communicate, develop relationships and work with anyone who is willing to work for the common good instead of their political party. One avenue may be term limits, which might focus Congress on passing appropriate legislation instead of worrying about staying in power. Another might be ensuring that the incentives for Congress are the same as those for the American people – they get no special benefits that aren't available to everyone.

### **Should states have veto power over what the federal government proposes with regard to water development projects? Explain your position.**

**John Barrasso (R):** Water infrastructure is vital to every state, territory, community, and tribe in the country. Federally authorizing important water projects will create jobs and spur economic growth. It will also increase water storage in the West and build new flood management infrastructure. States must be an equal partner in these efforts. Without that partnership we won't be able to cut red tape to get these projects done faster, better, cheaper and smarter. I'm proud to have authored and helped pass the largest federal water infrastructure bill in decades - American's Water Infrastructure Act.

**Gary Trauner (D):** I wholeheartedly agree with the ED of the Western Governors Association, who recently wrote, in “partnering with states (and recognizing their authority as sovereigns), the federal government will be positioned to utilize state knowledge and competency to produce federal policy that is more efficient, cost effective, and defensible.”. Many water projects – such as the Colorado River Compact – traverse state boundaries. Allowing veto power to any given state would not be appropriate. However, I am in favor of cooperation, communication, sharing of resources and expertise, and making decisions after bringing all stakeholders to the table.

## U.S. House of Representatives

*Annual salary for U.S. Representatives is \$174,000 per year plus some benefits; Congressional leaders receive more. An annual allowance is also provided to defray office expenses including staff. Terms are two years, with no term limits. Richard Brubaker (L) of Riverton did not respond.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Liz Cheney (R):** As Wyoming's lone Representative in the U.S. House, I have championed conservative reform to create jobs, cut taxes and regulation, expand America's energy, mining and ag industries and restore America's strength and power. As a proud constitutional conservative, I have co-sponsored legislation that would crack down on illegal immigration, preserve the constitutional rights of gun owners across America by expanding concealed carry reciprocity and protect life with bills that expand the Hyde Amendment, defund Planned Parenthood, and ensure Obamacare doesn't provide taxpayer funds for abortion.

**Daniel Clyde Cummings (C):** I have been an intensive student of United States national affairs for many decades. I will focus on 2 critical national problems that threaten to destroy our republic. First, the reckless spending of Congress will eventually destroy our economy and impoverish us if it continues; I will introduce an amendment to the Constitution to repeal the authority of Congress to borrow money; this will end further borrowing by the federal government. Second, the federal judiciary is wildly out of control; I will introduce precedent-setting legislation to limit federal judicial appellate jurisdiction. See my website, [cummings4congress.com](http://cummings4congress.com), for more information.

**Greg Hunter (D):** I have 35+ years of experience dealing with the laws that are derived at the Federal Level then are implemented by the states. This makes me uniquely qualified to understand how to craft protections that will be economically viable while protecting the health, safety and environment of Wyoming citizens. I have worked at the highest level of a government-consulting firm that was directly influenced by Congressional actions. This enables my understanding of the influence Congress has on State issues. Extractive energy is key to Wyoming's current economy. We must maximize our resources' efficiencies while supporting innovative research in energy technologies.

### **How can we get back to Congress doing its job, and not letting administrative agencies write all the rules?**

**Liz Cheney (R):** Our local citizens are the best stewards of our resources and lands. My first bill signed into law by President Trump overturned Planning 2.0, a federal power grab that would have expanded the control exercised by environmental groups and bureaucrats over our land. Congress also used the Congressional Review Act to undo the National Wild Life Hunting and Fishing Rule, the Stream Buffer Rule and the OSHA Power Grab Rule. We must continue to be vigilant in pursuing every opportunity to reduce federal overreach, streamline regulations and return as much authority as possible to our states and local communities.

**Daniel Clyde Cummings (C):** Our present federal government is simply too big to be effectively managed by Congress and greatly exceeds the functions originally envisioned by its founders in the Constitution (Article 1, Section 8). Congress should completely liquidate the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and many other profligately wasteful, intrusive, and oppressive agencies. Then Congress could concentrate more fully on its proper constitutional functions of protecting our national security and promoting our national independence by more meticulous supervision and oversight of the military forces and international relations, the most important functions of the federal government.

**Greg Hunter (D):** There is entirely too much money and lobbyists that "help" craft rules based on

the laws passed by the Legislative branch and signed by the President. We need to make sure that lobbyists and unchecked money do not have undue influence on Congress and the people that write regulations/protection. I understand the influence of money and power in limiting public knowledge on public health impacts. I will always put Wyoming first and will not be rolled over by either side for the sake of a “win” for the team. I will only introduce bills that serve Wyoming, not corporate interests.

**Should states have veto power over what the federal government proposes with regard to water development projects? Explain your position.**

**Liz Cheney (R):** States should have the primary role in identifying, creating, and implementing water development projects. States know best what projects will best meet the needs of communities, including fish and wildlife conservation measures, protection of existing water rights, preserving agricultural and municipal uses, and ensuring both quality and quantity of water resources. Furthermore, state authorities are better situated to collaborate with land owners, local governments, and other stakeholders to ensure water development projects meet critical needs.

**Daniel Clyde Cummings (C):** Water development is not among the proper congressional functions enumerated in the Constitution; therefore, Congress has no proper constitutional authority to finance any such projects. A water development project that affects only one state should be financed and managed solely by that state; water projects involving or affecting more than one state should be financed and managed by cooperation among those states. Congress can regulate such interstate compacts for fairness if any involved state becomes abusive of the other involved states (this was the original intent of the interstate commerce authority), but it should never finance these projects.

**Greg Hunter (D):** No. Water is a precious commodity and one that should not be wasted. Water law and its relationship to the Federal authority have been litigated in courts across America. Acts of Congress dealing with water projects supersede State’s water laws. The idea that a State has the power to have “Supremacy” over a Federal Action is one that lies within purview of Congress and not within the State. Congress has not yet acted to upset appropriate water rights but that day may come and I would fight for what Wyoming wants for its water and its beneficial use.

## Wyoming Governor

*The Governor is the only Wyoming elected official with a term limit—two four-year terms. Salary is \$105,000 with some benefits, including an office, and an official residence.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Mark Gordon (R):** Wyoming is at a crossroads right now. That's why it is more important than ever to have a proven conservative leader with the knowledge, experience and dedication to fight for Wyoming every single day. I'm the only candidate in this race with experience working in the industry's most important to our economy – energy, agriculture and tourism. I've successfully stood up and defended the Constitution and worked with the legislature to save taxpayers money. I've spent my life building businesses, raising my family and serving my community right here in Wyoming and am ready to hit the ground running on day one.

**Rex "T-Rex" Rammell (C):** I am a western native, born and raised near Yellowstone Park. A veterinarian, small businessman, rancher, wildlife enthusiast, and stalwart conservative. I have run for the U.S. Senate, U.S Congress, and Governor as a Republican. I am well versed in western politics and believe Wyoming should be sovereign over all its land and all its decisions.  
[www.rexrammell.com](http://www.rexrammell.com)

**Lawrence Gerard Struempf (L):** I earned a Bachelors of Computer Science and a Doctorate of Instructional Technology from the University of Wyoming and a Masters of Management from Regis, which are all knowledge bases a Governor should have. I have had diverse careers including farm Forman, truck driver, heavy equipment operator, bus driver, store manager, business owner, CEO, computer technician, systems/network engineer, high school teacher, and college professor. I have also had leadership roles on many boards and foundations such as Rotary, Kiwanis, United Way, Public Library, and Chamber of Commerce. I will research and solve any issue that comes before me.

**Mary A. Throne (D):** Most recently, I served in the legislature for 10 years, and I've worked as an energy attorney for most of my career. No other candidate in this race has as much experience in the energy sector as I do. I believe my experience will be instrumental in making the most of opportunities for the energy sector. I served most recently as minority leader of the Wyoming House of Representatives. I have a proven track record of building broad coalitions to tackle difficult problems. Most of my bills passed with more Republican votes than Democratic votes.

### **What proposals, if any, do you support for the tax changes recommended in the Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming (ENDOW) report? If you do not support any, what is your reasoning?**

**Mark Gordon (R):** There's no question a sustainable economic future will be based on a dependable balanced budget, one which is predictable and well diversified. To get there, Wyoming must manage spending levels by setting priorities that provide for the essential services the people of Wyoming depend on, and allow local communities a greater range of opportunities to foster and grow business. As our economy changes and grows into the future, Wyoming will need to have a real conversation about our tax structure but reining in our spending and growing our economy must be our top priority today.

**Rex "T-Rex" Rammell (C):** I do not support any tax changes and I do not support ENDOW or the Wyoming Business Council. I do support chartering a State Bank and taking our nearly 20 billion investment portfolio that we currently invest in Wall Street and bring that money back to Wyoming to use as business loans for new and existing businesses. A 10 to 20 billion dollar capital infusion into Wyoming would ignite the engine of capitalism and start a firestorm of economic



diversification and prosperity.

**Lawrence Gerard Struempf (L):** I agree with a lot of the findings in the ENDOW report such as diversifying the economy, growing wind energy, and creating an economic diversification specialist in my office. In regards to tax reform, I do not believe that taxes should be increased on the working class by increasing income and property taxes. The public minerals of this state are a finite resource and belong to the people of this state. It is important to gain a nationally accepted return on those resources, as we work to diversify our economy and bring new businesses to Wyoming.

**Mary A. Throne (D):** ENDOW and supporting studies have shown that Wyoming cannot sustainably grow its economy without reforming its tax code. As an expert on Wyoming's budget, I know we cannot afford to ignore this issue any longer. I do not support a state income tax, but there are other ways for Wyoming to broaden its tax base. A leisure tax, for example, would bring more money in from our tourism industry—Wyoming's second largest economic sector—and much of that tax revenue would come from out of state.

**Uninsured emergency care is a burden on Wyoming hospitals—what is your view on how medical care can be provided to citizens who are having difficulty finding insurance?**

**Mark Gordon (R):** Ensuring Wyoming citizens have access to affordable, quality healthcare is among my top priorities. This includes having options in place for those who are unable to get insurance. Driving down costs and improving transparency in billing are critical first steps to improving and expanding access to affordable healthcare. Wyoming must also look at building better business models for health centers and clinics; recruiting and retaining physicians; examining opportunities with telemedicine; building out better networks for care across communities; and finding unique opportunities to meet Wyoming's unique needs.

**Rex "T-Rex" Rammell (C):** Federal law requires all emergency rooms to treat anyone with an emergency, regardless of their ability to pay. Until the law is changed hospitals will continue to provide free emergency care and then pass that expense on to those who do have insurance. The federal law needs challenged. States need to be in control of their own economies without federal interference. If federal regulation was removed, then insurance wouldn't be as expensive for the poor. This along with a strong economy would make affordable health care available for everyone.

**Lawrence Gerard Struempf (L):** I have spoken with hospital managers and board members as well as lower income citizens about the difficulties of health insurance and medical expenses. I believe that Medicaid expansion would be best solution for the people and businesses of Wyoming, in addressing the healthcare issues. The fighting between the Republicans and Democrats has harmed the people of this country and this state. We need a central, third party to come between them and bring them together. As a Modern Libertarian, I will work to unite this political fraction so we can work together for the people.

**Mary A. Throne (D):** I strongly support the expansion of Medicaid. With one simple bill, we could help 20,000 people access high quality affordable health insurance, with 90% of costs paid for by the federal government. Moreover, Medicaid expansion would help everyone in Wyoming by stabilizing rural hospitals and reducing cost shifting to those with insurance. This would help to lower premiums for the rest of the state. I also support further investment in telehealth programs, and innovations that would help to stabilize the insurance exchange. Additionally, all of these programs would serve to better address the mental health crisis in our state.

## Wyoming Secretary of State

*The Secretary of State's term is four years with no term limits. Annual salary is \$92,000 with some benefits.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Edward Buchanan (R):** I attended UW and received my undergraduate and law degrees there. I served in the legislature for ten years and served as chairman of the judiciary committee. My primary focus was on agriculture and economic development. I was selected as the Majority Floor Leader and then Speaker of the House. I was appointed as Secretary of State on March 1, 2018. Immediately I began work to update voting equipment for fair and secure elections. We are also implementing a new education piece regarding agency rules that will allow citizens a greater access and understanding of these rules.

**James W. Byrd (D):** Consultant Oil & Gas, Consultant Computer networking, own Dry Cleaning business. Past President SWED (Southeast Wyoming Economic Development). I am currently finishing 10 years as Wyoming State House of Representative for District 44. Served on the standing legislative committee Corporations & Political subdivisions committee and Minerals & Economic Development committee 10 years. Management Council two years along with many appointments to select and special committees like Select committee on Capital Financing & Investments, Select committee on Legislative Facilities, Technology, and Process, CSG- National – energy and environment to name a few. Corporations committee has direct legislative oversight of the Secretary of State's office. . . .

**Kit Carson III (L):** My qualifications: Paralegal doing monthly biz. with S.O.S office for many years, tax consultant, International biz. man (Europe), former realtor, loan officer and private banker, lived in Cheyenne 16 years, strong supporter of 2nd and 10th amendments, Treasurer for the Libertarian Party, former cattle rancher and rodeo cowboy.

**What are your suggestions for increasing voter turnout in Wyoming?**

**Edward Buchanan (R):** As Secretary of State, I have promoted increased voter turnout through timely press releases and well as an entire program dedicated to younger voters. We also allow same day registration. In Wyoming it is easy to vote so there really are no excuses. It is important to note that we are not just wanting the increase numbers of voters, we are trying to increase the number of voters conversant on the issues important to Wyoming.

**James W. Byrd (D):** I am not sure that there is a "silver bullet" answer to this question. I have just completed some research on the primary election voter turn-out and trends and find it quite troubling. If one used the states numbers of "Voting Age Persons" (VAP) and subtracts the number of voters who cast a ballot in the primary, give or take ten percent (10%) more reduction for eligibility. It leaves you with an astounding number between 275,000 and 300,000 people who did not bother to vote. I think a very serious program with the counties needs to be put in place . . . .

**Kit Carson III (L):** I would focus on the 8 colleges in Wyoming as well as the millennial.

**How significant is voter fraud in Wyoming elections? If it is an issue, how would you counter it? Please explain.**

**Edward Buchanan (R):** There is not significant voter fraud in Wyoming and our voting systems are designed to prevent it. We cross-check with several different agencies to ensure only those eligible individuals vote. One area in which to be vigilant is absentee voting and ensuring our voter rolls are up to date. The county clerks do an excellent job for us.

**James W. Byrd (D):** During my time in the legislature on the Corporations committee there have been no credible incidents of voter fraud reported by the county clerks or the state elections division. There have been a couple of incidents that were addressed but not as intentional fraud and were dealt with by the local jurisdictions appropriately.

**Kit Carson III (L):** Hacking to our elections is a serious threat. If I am elected, I will terminate all electronic voting machines. I will also work with SLIB board to create our own W-crypto currency exchange, that will generate so much money, it will wipe out our \$900 million deficit !

## **Wyoming State Auditor**

*The Auditor's term of office is four years with no term limits. Annual salary is \$92,000 plus some benefits.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Jeff Dockter (D):** I earned my Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Wyoming in 2008. I have my Project Management Professional (PMP) certificate from the Project Management Institute. I started with the State of Wyoming in April, 2003, working as a program manager. I have audited government contracts and programs to ensure they complied with state and federal requirements. In 2012, I transferred to the Department of Enterprise Technology Services where I have supervised different teams that provide innovative and reliable technology solutions. My experience gives me the skills to lead and innovate business processes at the Auditor's office.

**Kristi Racines (R):** I graduated from UW with a degree in accounting and I am licensed as a Certified Public Accountant. In my current position as CFO and Director of Human Resources for the state judicial branch, I prepare and manage a statewide budget of 80 million dollars and oversee human resources for 340 employees. I sit on the State Employee Compensation Commission and was appointed a member of the Government Efficiency Commission in 2017. Prior to my employment with the state, I worked for a Cheyenne public accounting firm, where I performed audits of Wyoming businesses, nonprofits, and various different governmental entities.

### **What are the most important qualifications for holding this office?**

**Jeff Dockter (D):** Leadership experience and a commitment to provide accurate, timely information to promote Wyoming's people over special interests. I have worked with citizens, businesses, the Legislature, and state agencies to improve outcomes for Wyoming citizens. Project management experience is invaluable. My experience provides me the facilitation and people skills to innovate business processes at the Auditor's office. In a data-driven, connected world, the only way to save money for taxpayers is through technological innovation. A vision for tomorrow that keeps Wyoming on a path of excellence. I'm committed to ensuring that the office is ready to do business in a blockchain world. . .

**Kristi Racines (R):** Our State Auditor must possess two qualifications - Wyoming perspective and the technical skills to do the job. The Auditor is the Chief Accountant, Chief Payroll Officer, official custodian of the accounting record, and is responsible for all payments into and out of the treasury. This is not a figurehead position and it is critical that these tasks be done correctly. When it comes to perspective, I'm Wyoming to the bone. Being born and raised in the state and spending time in all 23 counties has taught me that each of our small communities are faced with unique challenges and opportunities.

### **The holder of this office sits on several policy-making Wyoming Boards; what issues do you want to promote in discussions on these boards?**

**Jeff Dockter (D):** I grew up in Circle, Montana, working on the family farm until it was sold in 1990. As a voting member on the State Lands and Investment Board, I will vote yes on projects that help communities improve antiquated infrastructure. I know how hard it is to complete new infrastructure projects that attract new businesses, bring in tourists, and promote a healthy economy. I also want to promote the issue of transparency to ensure Wyoming Boards are providing accurate, timely information so citizens can actively participate in Board conversations.

**Kristi Racines (R):** Preserving what we love about Wyoming, while making common-sense, pragmatic decisions to move us forward is my concern on both the State Loan and Investment Board and the Land Board. This means fostering an environment that supports our traditional industries (agriculture, energy) but mindfully diversifying into other economic sectors where appropriate. We must manage our state lands to fund education by promoting responsible multiple use and land access. It is critical that we make sound and cost-conscious investments in our communities to improve and maintain infrastructure and foster business and educational opportunities.

## Wyoming State Treasurer

*The State Treasurer serves a four-year term with no term limits. Annual salary is \$92,000 plus some benefits.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Chris Lowry (D):** I have a Bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Wyoming. I've worked in a laboratory for the last 22 years as either a technician, scientist, or manager. I've learned the value of consistent hard work and how to find solutions that are supported by evidence. Wyoming is the only home I've known and I believe I have our state's best interests in mind. I'm a single father that knows how to put other's interests before my own. I can also find ways to work with people to advance the best ideas for our state's investments.

**Curt Meier (R):** I attended LaGrange Schools K-12, and then received my degree from the University of Wyoming. I also studied computer programming at LCCC and served on Goshen Co. Economic Development Board and was Wyoming Ag Leadership Council President. I married my wife Charlene in 1982, and was appointed to the State Board of Education by Governor Sullivan. I replaced Jim Geringer in the Senate when he became governor, and have served in the Legislature since 1995. I held two committee chairmanships, and also spent 8 years on Appropriations Committee and 10 years as a legislative liaison on the State Retirement Board.

### **The holder of this office sits on several policy-making Wyoming boards; what issues do you want to promote in discussions on these boards?**

**Chris Lowry (D):** Understanding the boards and commissions this office is responsible for is a priority for me but I need more research to fully understand all the challenges. I don't think we can keep trying the same things that haven't worked for the past few decades and expect different results. It takes understanding and respect to work with other people and I think I can find ways to work with people that will benefit most people in Wyoming. I think the influence of money in politics is something we, the voters, must find a way to resolve before we're able to effectively solve any others.

**Curt Meier (R):** I wish to prudently increase investment income with a goal to be in the top quartile of comparative sovereign wealth funds. I am committed to transparency in all processes and issues, as well as multiple uses of public lands and no net loss of land, hunting or fishing. I want to enhance the opportunities for recreation and increase returns on state assets while tracking public building construction projects and making sure maintenance is timely. We will use the Wyoming Community Development Authority to help build healthy, safe vibrant communities. I intend to keep the excellent talent in the Treasurer's office. . .

### **What changes would you make in the state's asset allocation?**

**Chris Lowry (D):** Our current State Treasurer has presided over an award-winning office so, it's difficult to advocate for major changes in how our funds have been invested. I would rely on the advice of the highly qualified staff currently in the office because we have some of the brightest minds already managing our state funds. There's some work we could do to improve the efficiency of the office by more actively participating in management of our funds.

**Curt Meier (R):** Asset allocation is data and goal dependent and also relies on the time line associated with those goals. A higher rate of return is usually associated with higher risk, but risk can be reduced by diversification into non-correlative investment alternatives— "investments that do not move in the exact manner as the stocks." There is a great deal of due diligence required to research the quality of alternative investments. The Permanent Mineral Trust Fund has legislative directives which provide investing programs at below Market rates. This is a challenge. Our equity allocations are currently about 15 percent under our cap.

## **Superintendent of Public Instruction**

*Term of office is four years with no term limits. Annual salary is \$92,000 plus some benefits. No Democrat filed for this office.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Jillian Balow (R):** A fifth generation Wyomingite, I am a graduate of Campbell County High School and the University of Wyoming. Prior to being elected Superintendent of Public Instruction in 2014, I spent ten years teaching and eight years in government administration. In my first term, I worked to create stability in education while practicing conservative governance. I reduced the agency operational budget by 15% and staff by 10%, and made efficiency recommendations to the Legislature. I led initiatives to increase opportunities in computer science and career and technical education, reformulated school accountability, and created a system of support for struggling schools.

**Should the state revenue picture improve, what changes to the Department of Education budget would you restore?**

**Jillian Balow (R):** In my first term, I have reduced the agency operational budget and made several efficiency recommendations within the school funding block grant to the Legislature, many of which became law. In my next term, I will continue to work to identify efficiencies in education that do not impact learning in the classroom, such as identifying routing software to reduce transportation costs and staffing guidelines in special education. I will continue advocate against budget reductions that impact classroom learning. If funding were restored in some way, I would remain committed to achieving efficiencies while providing greater services to our school districts.

**The unelected School Facilities Commission has relaxed class size requirements in Wyoming schools. And the acreage they require for new schools is so large new schools are being built on the fringes of Wyoming towns. What is your recommendation about the proper acreage and student/teacher ratios?**

**Jillian Balow (R):** The School Facilities Commission (SFC) voted to reduce the square footage per student when no revenue source for school construction could be identified beyond 2018. The SFC had a fiduciary responsibility to mitigate costs as much as possible. Unfortunately, the vote negatively impacted other facets of education policy and class sizes. The decision should have been made in conjunction with the legislature and should have been more carefully vetted in public by education stakeholders.

## Wyoming Senate

*Senators serve four-year terms without term limits. Stipends are \$150 per day during the legislative session or for committee meetings—including travel days. Per Diem expenses are allowed at maximum rate of \$109, less when the meeting is in their community. There are three different Senate Districts in Albany County each with one Senator: SD 9, SD 10 and SD 11, which includes the Rock River area and Carbon County. Candidates are listed below grouped by District. Voters only choose from the candidates for the District in which they live; candidates must live in their District. No Republican filed for SD 9. The term for SD 10 Senator, Glenn Moniz, is not up this year.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Chris Rothfuss (D-SD 9):** I have served in the WY Senate since 2011, including the past six years as Senate Minority Leader. I am a member of the Education Committee, the Minerals Business and Economic Development Committee and numerous other select committees and task forces. Outside of the legislature, I am a Visiting Assistant Professor for the UW Honors College and an advanced technology consultant. I received a BA in international studies and an MS in chemical engineering from the University of Wyoming; and an MS in applied physics and a PhD in chemical engineering from the University of Washington. [[www.linkedin.com/in/rothfuss/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/rothfuss/)]

**Larry Hicks (R-SD 11):** Education: B.S. University of Wyoming, M.S. Montana State University, Doctoral work at UW. Twenty-eight years' experience in natural resource management working with federal, state, local governmental agencies and landowners on the management and regulation of natural resource in Wyoming. Served on local and national boards related to water, agriculture, and natural resources. Eight years in the Wyoming Senate, including Chairmen of the Agriculture-Public Lands and Water Resources, and Select Natural Resource Funding. Also served on Judiciary, Corporation- Election-Political Subdivision Committee and Select Water. Represent Wyoming Legislature on national committees for Agriculture, Water Resource and Infrastructure, and Environment.

**Lee Ann Stephenson (D-SD11):** I graduated from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor degree in Administration of Justice in 1989. While living in Cheyenne, I worked for the Department of Family Services investigating child abuse. I was promoted to the DFS state office to provide training, rules, procedures, office audits for the child protection division, including work on legislation for child protection and welfare reform. I next moved to the Wyoming Attorney General's Office, as a program manager for domestic violence in the Division of Victim Services, also working with the legislature on laws concerning domestic violence. Retired in 2007, moved to Riverside.

### **If elected, would you work to change the current election code that allows voters to change party affiliation at primary elections and why?**

**Chris Rothfuss (D-SD 9):** I believe all voters should be able to meaningfully vote in all elections that affect them. I would not support any statutory changes that would limit voter participation or choice. On the contrary, I have sponsored and will continue to support legislation that would adopt an open primary (everybody gets the same ballot regardless of party) providing ranked preference voting (you rank the candidates rather than just vote for one of them) and a 'top 2' primary outcome (the two most popular candidates move on to the general election, regardless of party). See <http://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2017/SF0112> for details.

**Larry Hicks (R-SD 11):** Absolutely I will continue to work to revamp our current election codes. Voters should not be allowed to change parties at the polls in "primary" election. Primary elections are for the sole purpose of the parties to select their candidates. The system is currently being abused where one party crosses over on primary election day in order to politically medal in the outcome of the other political party's candidate selection.

**Lee Ann Stephenson (D-SD11):** I would not work to change the current election code.

**What specific parts of the ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming) report ([www.endowyo.biz](http://www.endowyo.biz)) do you support such as tax reforms, infrastructure and pay equity improvements, population growth and others?**

**Chris Rothfuss (D-SD 9):** I have been supportive of the Governor's ENDOW initiative and appreciate the thoughtful 20 year strategy prepared by the ENDOW council. One key finding that I have repeatedly emphasized over the past 8 years is that the current state revenue structure will not support economic diversification. Broad-based revenue reform must go hand in hand with economic diversification for us to successfully break free of our mineral based boom and bust cycle. Furthermore, progressive labor priorities including gender wage equity, workplace non-discrimination, worker safety, wage strength, and excellence in education are all essential in developing an environment favorable for beneficial diversification.

**Larry Hicks (R-SD 11):** There is little in the ENDOW report that I can support for the primary reason is it was supposed to be an economic strategy to diversify our economy and what it turned out to be is a wish list for more government programs and spending. The report wanders all over the spectrum and lacks any semblance of a targeted strategic approach to "how" we are going to diversify our economy. The singular most glaring deficiency in the ENDOW report is any discussion of consistency of how economic development can be done while preserving the heritage, customs and culture of Wyoming. . . .

**Lee Ann Stephenson (D-SD11):** No one wants to pay more taxes. First, I want to make sure we have all the tools in place to make sure we are correctly collecting all the taxes currently legislated. Next, I would like to evaluate all the tax exemptions currently granted and decide if they should still be supported. I would next support the expansion of U of Wyoming so residents across the state can have access to degree programs to better educate our workforce. I would also support expanding medical education facilities to better train a workforce to bring medical innovation to serve our rural residents.



## Wyoming House of Representatives

*Wyoming House members serve two-year terms without term limits. Stipends are \$150 per day during the legislative session and committee meetings—including travel days. Per Diem expenses are \$109 maximum, less when the meeting is in their community. There are five House Districts in Albany County—House Districts 13, 14, 45, 46 and 47. County residents vote only for the candidate in their district; candidates must also live in their District. Candidates are listed below alphabetically by district. No Republican filed for HD 13 and no Democrat for HD 47. No response was received from Jerry Paxton (R- HD 47).*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Cathy Connolly (D-HD 13):** Having lived and worked in Laramie for over 25 years, I have served on several boards including the SAFE Project, the Laramie High School citizen advisory board, and the Whiting High School parent advisory council. I am a UW professor, proud of our university and its students. I have been honored to serve in the legislature for the past five terms including leadership roles, and assignments to committees including Revenue, Appropriations and Education. I listen to constituents and have a proven record of success working with colleagues across the aisle on issues to improve our lives, livelihoods and communities.

**Dan Furphy (R-HD 14):** The past two years of serving in the Legislature has provided valuable experience in developing an extremely tight budget yet balancing it. I supported the University of Wyoming, the K-12 school system and WyoTech. I had many years of experience as CEO of a multi-state banking organization. Developing a budget involving several branch banks gave me exposure to working with a complex budget such as the State of Wyoming with its many agencies and departments. After retiring I took on the position of economic development for our community. My economic development experience helps with the Endow initiative.

**Lorraine Saulino-Klein (D-HD 14):** I worked 48 years in health care, owned one small business for eighteen years and ran a small medical business with my late husband for twenty. Health care will be a major issue in the Legislature and my experience in medical business and positive nursing practices will benefit Wyoming residents. I will be a strong advocate for small business. I also taught nursing in the public schools for the last eleven years and that experience will allow me to work effectively for an excellent education for all Wyoming students.

**Charles F. Pelkey (D-HD 45):** I am the current Minority Whip and a member of the Wyoming House of Representatives for two terms. I have worked diligently to protect our state's investments in education, reform our criminal justice system, improve protections for victims of domestic violence and our health insurance and health care systems. I have worked in the private sector for most of my life, but see the need for communities to come together to provide those services that we can't do on an individual basis. Government is a tool that we should use wisely to aid all of the citizens of Wyoming.

**Roxie Hensley (R-HD 45):** I bring over 25 years experience as a successful small business owner in Laramie and around the state, so I, understand how government can help or

impede businesses of any size. As a practicing attorney and child advocate for the State, I have a thorough knowledge of the law and understanding of what needs to be done to decrease juvenile offenses and keep families together. Third, perhaps most important, I know the value of hard work, integrity, and finding solutions. Finally, I have deep Wyoming roots and wish nothing more than to help our community and the state to prosper.

**Jackie Grimes (D-HD 46):** My 15 years of experience in mental health and six in education has helped me develop skills on gathering relevant information, analyzing data, developing and implementing effective action plans, and coordinating with government agencies. It has raised my appreciation for the importance of focusing on the people. As the wife of a small business owner, I'm aware of challenges businesses face and what they need from government. Finally, as a mother and consumer, I have first-hand experience with the costs of healthcare, daycare, and what the educational, employment, housing and other needs of families and communities are.

**Bill Haley (R-HD 46):** I have two years' experience in this office and I've lived and worked in Albany County for 40+ years. I know what's important to my constituents since I have had the opportunity to work with so many of them. I have worked with public lands issues and know the importance of keeping public access. Because of my expertise with state and public lands, I was appointed the Pilot Hill Project. Because of my experience working with the agriculture community, hunters, fishermen and realize the need for tourism, I was appointed to the Agriculture committee, Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Committee.

**If elected, would you work to change the current election code that allows voters to change party affiliation at primary elections and why?**

**Cathy Connolly (D-HD 13):** Our election code should be designed to maximize the opportunities to exercise our most fundamental right as citizens - the right to vote. Citizens should continue to be permitted to choose to join a political party (or not) and to change that affiliation on election day. The mechanisms needed for registering new voters and accommodating those who wish to switch party affiliation work well due to the efforts of our County Clerk and the numerous election day volunteers. Thank you! I do support enhancements to our statutes that might encourage more voter participation such as voter registration drives for youth.

**Dan Furphy (R-HD 14):** I am generally in agreement with our current statutes. 22-5-214 states that an elector may change party affiliation with the county clerk not less than (14) days before the primary election or at the polls on the day of the election. If an elector feels strongly in favor of a candidate in the opposing party, they should have the right to vote for that person. Being able to change party affiliation at the polls allows someone to make the change when they have received information regarding a candidate they want to support after the 14 day limit.

**Lorraine Saulino-Klein (D-HD 14):** Wyoming citizens are free to change parties on election day or any other day they choose. This has worked to give everyone a voice and should not be changed. Wyoming citizens have proven repeatedly that they are independent spirits. This is a representative government and the people have spoken at the polls when they have changed their party affiliation. Why would any patriotic citizen try to stop other citizens from exercising their right to vote? I would never support blocking voter participation.

**Charles F. Pelkey (D-HD 45):** No. I firmly believe that Wyoming citizens have every right to have a role in selecting those who will ultimately represent us. In many parts of the state, the final decision is made in the primary ... particularly in the primary election of the majority party. In those cases, Democrats and Independents have little choice but to change affiliation if they are to have any say in who governs them. Our political parties are not private clubs. Citizens have the right to declare their party affiliation whenever they desire. That right should be protected.

**Roxie Hensley (R-HD 45):** I believe I need to be responsive to the electorate in all matters. However, in my opinion the primary election was clearly designed for the party to select the candidate that would represent them in the general election. It does not seem fair that the opposing party should be able to influence that selection.

**Jackie Grimes (D-HD 46):** While I support the current “open primary” system in Wyoming, in my opinion, the people and the communities are best served when a primary narrows the candidates for each office to the two most qualified individuals (as determined by the vote of the people) as in the “Top-Two Primaries” system. It’s the voters responsibility to elect the most qualified and committed person to represent them. Far too many people do not identify strongly with a political party. While party affiliation has some advantages, it should not restrict the rights of voters to select the best candidates for the general election.

**Bill Haley (R-HD 46):** It is very difficult to develop a law to address every situation we don’t like, or we feel is somehow unfair. During the last 2 years in the Legislature, I have had to vote on several controversial bills, so this issue will only be one of many bills that people feel passionately about that I will have to vote on. Having said that, if a legislator brings a bill dealing with this issue, I will look at it and vote on that bill’s content.

**What specific parts of the ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming) report ([www.endowyo.biz](http://www.endowyo.biz)) do you support such as tax reforms, infrastructure and pay equity improvements, population growth and others?**

**Cathy Connolly (D-HD 13):** I support the goals of ENDOW including: a continued commitment to high quality education at all levels with support for research and innovation, job training opportunities especially for displaced workers, and enhanced air service and broadband. Revising the tax structure to provide needed revenue for infrastructure and community services is a necessity. Closing the wage gap between men and women, and bolstering our anti-discrimination statutes will help to attract cutting-edge businesses. With the political will, the results can be economic diversification that provides high quality jobs and steady state revenues to support our children and grandchildren for generations to come.

**Dan Furphy (R-HD 14):** I am very much in favor of the Workforce and Education portions of the ENDOW. The report indicates that a majority of occupations require some form of post-secondary education. Accordingly, we need to support the University of Wyoming and LCCC in order to develop a ready and educated workforce to attract and retain companies. We need to keep our graduates in the State instead of exporting them elsewhere. I am also in favor of workforce training in priority economic and technical sectors that meet the needs of companies seeking well trained employees. Venture Capital for start-up businesses is needed.

**Lorraine Saulino-Klein (D-HD 14):** ENDOW's mission is to help Wyoming diversify the economy. Our current tax structure will not support expanding economic diversity. New non-mineral jobs will cost the state more money than they bring in. Instead, we need experts to review our tax structure to make diversification worthwhile. Relying on mineral extraction for jobs and taxes takes us backward and contributes to the gender gap in wages. ENDOW is a powerful tool for exploring future economic diversity. I support its mission and will work ensure that gender parity in wages is a priority.

**Charles F. Pelkey (D-HD 45):** I support ENDOW because Wyoming desperately needs to diversify its economy. Concurrent with that, however, the state will have to diversify its tax base. We have long relied on a vibrant minerals industry, particularly coal, as our main source of tax revenue. That revenue stream has allowed Wyoming to invest in education, infrastructure and essential services, with little cost to individuals and corporations not involved in the minerals industry. Global demand for coal is decreasing, though. If Wyoming were to only attract new non-mineral businesses to the state, we would put greater pressure on state resources, without additional revenues.

**Roxie Hensley (R-HD 45):** I support the general premise of the ENDOW Program. It is critical that Wyoming continue to broaden and diversify its economy in pursuit of economic growth, job creation and a quality standard of life for my fellow citizens. But in order to be effective, these types of programs must be well designed with a focus on transparency and accountability. They must ensure that the government is not wasting taxpayer dollars, detracting from private investment or providing windfalls to already well established enterprises.

**Jackie Grimes (D-HD 46):** I am supportive of the ENDOW strategy. I believe you achieve improvement by ensuring the right "structures" are in place, and performing the right "processes" to achieve the desired "outcomes". "Pay equity" is an important outcome and should be a goal. I would start on structures with a focus on the systems for education and training. Then I would look at the systems that create opportunities, such as business development and innovation incubator zones. I also think that aligning state policies and resources to encourage it is critical; but most important is the recommendation to develop the 4-year action plan.

**Bill Haley (R-HD 46):** I have supported the ENDOW and ENGAGE process since Governor Mead introduced his vision to the Legislature. This is a 20-year guide into the future that is starting to evolve with the recent publication of the Executive Council thoughts and recommendations. I think it is a great starting point to overcome the boom or bust cycles while preserving our way of life. The purpose of ENDOW is to diversify our economy and through that effort I will support improved health care, reliable, affordable air service, and improvements to our infra-structure to keep pace with moderate population growth.

## Albany County Commissioner

*Three commissioners serve four-year staggered terms with no term limits. Commissioners receive a salary of \$30,000 and some benefits. Two seats are up for election this year; those elected will join Commissioner Terri Jones (R) who has two years left on her term.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Tim Chesnut (D):** I think my time serving as a County Commissioner and the historical knowledge that brings is my best qualification for this job. I don't think anyone can be fully prepared, as I wasn't, to take on this job without having experienced it. I have been in this position for a long time now and even now every week I have learned from new issues and taken on new duties. I love the job because you never stop learning how to be a good commissioner.

**Pete Gosar (D):** I have lived in Albany County for two decades and have a passion for its people and places. I believe Albany County is poised to lead in Wyoming, but only if the county commission becomes more innovative, transparent and accountable. As a business owner, the director of a local non-profit and as a former Chairman of the Wyoming Board of Education, I have learned about leadership and the importance of community involvement. I will reach out to citizens throughout Albany County to find innovative solutions, I will work to make commission business more transparent and accessible, and I will listen.

**Jerry M. Kennedy (R):** My Father, W. H. Kennedy, homesteaded Dodge Creek Ranch 100 years ago. I was born and raised in rural Albany County and have lived there all my life. Evelyn, and I have been married for 54 years We raised two sons who attended rural school on the ranch. I am a member of Albany County Stockgrowers, NRA, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Masonic Lodge, I was BLM Fire Guard 47 years, I previously served 12 years as Albany County Commissioner

**Heber Richardson (R):** I've lived in Laramie all my life, with some ill advised breaks. I love living here and raising my family here. I have extensive executive experience as a county commissioner, businessman, and coach. I have practical and useful knowledge of regulation, both as the rule maker, and as the rule follower. I can recognize poor policies and their unintended consequences before they can get their shoes on. I know how to plan, budget, and execute, without making critical mistakes. I serve everyone humbly and equally. I'm plain spoken and honest. I even love the people I don't like.

### **How would you facilitate cooperation between the city and county regarding land use planning within five miles of Laramie?**

**Tim Chesnut (D):** Starting in January the legislature will take away a municipalities right to require regulations outside of their jurisdiction. That does not mean that when developments occur outside the city limits there are not logistical certainties that must be required, such as utility corridors lining up and rights of way being utilized for responsible growth. The legislature recognized that some municipalities were overstepping their boundaries by requiring things such a landscaping and curb and gutters that don't always fit in the unincorporated areas of rural living.

**Pete Gosar (D):** I believe you facilitate cooperation by becoming as knowledgeable about land use issues as possible and by accessing all available resources. I would make it a point to listen to other perspectives, visit with city and county employees and their planning entities and then attempt to set up joint work sessions with the stated goal of finding solutions that serve city and county residents alike. In the long term, it makes sense to set up more permanent joint planning committees that have members from all relevant perspectives so that finite resources can be used efficiently and waste is avoided.

**Jerry M. Kennedy (R):** Both City and County have to be upfront and honest about the scope of the land use planning as well as cooperation with landowners so that all parties are represented in the decisions.

**Heber Richardson (R):** A five-mile radius would mean joint planning for an area ten times the current size of Laramie. That level of planning is unrealistic and fiscally impractical. It would mean planning for growth to 250,000 souls. State law doesn't require planning to five miles. That said, we do have a City/County streets plan that goes well beyond the mile radius. The county, city, and WYDOT meet as the Urban Systems Advisory Committee to prioritize and plan for the future. As commissioner, I will jointly plan with the city to a mile as outlined in 2018 HB14 starting January 1, 2019.

**What response would you make to the statement on the County Planning website (See "Code of the West") which reads: "In general, city residents and rural agricultural producers subsidize the lifestyle of rural residents by making up the shortfall between the cost of services and revenues received from rural dwellers."**

**Tim Chesnut (D):** When you live in a city you have the luxury of paved streets and cross town shopping, but you also pay for these services with higher property taxes and sale and use fees. As you move away from urban settings the cost of county roads and state highway increase exponentially. It also cost more to run power lines and other electronic infrastructure and when an established city is near by, connecting to those services and the cost of them is lower by the urban development, but it makes them more affordable and accessible to rural residents.

**Pete Gosar (D):** The Wyoming Taxpayers Association estimates that a Wyoming household pays enough taxes to fund only a fraction of the services it receives; the rest is paid for by mineral taxes. As a Wyoming native, I understand the desire to live in the "country", but we must realize that it costs more money to send the school bus or the sheriff to a dispersed population. Uncoordinated and inefficient services lead to more expense for taxpayers. I will not be afraid to talk about and seek solutions to, the difficult issues we face in funding necessary services with a limited tax base.

**Jerry M. Kennedy (R):** Services provided in Rural Albany County are less than the close in residences. All properties are taxed uniformly across the county which helps balance the costs and revenues.

**Heber Richardson (R):** I disagree with the premise of the quote. I encourage readers to go to the County Planner section of [www.co.albany.wy.us](http://www.co.albany.wy.us) and read all of the Code of the West as context for the quote. All state residents receive massive subsidies from extractive industries, rural and urban alike. Every county and city has different industries and people who pay ad valorem, sales, and property taxes. The legislature makes taxation law, not local governments. Rural residents pay property tax and sales taxes just like urbanites. As commissioner, it's my job to lobby for a more equitable remittance formula.

## **Albany County Coroner**

*The Coroner serves a four-year term with no term limits. Annual salary is \$45,000 with some benefits. No Republican filed for this office.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Jennifer Graham (D):** I started with the Albany County Coroner's Office in 2003 under then Coroner Julie Heggie as a deputy. I advanced to the role of Chief Deputy and continued that role for Tom Furgeson when he was elected. During that time, I finished my associate's degree in general science and received my bachelor's degree in Anthropology with an emphasis in Forensics from the University of Wyoming. I attended the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy in Douglas, WY. After a hiatus from the Coroner's Office I was elected Coroner in 2014. I have served the citizens of Albany County for almost 12 years.

**What are the top three challenges facing the Coroner's Office and how would you address them?**

**Jennifer Graham (D):** I The top three challenges facing the Coroner's Office are the County's limited budget, finding acceptable deputy candidates and preventing workplace injuries. I work to maximize every penny that the Coroner's Office is allocated to include working out a group rate with the company that performs our toxicology testing. This rate reduced cost by approximately 100 dollars a test. I accept interns from the local colleges to help draw suitable candidates to the office. In an effort to minimize workplace injuries two deputies are required to respond to every scene when possible. This provides more people to lift safely and effectively.

**What resources can the Coroner call upon when special expertise is needed?**

**Jennifer Graham (D):** I As the Coroner, I have a wealth of contacts when special expertise is needed. This starts with the Forensic Pathologists that I contract with at McKee Medical Center in Loveland, CO. These doctors are available for consultation on cases as well as performing the actual forensic autopsy. I also have an agreement with Dr. Robert Byrd, who is a trained forensic odontologist, who performs all of our dental comparisons. I also use the expertise of Dr. Rick Weathermon, a physical anthropologist at the University of Wyoming. I call Dr. Weathermon to examine, date and sex any bones that are recovered.

## **Albany County Attorney**

*The County Attorney serves a four-year term with no term limits. Salary is \$95,000 with benefits; an office is provided.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** I have been a resident of Albany for 40 year, a lawyer for 36. I have been a prosecutor, judge and defense attorney. I have tried hundreds of cases. I was an officer in USMC and learned to lead. I have been a baseball coach, soccer coach and a frequent participant in the free legal clinic and in the past have served on several Boards. I think I am a reasonably intelligent person and I realize the strength of the office comes from a team that works diligently to serve the public.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** As Albany County Attorney, I have implemented needed reform in the juvenile criminal justice system and prosecution of violent crimes. I have practiced law for 30 years, mostly representing governmental entities including: Assistant Prosecutor (Ohio), Laramie City Attorney, Senior Assistant Attorney General for Wyoming Departments of Family Services and Corrections, and private practice representing local governments. This position combines the roles of District Attorney in criminal cases and County Attorney in civil matters. My experience in both areas prepares me to implement best practices in prosecution, staff supervision, collaboration with stakeholders, and team leadership to address issues facing our community.

### **What are the top three challenges facing the County Attorney's Office and how would you address them?**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** 1. I think the office has too much turnover among the attorney staff, four or five vacancies in less than 4 years seems excessive. Train them, school them, nurture, monitor, mentor and challenge. Observe performance, evaluate and critique as instruction. 2. The position is one of advising the county, I do not intend to drive the bus. Here are the consequences to your decision, here is the advice. 3. Be honored and grateful to hold the position. Suit up, show up and shut up and do more with less as I learned in the USMC.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** First, individuals with mental illness in the criminal justice system. I am working with the Mental Health Board to develop protocols to address and seek treatment for mentally ill individuals charged in court. Second, individuals with substance abuse in the system. I plan to launch an early intervention juvenile drug court to treat juveniles in our community, avoiding costly residential treatment, and we are expanding Adult Drug Court, reducing prison costs. Third, protection of vulnerable adults. We will be exploring processes for identification and education.

### **What are your criteria when you make sentencing recommendations to the court?**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** Overall criteria - severity of the crime. Violent crimes, sex crimes, abuse and meth not a lot of sympathy. First time felony stupid with no victim - we can talk. Sentencing is a Judicial function. A presentence investigation by the department of



probation gives a guide to the Court. Make sure victims are made whole and have an opportunity to speak. Circuit Court ? well frequent flyers should be rewarded with a time out from society and see if Orange Is The New Black. Use the Drug Court and juvenile diversion program where appropriate.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** It is the ethical obligation of the CAO to assure that a fair and informed judgment is made on a sentence and to avoid unfair sentence disparities. Severity of sentences should not to be the index of our effectiveness. Our office makes sentencing recommendations to the Court based on the severity of the crime, circumstances relating to the offense, the offender's criminal history, safety of the community, the opinion and input of the victim of the crime, and input from law enforcement.

## Albany County Sheriff

*The Sheriff serves a four-year term with no term limits. Annual salary is \$85,000 plus some benefits.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Tim Hale (R):** The position of sheriff is predominantly one of administration, e.g., determining budget requirements and overall supervision of the staff within the department. Having been in private business for several decades, I understand the need for the proper management and consideration of taxpayer monies. For example, unlike the current sheriff, I will not purchase a new Tahoe for \$38,000 and run errands for my wife using the county's fuel, all paid for by the citizens of Albany County. My perspective will be what policies will benefit the public, rather than from the point of view of a career politician.

**Dave O'Malley (D):** I am a Wyoming native and resident of Albany County since 1971. After graduating from U.W. I started with the Laramie Police Department on January 2, 1974. I worked through the ranks and retired as Chief of Police on May 28, 2004. Following retirement, I was elected to the Laramie City Council. I have over 38 years of experience in law enforcement, many of those in the capacity of upper level and budget management. I have been your Sheriff for the past eight years and it would be an honor and privilege to continue to serve in that capacity.

### **What are the top three challenges facing the Albany County Sheriff's Office and how would you address them?**

**Tim Hale (R):** First, establish a more professional image. The sheriff's department should take the approach of how they can help the public rather than focus on the public's date of birth pursuant to criminal history. Second, respect is earned, not given. Using the county's email address for personal campaigning is in direct violation of State law. Our county commissioners were unwilling to pursue the current sheriff's personal disregard of this law. Yet he has stated in court that law enforcement is to be held at a higher standard. Third, concerning the budget, I will do more with less.

**Dave O'Malley (D):** Reducing turnover, implementing a process to close salary disparity, and combating an epidemic of opioid and methamphetamine abuse are the top three challenges we face. We are currently working with Human Resources and the Commissioners to implement a step in grade process to close salary disparities for deputies. Currently, deputies top out after one year. The step process allows salary increases based on time in service, which give employees incentive for longevity. If this process is successful, it will impact turnover. We are combining education and enforcement as a means of reducing the opioid and methamphetamine crisis.

### **How does the office assure that low-income inmates receive appropriate personal services such as medications, access to telephones, and personal hygiene products?**

**Tim Hale (R):** All inmates will be afforded the protection of the U.S. and Wyoming Constitutions; they should have the basic essentials for personal hygiene and communication with their family and attorney. Given the financial shortfalls that this county is experiencing and considering that the salary of the sheriff is \$85,000/year, the sheriff should be quite capable of purchasing his own meals, rather than eat at the detention center at taxpayer expense. It's time for a new sheriff.

**Dave O'Malley (D):** We treat all inmates with dignity and respect regardless of their income level. Clean uniforms, socks, shoes and personal hygiene products are supplied to all inmates. We have full-time medical providers who dispense medications to inmates. Appropriate medications are provided regardless of ability to pay. Additionally, inmates are able to attend AA and NA meetings, receive assistance from the VA, attend religious services, and prepare for a GED. We are preparing to start a pilot program of acupuncture to reduce anxiety and withdrawal from drugs and alcohol. Indigent inmates are allowed phone privileges for emergency and legal assistance calls.

## Albany County Clerk

*Term of office is four years, with no term limits. Annual salary is \$85,000 plus some benefits. No Republican filed for office.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Jackie R. Gonzales (D):** Since my employment began with the Albany County Clerk's office in 1980, I have gained valuable experience that has allowed me to successfully handle the responsibilities of County Clerk. I believe I have carried out my position and duties with passion, integrity, and respect. The daily challenges, along with the need to continually learn and implement new processes, are what inspire me to keep serving the public. It would be my honor to continue serving the people of Albany County.

### **What is the role of election judges (workers at the polling place) and what are the challenges involved in recruiting and training a sufficient number of workers?**

**Jackie R. Gonzales (D):** Election judges are an integral part of the election process, as they are the conduit between the polling location and my office during Election Day. One easy way of recruiting judges occurs when voters indicate their interest in judging on their voter registration card. One of the biggest challenges is the required commitment to work at the polls for an average of 14 hours with minimal compensation, along with the requirement to attend schooling prior to service. These individuals truly are the "public servants" that comprise part of my election team, and I'm grateful to work with them.

### **How have county budget cuts affected the operations of the County Clerk's Office and what are the consequences for the public?**

**Jackie R. Gonzales (D):** While the loss of 2.5 positions in the Clerk's office has been difficult, I have done my best to prevent it from affecting the operations in my office. My staff has remained deeply committed to carrying out the statutory responsibilities that are required of our roles. Although there may be a bit of lag time in assisting the public, we strive to ensure the utmost professionalism and attention to detail. Fortunately, I have not encountered any major problem, but my staff and I remain receptive to feedback from the community.

## Albany County Treasurer

*Term of office for the County Treasurer is four years, with no term limits. An office is provided and a salary of \$85,000 with benefits.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Tracy Fletcher (D):** I have 15 years of experience in the Albany County Treasurer's office. I graduated with a bachelor degree in accounting from the University of Wyoming and a complete job-specific training course from the Wyoming County Treasurer's Association. I have extensive knowledge of all the various processes and duties of the treasurer's office including property taxes, budgeting, motor vehicles, auditing, and accounting. I also volunteer in our community through 4-H and Soroptimist. I have spent the majority of my career in public service and I want to continue to serve the citizens of my community.

**Michael J Pearce (R):** Prior to entering law, I worked ten years in banking, lending, and budgeting. I have therefore worked with budgets and the operation of financial institutions. That experience, coupled with my legal knowledge, gives me the knowledge and experience to be your Treasurer. The Treasurer does more than review budgets, and I believe citizens deserve to understand how their money is used, including receiving a positive customer experience. I can communicate complex topics in simple ways. I believe in accountability, transparency, and integrity, meaning I can and will work with the Commissioners, other offices, and the public to develop positive relationships.

### **What are the top three challenges facing the Treasurer's Office and how would you address them?**

**Tracy Fletcher (D):** The first challenge is the lackluster revenue portrait the County has faced in recent years. I have been working towards, and will continue to work towards, facilitating the collection of all possible revenues. The second challenge is the utilization of technology. I plan to utilize more technology going forward. This plan includes reporting current audit information on the website along with more options for online transactional business. A third challenge is keeping the citizens informed. I will provide informational sessions to teach citizens the functions of the office including property taxes, sales tax, and budgeting.

**Michael J Pearce (R):** These are: ensuring transparency, collecting revenue efficiently, and providing meaningful service. Transparency is vital. The County provides access to its numbers, but we can clarify what's there and provide additional opportunities to discuss financial questions. We can find less expensive ways to collect revenue and maximize our returns elsewhere by aggressively pursuing funds that are due to the County. Providing meaningful and positive service should be a top priority for all. We can better train staff in all areas to provide the best possible customer experience. I will ensure our employees are valued, because valued employees make offices work better.

### **What qualities would you seek in new deputies?**

**Tracy Fletcher (D):** I look for a deputy that embodies the mission and values of this office. Integrity is one of the most important values for deputies. Another value is being ethical. I want a deputy that would be able to take the helm of the office in my absence. This person ideally would know about the accounting functions, property tax, motor vehicle, auditing, and budgeting management of the treasurer's office.

**Michael J Pearce (R):** I welcome current staff to remain. If new staff is necessary, I believe in and will seek two primary qualities in my team: competency and positivity. The Treasurer's office must provide accurate and timely information to Commissioners, other offices, and citizens. To provide great service, staff must be knowledgeable, competent, versatile, able to work with others and effectively communicate. Great service requires positivity and trust. I will encourage staff to grow and become a team that supports each other. The citizens of Albany County deserve this competent, united and dedicated team. As Treasurer, I will seek that team and staff.

## **Albany County Assessor**

*The County Assessor serves a four-year term with no term limits. Annual salary is \$85,000 plus some benefits. No Republican filed for office.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Grant Showacre (D):** I have been valuing property with this assessor's office for eighteen years, twelve serving as your County Assessor. I am a certified appraiser with 750 hours of continued education. My eighteen years' experience with all the office statutory duties helps with my leadership of a current staff of six. I enjoy serving this community in other ways. As a member of Kiwanis and the Eppson Center Operating Board I can help make Laramie a place we are proud all of. I am also active with my church, volunteer with the Eppson Thanksgiving Dinner, The Cattlewomen's Ranch Tour and other programs.

**The State of Wyoming has made significant investments in standardizing the property tax assessment system statewide. What further improvements would you suggest?**

**Grant Showacre (D):** I am happy to say this office has a very good relationship with the Department of Revenue. I would like to see Assessors have more input with the guidelines when State Rules and Regulations guiding our duties are being updated. Currently in most situations the Assessors as an Association submit recommendations after changes are completed. Face to face communication as the rules are being updated are best. The assessors see things from the ground while the state sees things from a more statistical view.

**How have county budget cuts affected the operations of the County Assessor's Office and what are the consequences for the public?**

**Grant Showacre (D):** Field inspections has seen the most significant operation losses. Budget cuts caused a reduction in staff that included losing one of two field teams. Assessors are required by the state to review all property in a 6 year cycle. Having half of the field staff needed our office cannot complete the reviews the state requires. Field inspections are the foundation of our valuation process. Updating changes like additions, renovations and new structures help value properties fairly and accurately. Not reviewing properties timely diminishes potential annual revenue growth for needed public services like hospital, schools, fire protection and police.

## **Albany County Clerk of District Court**

*The Clerk of District Court serves a four-year term with no term limits. Annual salary is \$85,000 plus some benefits. No Democrat filed for this office.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

Janice Sexton (R): I have been in the Clerk of District Court office for 23 years, of which 16 years have been as the Clerk of District Court. I have an excellent staff of which all of us have knowledge of all that goes on in this office. I have been in this office long enough to have worked with three different Judges, three County Attorneys, and several County Commissioners. I have gone through three case management computer programs and the Court House remodel which involved an entire new filing system; I am currently on the committee for yet another case management system.

**What are the top three challenges facing the office of Clerk of District Court and how would you address them?**

Janice Sexton (R): Biggest challenge is getting ready to be the pilot court for the new state wide case management system; I am on the committee which will help in the conversion. Along with the new system will come electronic filing shortly after; this is new to ALL Clerks statewide. We are also training for a new state wide jury system which will involve electronic questionnaires/summons, responses, and contact with jurors. Keeping up with the case load (this has doubled since 2017) is always a challenge, but with my excellent staff, it's under control.

**What are the anticipated benefits to the public of the soon-to-be inaugurated statewide system for reporting court cases?**

Janice Sexton (R): Probably the biggest benefit will be the ability (with limits of course) to access court records and search names for felonies without coming to the courthouse. There will also be a benefit to enable attorneys statewide to electronically file documents. We are the pilot court for this new system and there are still many issues to iron out to ensure and protect the court records when confidentiality comes into play. Because I am a public servant, I will ALWAYS put the people of Albany County first and foremost and stand up for what will be best for them.

## **Judicial Retentions—Albany County**

*Another ballot issue in most Wyoming counties this year is judicial retention. The Governor appoints judges with suggestions from the Judicial Nominating Commission. Five Supreme Court Justices serve for one year after appointment, then stand for retention for an 8 year term. No Justices are up for retention in 2018. There are nine Judicial Districts in Wyoming—several counties are combined to form a District. The District Court Judges stand for retention every six years. Circuit Court Judges hear cases where damages are \$7,000 or less, misdemeanor cases, plus domestic violence cases. They stand for retention every four years after appointment.*

*Judges in Wyoming run on a non-partisan basis and are not allowed to campaign. Voters can obtain information about how attorneys evaluate judges in cases they have had before them in the past two years. This attorney poll is strictly voluntary. Poll results are available on the Wyoming Bar website, [www.wyomingbar.org](http://www.wyomingbar.org). Look for a button on the home page connecting to the Advisory Poll results.*

*Albany and Carbon Counties are the Second Judicial District, which has two judges; both are up for retention this year. Judge A is based in Rawlins, Judge B in Laramie, but voters in both counties vote on each of them. The Circuit Court Judge for Albany County is also up for retention in 2018. All Albany County ballots will contain the following:*

### **For Judge of the Circuit Court of the Second Judicial District, for a term of four (4) years:**

Shall judge Robert A. Castor be retained in office? (Yes/No)

### **For Judge A of the District Court of the Second Judicial District for a term of six (6) years:**

Shall Judge Dawnessa Snyder be retained in office? (Yes/No)

### **For Judge B of the District Court of the Second Judicial District, for a term of six (6) years:**

Shall Judge Tori R.A. Kricken be retained in office? (Yes/No)



## Laramie City Council

*The nine council members are elected three each from three wards on a non-partisan ballot; they receive a stipend of \$120 maximum each day for meetings they attend, with no offices or benefits. Three each from three wards are elected. They serve four-year terms with no term limits; expiration years are staggered. This year there are two vacancies in Ward 1—one is for a two-year term to serve out the remainder of an unexpired term. The other Ward 1 vacancy is for a four-year term. Ward 2 has one vacancy. Ward 3 has two vacancies (both 4-year terms). They are listed below with candidates for the same ward together, in alphabetical order. One candidate for Ward 3, Christina Maki, withdrew too late for her name to be removed from the ballot. Winners will join Charles McKinney (Ward 1), Joe Shumway and Jane Pearce (Ward 2), and Pat Gabriel (Ward 3).*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year term):** As a 45 year Laramie resident, my passion for our city and my desire to make it the best it can be for all of our residents is my number one qualification. As an engineer, my ability to solve problems with creative, effective, and economic solutions will be a great asset to the City Council. I have seen both directly and indirectly the impact decisions by the City council have on our residents. From zoning, annexation, construction, and development permitting, the city has cost our residents countless hours and dollars in pursuit of ever-changing regulations and requirements.

**Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year term):** I grew up in northern Wyoming in a place without much opportunity. My parents worked hard to support us, but they couldn't ever seem to get ahead. Seven years ago, I decided to chase my dream to become a small business owner. I started with a loan my parents took against the equity on their home. I knew I only had one shot. As I built my business, it became clear how special the Laramie community is. I'm running to preserve and enhance what makes our town unique and to ensure that support and opportunities are plentiful for everyone.

**Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year term):** I'm a Laramie native. I'm raising a family here. This is my home and it is important to me that our community thrives. As a nurse, I care for all people equally and with compassion. I will bring the same level of integrity and advocacy to City Council. I have a Business degree from UW and am confident in my ability to think critically about issues such as budget and growth. I am not a career politician, looking to advance my career, but a citizen-servant committed to improving the community.

**Andi Summerville (Ward 1, 4-year term):** I currently serve as Mayor and have been a member of the Laramie City Council representing ward 1 since 2014. My passion is to see this community continue to succeed and grow for all residents. During my first term, I have worked with the Wyoming State Legislature, our federal elected officials and community groups such as Laramie Main Street and others to improve Laramie's quality of life, help make Laramie the premier place to start a new business and worked tirelessly to improve Laramie's street and drainage infrastructure citywide. Above all—I am always willing to listen.

**Paul Weaver (Ward 2):** I served on the city council previously between 2013-2017 and the Laramie Planning and Zoning Commission prior to that from 2011-2012. I think those past experiences will be helpful. Laramie has a lot of activity as a community in general and events can evolve pretty quickly, having some familiarity with our municipal government should be beneficial. I am interested in working on many issues the city is examining such as our business environment, economic development, coordinating with the university and cooperating with the county on water protection and future growth for Laramie. There are many other important issues as well.

**Karl McCracken (Ward 3):** Moved to Laramie from Cheyenne in late 1970's to manage a local business office. Past President, Laramie Chamber of Commerce. Past President, Wyoming Territorial Prison and Old West Park. Past board member on three Wyoming newspapers. Community involvement in several charities and community organizations. Over 20 years with Foster's, Inc. when Foster's had 225+ employees. Experience with lenders, bonding and bonds (government, non-profits, contractors). Four years, nine months prior experience on the City Council. Ability to listen to others and hear good ideas, or have a discussion with competing viewpoints while adjusting the situation to get things done. Readily Accessible.

**Erin C. O'Doherty (Ward 3):** My experience as a well-informed Laramie resident of 27+ years who cares passionately about our town and residents qualifies me for this position. I follow events and politics in the city and state and would like an opportunity to use my research and reasoning skills on city council. Keeping our water clean is a priority. I started my science career in aquatic ecology where I learned about nutrient cycling and aquatic communities, so I am keenly aware of the effects of nitrate pollution in water bodies. As a council member I would respect the dignity of all our residents.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):** I am running for my fourth term on City Council for ward three, where my wife and I have raised our three children since the late 1980's. I have devoted my time and efforts to several city and county boards, including Planning Board and Appeals, Jubilee Days, Railroad Depot, Airport Board, Rifle Range Board, and Pilot Hill, and take my responsibility seriously by maintaining a perfect city council attendance record for the last two years. I support Laramie by always shopping Laramie first and encourage others to follow my example.

**In light of the recent losses of several major businesses, how should the City Council interact effectively with economic development entities?**

**Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year term):** The city council must be receptive to new and existing business development opportunities presented to them. Being protective of specific special interest groups in the city have cost Laramie the opportunity for new businesses in the past, and is not in keeping with the council's charge of serving the best interests of the city as a whole. The unwieldy, 500 page Unified Development Code must be streamlined to shorten the time required by developers to submit and receive approval. After development plans are approved, businesses should not be faced with the possibility of the city adding additional, costly requirements.

**Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year term):** Keeping our economy competitive in a rapidly changing world is a major challenge for Laramie's future. Decision making should center around not only creating opportunities for employment and competitive wages, but also general community vibrancy and quality of life. This means embracing a holistic approach to economic diversity by building upon and expanding the momentum of existing economic development entities, which have already helped to create one of the most diverse economies in our state.

**Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year term):** Progress stems from communication, transparency and a common goal. The City Council must work with economic development agencies to define achievable short and long-term objectives. I will work with community and business leaders, City and State representatives, UW leadership and key stakeholders to create a clear vision and an executable plan for Laramie's future. We must incentivize businesses that create jobs and retail opportunities to grow the sales tax revenue base. The City must help new and existing businesses and developers thrive through thoughtful consideration of regulations and creative solutions such as delayed improvement contracts.

**Andi Summerville (Ward 1, 4-year term):** The city has strong partnerships with the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, Laramie Main Street and UW-Wyoming Technology Business Center that have yielded success in recent years (400+ new jobs) that mitigated (in numbers), most of the job loss from recent business closures. Laramie's losses during the last year have primarily been

national retailers that are struggling in a new internet retail world. We need to continue to encourage and support our partners and pursue new opportunities such as direct retail recruitment to enhance retail amenities and new community entrepreneurship initiatives with UW College of Business/Innovation Center, LCCC and WyoTech.

**Paul Weaver (Ward 2):** Laramie has faced some business losses recently but many of those same businesses are reemerging with a new structure or business model and I don't think we should count them out just yet. The city has many assets that it can continue to leverage for economic progress and new opportunities. Historically the city and the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance have partnered effectively. Not every project will succeed, business is never easy and always competitive. Continuing to look for promising projects and supporting the best proposals should continue to be a top goal for the city.

**Karl McCracken (Ward 3):** Council should listen better themselves and direct staff to be flexible. If necessary council should rewrite the code to be more business friendly, scrubbing the udc if necessary. (The city of Cheyenne attempted this 2 years ago) What Cheyenne did do was rename the planning department, the engineering department. This helped their budget greatly. The current code is too stringent, subject to interpretation. A more lenient, business friendly code that does not require "cash in lieu of trees", among many more items. Many promises were made to council upon passing the udc, these need to be honored. More 760-3116

**Erin C. O'Doherty (Ward 3):** Most of the big business losses in the last decade were national firms. I'd consider communicating with other retailers to ask them to examine the business they get from Wyoming residents in their Colorado outlets. More importantly, we need to retain and grow homegrown businesses and not just chase the companies that every city is courting. We should look for ways to keep our entrepreneurs in town, especially the younger ones. Perhaps the chamber alliance could find a way to offer umbrella health insurance to members I know that health insurance is limiting factor in our small business.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):** While the loss of several major businesses has concerned our citizens, Laramie has always been an appealing and welcoming city that is attractive to growing and major companies alike. However, there are several ordinances, including landscaping, that make developing in Laramie difficult and infeasible. Adjusting these ordinances would entice economic development entities, especially retail stores that would encourage the Laramie first philosophy, to make Laramie their new home.

### **How would you facilitate cooperation between the city and county regarding land use planning within five miles of Laramie?**

**Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year term):** Developers may choose to develop outside of the city limits for a variety of reasons, including land cost, space, and a desire to have a more rural location while being in close proximity to the city. Perhaps the biggest incentive for developing outside of city limits is the lack of a requirement to adhere to the City's building codes and permitting process. An incentive that the city can use to entice county developers into conforming with certain city requirements such as aesthetics, water, and sewer systems, is to provide access to City amenities such as water, sewer, and trash removal.

**Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year term):** The relationship between the city and county has the potential to chart an optimistic future. The two governing bodies must focus on what is best for the area as a whole. Collectively, we should plan for tomorrow--today--while respecting the rights of landowners and the distinct needs of the county and city. Without a healthy and functional relationship between the two, all our residents will suffer. I will focus on building bridges and working together to achieve our shared goals.

**Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year term):** It is critical that the city and county work cooperatively to

protect water infrastructure for future generations. The City should actively engage in the co-operative effort with the county to protect the Casper Aquifer with the Pilot Hill Land Purchase. Beyond this important issue, the city and county should communicate early and often during joint projects within 5 miles of city limits to ensure that the right regulatory environment is created to incentive appropriate development of infrastructure and sanitation that benefits all citizens, whether they live in the city, or outside of city limits.

**Andi Summerville (Ward 1, 4-year term):** The residents of Laramie have a significant financial interest in how the city grows. I propose a joint planning initiative which includes three points: 1) Consolidation of planning services between the city and county (single approval process for developers/businesses). 2) Jointly agreed land use and zoning regulation for at least one mile outside of the boundary that is compatible with adjoining uses on the city boundary, and a mutually agreed land use plan for the areas of two to five miles outside the city. 3) Jointly agreed development requirements for roads, rights of way, etc for one mile around Laramie.

**Paul Weaver (Ward 2):** Laramie has a long history of cooperation with the Albany County government, although this relationship has experienced some tension in recent memory we have a good track record. There are some areas where there is a need for greater cooperation and clarification; in my view there are some simple rules to follow to achieve this. First, being willing to negotiate and compromise is key. Second, the County and the City must recognize that there are serious differences on some points that we have to resolve together as opposed to locking out one another from the policy making process. We can do it.

**Karl McCracken (Ward 3):** The city needs to recognize that the legislature rewrote the law so that the city only has jurisdiction within a half mile radius and then only for purposes of road alignment. Then discussions could be had where the councilors interact with the commissioners to find common ground. This would involve talking and listening with respect. Perhaps going back to the joint city/county planning department that existed until 15+ years ago would be helpful. The planners I talked with regularly then clearly knew why the county wanted their direction, and why the city wanted theirs. They were great intermediaries for issues.

**Erin C. O'Doherty (Ward 3):** The city government is pretty limited in our influence in the donut around the city boundaries, except for roads, so to some degree we are at the mercy of our county commission. I would remind our commissioners that the large majority of their residents are located within the borders of the two cities and urge great care to ensure our collective safety. I believe one of my greatest strengths is my ability to get along with people, so I would be respectful in conversations and sensitive to the worries of the residents outside of town.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):** Aside from city ordinances, the real concern the council has regarding land use planning within five miles of Laramie is in relation to the aquifer that supplies water to Laramie. The Pilot Hill Peak Committee, of which I am a member of the board, has diligently put our efforts to protecting 50% of the critical recharge area. This county board plans to use the land purchase of over 5,000 acres for public recreation that is limited to horse, bicycle, and hike trails to keep this area pure for the public and pure for the aquifer on which we all rely.

## Albany County School District #1 Trustees

*The School District encompasses the entire county. Trustee races are non-partisan; nine serve four-year staggered terms and receive no salary or benefits. There are three different races for Trustee (six from Area A, one from Area B, and two At-Large). Candidates must live in the area they will represent but all voters elect candidates from all areas. This year there are three vacancies in Area A, one from Area B, and one At-Large vacancy. Candidate responses are grouped by seat they are seeking and alphabetically within the group. Those elected will join these trustees whose terms do not expire—Area A: Mark Bittner, Michele Mitchum, and Tammy Schroeder; At-Large: Karen Bienz.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Beth Bear (Area A):** I am the proud mother of a 2nd and 5th grader and work as the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for Wyoming Game and Fish. I have worked on boards and committees through PTA, work, and church and have experience with budgets, grants, fundraising, personnel, managing volunteers, report and plan development, public surveys, laws and regulation, outreach, and coordination with different groups, which will help me in this position. I have a vested interest in helping to make our schools the best they can be and want to do my part to support and encourage our students, teachers, staff, and administrators.

**Nate Martin (Area A):** I'm a public school advocate. My day job involves fighting the Wyoming State Legislature's cuts to public school funding. As director of Better Wyoming, I work to inform and mobilize citizens in order to hold state lawmakers accountable for their decisions that affect Wyoming education and our children's future. This work has familiarized me with the threats that face Albany County public schools. It has also immersed me in a variety of school policy issues—from class size to computer science to Hathaway scholarship requirements—providing me a strong foundation for my service on the school board.

**Jason Satkunam (Area A):** I care about the quality of education that our children receive and am dedicated to the ideal that every child can be a strong learner. As a member of the law enforcement community I have seen how a strong education helps maintain a strong community. I enjoy serving my community and want to continue in a new and challenging role. As someone who has not served on the board I can bring in new ideas and perspectives to ensure we are meeting the needs of teachers and students simultaneously while continuing to make Albany County a community dedicated to learning.

**Jason Tangeman (Area A):** The school district is faced with a variety of challenging legal issues ranging from employment disputes, contracts, constitutional concerns and even juvenile criminal prosecutions. I am a local attorney who has enjoyed a general practice for more than twenty (20) years here in Laramie. I feel my professional experience has been an asset to the Board. The past four (4) years as a Trustee has also been invaluable in learning how the District operates and how as a Trustee I can best advise and support our administration, teachers and students.

**Janice Marshall (Area B):** I have been honored to serve as a trustee for the last twelve years, the last four as chairman of the board. I serve as a director for the Wyoming School Boards Association and was president in 2017. In 2014 I was appointed by the governor to the Professional Teaching Standards Board. I also serve on the Rec Mill Board. The school board has made tremendous progress in the last four years. Communication has greatly improved, transparency and community engagement have increased, policies updated and the first strategic plan for the district approved. We remain student focused, and teacher empowered.

**Robert Mobley (At-Large):** I am running for the position because I have prior school board experience. I served on a board and my goal is improving student achievement in a safe and respectful learning environment. My family relocated to Laramie because Wyoming values education. My previous experience provided opportunities to see and participate in the unique

Trustee setting. Districts are bound by a strict set of laws, rules, and regulations. I also graduated with an MPA from UW, so I bring a background of knowledge from diverse experiences that help shape the questions I'll ask about issues that are brought before the Board.

**Lawrence Perea (At-Large):** I was elected to the ACSD#1 Board of Trustees in 2008 and again in 2012. In 2017, I was honored to fill in for Ruth Castor when she could no longer serve. I have ten years of experience in school board governance, including creating, modifying, and adopting board policies. I have a long history of public service in Albany County, including in law enforcement, on the school board, in social work, and as board chair on the Laramie Head Start Board of Directors. I would be grateful for the opportunity to further serve the Laramie community as an ACSD#1 Trustee.

### **What is your approach to providing school security?**

**Beth Bear (Area A):** Our children, teachers, and staff should be able to learn and teach in a safe and secure environment. Our District has increased security in our schools and I support these efforts. Planning and preparation is the most important way to keep our schools safe. I support the consideration of additional resources available for enhanced school safety such as the installment of resource officers, secure classrooms, continued training, and support of student reporting programs. I will look to what other districts in our state and country are doing to help bring ideas to our District, as this is a broad issue.

**Nate Martin (Area A):** School security begins and ends with students' mental and physical wellbeing. Counselors are the first line of defense. They are in the best position to identify and intervene when students pose a risk to themselves or others. ACSD#1 should elevate mental health professionals in the process of developing and executing comprehensive plans to address potential threats and to respond to crises. The district should increasingly work with the county's Community Juvenile Service Board to engage at-risk students. It should close any gaps in the background check process for employees working with students and forefront safety when constructing new schools.

**Jason Satkunam (Area A):** Every child, teacher, and parent deserves to feel safe in their school. School security should be left to each individual district, not regulated or mandated by the state legislature. We must continue to partner with local law enforcement by using proven security programs that work for our district. I want to make sure that all personnel in our schools are fully trained and feel comfortable in their roles during a security event. As a school board member I would look for active community feedback from parents and teachers to develop sensible solutions that meet our district's needs.

**Jason Tangeman (Area A):** As a Trustee I commit to continue working closely with law enforcement and other security professionals to implement and develop the best proactive and preventative security plans and measures which provide our employees and students a safe environment to work and learn.

**Janice Marshall (Area B):** School safety and security is a top priority for me. I believe it is necessary to continually review and if necessary revise and improve safety measures. I value the constant communication with law enforcement to assess security in all our schools. We have three School Resource Officers in schools daily. Word limits do not allow me space to go into detail about all the security measures in place. However, we can never do too much to protect our students and staff. Trainings and safety drills are frequently held. I support constantly training everyone in the district to be vigilant.

**Robert Mobley (At-Large):** Frankly, ACSD#1 has a strong set of policies regarding security. I have children in all levels within the district, and at each school, one must be 'buzzed' into a building to conduct business. Cameras provide staff with the opportunity to see who is waiting for admittance.

At a recent board meeting, some funds from \$150k remaining in a Title IVA grant allow for “Professional development on school safety and early interventions for students.” It is critical to conduct this professional development with staff to discuss security, but more importantly, to get their ideas where improvements can be achieved.

**Lawrence Perea (At-Large):** Keeping ACSD#1 safe is imperative. The best plan for school security is what ACSD#1 already has in place, as outlined in Dr. Jubal Yennie’s press release dated April 11, 2018. Currently, ACSD#1’s plan for school security includes communication, access control, and awareness. ACSD#1 can communicate fast and reliable information via the alert communication system. Each school building has a lock access control that requires visitors to be “buzzed” into the building. ACSD#1 encourages students, teachers, and employees to be aware of their surroundings. Students and parents should report concerns to school officials, law enforcement, or the Safe to Tell link.

**Describe the impact to our district of the reductions in state funds for school operations and facilities, and your approach to addressing these losses.**

**Beth Bear (Area A):** Funding reductions affected our District through employee health care, staffing, and lunch program changes. I will work with board members, administrators, staff, and teachers to improve efficiencies in hopes of avoiding program cuts. In my children’s classes, I have seen our great teachers at work. I believe our greatest priority should be in retaining and recruiting quality teachers with competitive pay and benefits and will strive to meet that goal in the face of budget reductions. I applaud the tough work the District has done and will work hard to bring new ideas and solicit public input for future solutions.

**Nate Martin (Area A):** ACSD#1 has cut summer school, field trips, and eliminated 17 public school jobs via attrition. It recently privatized its food preparation and laid off several food prep workers. It lost state funding for modular classrooms as a result of class size increases. More cuts from the Legislature are likely. My priorities will be to support teachers and to protect the classroom. I will weigh each funding decision according to Wyoming’s constitutional promise that *all* students deserve access to quality education. Administrators shouldn’t get raises if teachers and staff don’t. We shouldn’t waste money expanding bureaucracy or chasing newfangled educational fads.

**Jason Satkunam (Area A):** The obvious impact is the lack of new facilities for both Slade and Beitel. At the same time, increased pressure, with less funding, is being put on local districts to meet increasingly demanding state and federal standards. As a board member I would start by auditing our budget to determine areas we can improve in financially while being careful not to under fund areas that are imperative to our success as a district. Proper fiscal responsibility will require us to be vigilant in our spending and be aware of the value of each dollar spent.

**Jason Tangeman (Area A):** At this juncture our Superintendent and his team have done an excellent job mitigating against the fallout from the funding shortfall. It is difficult to answer this question because so much depends on what the Legislature does with school funding during the 2019 session. In general, the District has developed different options to consider in the future if we are faced with another \$1,000,000 shortfall. These options include potentially increasing class sizes, reducing services and/or reducing the number of employees. Again, it is very difficult to answer this question in light of the unknowns coming from Cheyenne next year.

**Janice Marshall (Area B):** The Board, Superintendent and Business Manager began planning for budget reductions several years ago. Last year we were able to identify \$600,000 in budget reductions and improved efficiencies. This helped to offset the cuts we received. I will support ongoing efforts to identify efficiencies so that we can keep the impact of reduced funding as far away from the classroom as possible. We cannot continue to do all that we have done with less funding. Building projects, like Slade School, are all on hold due to lack of funding from the state. School funding needs legislative support, no more cuts.



**Robert Mobley (At-Large):** When I served on a board before, our district had a severe drop in revenue that led to a devastating financial situation. We experienced austere budget cuts resulting in massive lay-offs, leading to nearly untenable increases in student-to-teacher ratios. Our standardized test scores went down as a result. I cast the lone 'No' vote. It is important to conduct a top to bottom review of finances locating areas that may need to take partial cuts to preserve our student-to-teacher ratios. Education is our primary focus and removing classroom teachers is not the answer from my prior experience.

**Lawrence Perea (At-Large):** One of the greatest impacts to the district from the reductions of state funds is in capital construction, which has halted plans for a new Slade Elementary. In addition, the Legislature reduced the ACSD#1 funding model by \$1.0 million, frozen special education and transportation reimbursements, and have not kept up with external adjustments (ECA) that our district and employees need to keep pace with inflation. ACSD#1 has done a good job of increasing the reserves to mitigate future cuts. I will work with the legislatures to ensure ACSD#1 is adequately funded and employees receive the ECAs they so greatly deserve.



## **Albany County Fire District #1**

*This volunteer three-member non-partisan board sets fire suppression policy and disperses tax money collected from the residents of the District to five volunteer departments, which include most of the southern half of Albany County outside the city of Laramie. The five are: Central (in leased space north on Hwy 287 with seven engines and 25 volunteers), Big Laramie (four stations), Centennial (three stations), Vedauwoo, and Tie Siding. Only residents of the District will vote on the candidates. There is one four-year term available in 2018. The successful candidate will join Jon K. Essley and Joseph O. Witt who have two years left on their terms. No response was received from James Lee.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Art Sigel:** I am now completing a four year term as a Director of ACFD1. I have been Chairperson of the Board for all four years. My experience with ACFD1 is my most significant qualification for this position. Working with and learning from our dedicated Volunteers and many others has provided me with a very solid base from which to lead ACFD1. I have lived and ranched in the Centennial Valley for twelve years. I have been involved deeply in safety management for over 50 years as a chemical engineer, plant manager and 21 years as a CEO.

### **What are the top three challenges facing ACFD1 and how would you address them?**

**Art Sigel:** ACFD1's biggest challenge is raising its level of service to the central area of our county. A Department has been created, engines acquired and a 25 Volunteer staff built. An owned Station south, near 287 will be built using SLIB Grant funding. Creative effort and spending must be directed toward improving recruiting and training. Interaction with the Insurance Industry is bringing in new insights. Funding for training is a priority. ACFD1 must continuously improve its response time and capability. Three stations built or expanded. Six engines added or replaced. Water availability increased District wide. Dispatching efficiency is improving.

### **Experts are saying that fire seasons will become more intense. How will that affect firefighting in rural areas of Albany County?**

**Art Sigel:** I believe the more intense fire seasons become the more value must be placed on teamwork. The five Departments in ACFD1 are consciously emphasizing teamwork to their Volunteers. The five Chiefs meet routinely to work on common problems. Our Departments are joining with Laramie FD to create Unified Command capability. ACFD1 routinely partners with LFD, Forest Service, State Forestry and North Albany County all with resources and people. We know the leaders and they know us. ACFD1 has a new mutual aid agreement in place with Larimer County Colorado. Preparedness of people, gear and engines is our strength.

## Hospital District Trustees

*The District encompasses all of Albany County. As of this election, the District will move from seven to five Trustees who serve four-year terms, elected on a nonpartisan ballot. They receive no compensation. The Hospital District owns Iverson Memorial Hospital's buildings and grounds, and currently oversees a lease held by a non-profit entity managed by the Iverson Hospital Board of Directors. The Trustees meet at least three times a year to establish a budget, and receive semi-annual reports from the hospital Directors. Two vacancies are available this year. Those elected will join Guy Warpness, Rex Gantenbein and Rick Melone whose terms are not up this year.*

### **What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**James Martincheck, M.D.:** I am running for re-election for the IMH Board of Trustees. I have seen a lot of wonderful changes to the hospital. I graduated from the University of Wyoming with a B.S in Biochemistry and a M.S in Molecular Biology. The State of Wyoming paid for my Medical School training in Salt Lake City and came back to practice medicine in Laramie in 1999. I have truly enjoyed being a part of the success of IMH and the Board of Trustees for all these years. Because I am a physician, I feel like I add an important clinical element. . . .

**Terry Roark:** I have been privileged to serve four terms as a District Trustee and believe I have a good grasp on how IMH should function. I also have attended many continuing education conferences in Wyoming and nationally to keep abreast of health care changes.

### **The hospital is now managed as a nonprofit under contract with the Hospital District. How would you evaluate the new arrangement?**

**James Martincheck, M.D.:** I feel IMH continuing to provide exceptional medical care under the new nonprofit management arrangement. The District Board members are still very much involved in making sure IMH continues to improve and acquire talented and friendly medical teams. IMH has a rapidly growing list of new doctors and services. The new Medical Office Building has been a wonderful addition to IMH, so we can provide much better timely care for all of our patients.

**Terry Roark:** The new IMH Board of Directors bring great expertise and balance in areas that, frankly, it is difficult to achieve through elections. The Trustees have reviewed the Report on their first six months of operation and found the new Board's attention to finances, patient safety and quality of care meet our high expectations.

### **Would you diversify how the revenue from the current three-mill tax levy for the Hospital District is used? Explain how and why.**

**James Martincheck, M.D.:** In my opinion, I would like to see the current three-mill tax levy being used to cover the costs of caring for patients who are struggling financially. I believe it's our duty and responsibility to help patients recover from illness and financially when we can.

**Terry Roark:** The current mill-levy is just sufficient to meet the needs of Albany County indigent care provision. Should future mill-levy income exceed that need, the Trustees would have to go back to the original language establishing the levy to see if excess income could be used for other health care possibilities.

## **Laramie Rivers Conservation District Supervisor**

*The District encompasses all of Albany County with a five-member non-partisan Board of Supervisors. They have four-year staggered terms with no salary or benefits. Three members are elected from the Rural Area (one vacancy this year), one member is from the Urban Area (inside city limits of Laramie or Rock River, no vacancy this year), and one is elected At Large (one vacancy this year). Those elected will join Ruth Shepherd (Urban), Larry Munn and Carol Price (Rural). No candidate filed for the one rural seat available, therefore the write-in who receives the highest number of votes, meets the qualifications of residency and is willing to accept will be elected.*

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Robert Shine (At Large):** Have lived in Laramie since 1975. Have volunteered on Laramie Soup Kitchen board and Planned Parenthood. Have small ranch North of town on the Oasis Ditch.

**What are the top three challenges facing LRCD and how would you address them?**

**Robert Shine (At Large):** Challenges include developing new sources of water and conserving water in Albany County, affording water projects on ranches which benefit both livestock and wildlife, and affording family ranches to decrease the possibility of subdivision which can affect both water rights and wildlife habitat.

**A part of the LRCD mission is to protect Albany County's tax base; what is your approach to this responsibility?**

**Robert Shine (At Large):** Water is integral for Laramie's growth. I support projects which will maintain the availability of clean water in the city and county, such as the Pole Mountain project.

*The statements below with “Pro” and “Con” viewpoints on the renewals of the Albany County Excise Tax on Retail Sales and the Lodging Tax were written by the League of Women Voters with input from citizens holding these views. They are not official government statements, more information about what the city and county governments do with their revenue from these sources can be found on the websites:*

*Albany County: <http://www.co.albany.wy.us>*

*City of Laramie: <https://cityoflaramie.org/27/Government>*

*Albany County Tourism Board: <https://visitlaramie.org>*

## **Viewpoints on Renewal of 1% Albany County Excise Tax on Retail Sales—2018**

Ballot Language: “Shall the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Albany, State of Wyoming be authorized to impose a general purpose excise tax of 1% upon retail sales of tangible personal property, admissions and services made within the county for general revenue purposes?”

### **FOR THE EXCISE/SALES TAX RENEWAL**

✓ *This is not a new tax, it has been in effect since 1986 and it has raised over \$18.5 million over the past four years for Laramie, Rock River and Albany County.*

✓ *It is called an “excise” because it is over and above the mandatory 4% state sales tax (which the state mostly keeps).*

✓ *Without this tax, Laramie could not meet the annual budget—currently about 30-35% of the city’s FY19 budget is from the “Fifth-penny” tax.*

✓ *The tax is collected on alcohol, tobacco and restaurant food but not on food or prescription drugs that the consumer takes home to prepare or to eat.*

✓ *In the past four years, over \$2.8 million from this tax has been given to groups like Ark, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and CLIMB Wyoming. Almost 50 groups participate by applying—including the Soup Kitchen, SAFE, Youth Crisis Center, Hospice, and many others.*

✓ *The tax must be voted on every four years, so if voters don’t like what is being done with the money they can do away with it.*

✓ *This tax shows that we are helping ourselves generate funds.*

### **AGAINST THE EXCISE/SALES TAX RENEWAL**

✓ *Taxes are too high and should be reduced. How many times have we ever seen taxes like this “go away?”*

✓ *The County and City of Laramie and Town of Rock River should provide law enforcement, fire protection, streets, water, sewer, and waste disposal. The people who use all the other things the tax supports should be the ones to pay for the services.*

√ *In general, sales and excise taxes are regressive—the less income a family or individual has, the greater the proportion of their income goes for taxes as compared to wealthier families.*

√ *Using excise tax funds as required “matches” to be eligible for certain grant funding only encourages more spending and a higher tax burden on consumers.*

√ *New businesses and new residents appreciate lower taxes, not higher taxes, provided basic government functions are met.*

√ *Nonprofit organizations should not come to depend on public funds for the services they provide; they should be sustained by private donations or grants from funders who support their mission.*

## **Viewpoints on the Renewal of the 4% Albany County Lodging Tax**

Ballot Language: "Shall the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Albany, State of Wyoming, continue to impose, as allowed by Wyoming Statute, a four percent (4%) excise tax upon the sales price paid for lodging services within Albany County, the primary purpose of which is for local travel and tourism promotion.

### **FOR THE LODGING TAX RENEWAL**

✓ *This is not a new lodging tax, it is one that we have had in Albany County since 1989. This tax rate will not change. Albany County residents don't pay it unless they stay in lodging facilities within the county.*

✓ *All 23 counties in Wyoming collect it now; 4% is the maximum rate allowed by state law. This is a lower rate than larger metropolitan areas often charge.*

✓ *The Lodging Tax supports staffing of the Summit Visitor Center from May 15 to October 15. An average of 110,739 visitors stop in per season.*

✓ *Visitors account for 17% of all sales taxes collected by the City of Laramie and Albany County, helping support infrastructure and public services used by visitors and residents alike. The Lodging Tax proceeds are used to attract these visitors.*

✓ *The Lodging Tax funds grants to organizations wanting to bring people here for special events like Wyoming High School Activities Championships. Grants amounted to \$157,700 over the past four years. Revenues from these visitors are estimated to be \$15,029,750.*

✓ *The Tax supports the Laramie Area Visitor Center Office, providing brochures (most printed locally), maintaining a web site, promoting local events and attractions, and other services that enhance the experience of visiting Laramie.*

### **AGAINST THE LODGING TAX RENEWAL**

✓ *It's irritating when travelling to have to pay around 12% extra in taxes for a hotel room in Denver, let alone the 22% they charge in Portland. The 15% or more charged in San Francisco and New York City go to support things that are only a little related to tourism. Why should Laramie be like them? Charging a lodging tax may discourage visitors from staying in motels.*

✓ *Laramie has enough people without encouraging more tourists to come, creating congestion and using our water.*

✓ *Gouging tourists is not an ethical way to support local services; if additional services are needed to accommodate the tourists who come, we should figure out other ways to pay for them.*

✓ *Just because other places do it doesn't mean we should too.*

√ *This is a way for the state to avoid dealing with the issue of outmoded reliance on the mineral industry for revenue. If the Wyoming Legislature would revamp its revenue structure, an extra tax like this would not be necessary and the state could afford to pass through to counties and/or cities the money they need for tourism services.*