

WARREN COUNTY SHERIFF CANDIDATES



RODNEY WHILES

OPENING REMARKS

"Building bigger jails every few years is not the answer," said Whiles, who has 13 years of law enforcement experience. "We're going to have to take advantage of several different programs in Tennessee right now to work our inmates and offer new rehabilitation techniques for them and also get them employed and get them so they're not in such a hole when they get out of jail. ... I've worked seven different counties and I've seen different ways, better ways, to do things and I want to bring those ideas to Warren County."

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"I think there would be very few teachers who would be able to be certified and qualified and be able to retain that weapon and not have it taken away from them. If you do give them a gun, now they have that gun at school and it could be taken away and used."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"Reform, rehabilitation and education of the inmates. We're going to work our inmates like other counties around us do. That can be beneficial to the inmates as well as the county. Two years ago, Coffee County saved over \$900,000 based on minimum wage labor. ... I'd eventually like to make it to where these inmates can go out and maybe start working in a factory. When we get these inmates out working every day, a portion of their paycheck will go to pay for their stay in jail, a portion will go to their fines and probation, and then a portion will go to their savings account so they have some start-up money when they get out of jail so they don't have to try to break into a vehicle or sell drugs."

IN CLOSING

"What are we currently doing to reform these inmates by locking them in a jail cell for 22 hours a day with other criminals who cook meth and break in? All they're doing is furthering their criminal education out there so when you hear people talk about me putting murderers and rapists out on the road, it's not. I'm trying to change their lifestyle. I'm trying to change their work ethic. I'm trying to get them rehabilitated. And there are proven programs out there that are working. ... If you want a hard-working family man, a Christian, who has always excelled in everything I've done, then please vote for me."



JOHN MORGAN

OPENING REMARKS

"I want to take the structure from the city, the city has a wonderful police department, and I want to apply it to the county," said Morgan who served for 40 years with McMinnville Police Department before retiring this year.

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"I'm for teachers having guns for those willing to volunteer to do it and who meet the criteria and training the sheriff's department and police department puts on every year. It's good training. ... The reason I'm in favor of it is because if my son or my daughter is in that school and there's someone who wants to cause damage, the first thing they're going to do is take the SRO out, then they've got another gun and we may be 5 to 6 to 8 minutes to get there. How many kids can be killed in that 5 to 6 to 8 minutes that maybe if you have two good teachers who are highly trained and highly motivated, when we get there all we have to do is the paperwork."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"One of the changes I'd like to see is higher visibility and better response rate in on-scene time. I want the community to be saturated with more patrol units. If you have a lot of crime in a community, you saturate that community with extra police officers and your crime rate is going to go way down."

ON WORKING JAIL INMATES

"A lot of your inmates that you're going to be working, they're going to be trying to plan on a daily basis a way to escape. I know because I've seen them do it. I've seen them rape an old lady, the work crew. I've seen one try to run over deputies in their patrol cars and had to shoot them through the windows. I'm speaking from many, many years of experience. ... When all is said and done, I'd like to see jail inmates worked more, but they don't have the manpower and the county is not going to hire deputies and guards to do that. You have to have an armed guard who is trained who knows how to work these people. If not, somebody is going to get killed."

IN CLOSING

"If you make me your sheriff, you're going to see me a lot. I'll be stopping by your house when I see you mowing to ask if everything is OK. I'm going to be drinking coffee with you. I'm going to be out at night. That's when your criminals are out. Darkness breeds crime and I love catching them in the act."



TOMMY MYERS

OPENING REMARKS

"I know what hard work and dedication is and it's put me through everything I've tried. ... I want to provide firm, fair law enforcement and I want to be available 24-7 for you," said Myers who became an officer in 1989 and is currently chief deputy.

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"I love our teachers and our teachers need to teach. They don't need to be carrying guns. We don't need to put that pressure on our teachers to become a police officer overnight. Our deputies and police officers are highly trained to carry that weapon and retain that weapon and use that weapon. I would never put that on a teacher's shoulders."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"I want to work on communication equipment. We are on analog in case you don't know. A lot of departments around us are on digital. I do not want us to put a Band-Aid on this issue. Our deputies will jump out of their car and get on their portables and their car radios are OK, but when they jump out of the car, we can't hear them. All we hear is static and we don't know if they're getting shot at or what's happening."

ON WORKING JAIL INMATES

"We work 65 inmates every day. I've knocked on thousands of doors for the last six months and that is the question that's come up. Everyone wants to work the inmates. We do and have for a long time. I've talked to the Coffee County Sheriff and this \$900,000 that we keep hearing they saved it's just fabricated numbers. He said they were just goofing around and put these numbers together. If you go to Gary Cordell for Coffee County Mayor, go to his Facebook page and scroll down to annex issue, he will tell you that he wants to close down the workhouse because it's costing Coffee County too much money. If we put the same numbers that Coffee County did to us, we'd be saving over \$1 million for years. ... I want to see these inmates work but we have to do it in a safe and secure environment."

IN CLOSING

"I've been here protecting and serving you for 30 years. I didn't leave. I could have gone to a police department anywhere but I didn't because this is my home, you are my family and I've stayed with you protecting and serving you for 30 years. I want to use my budget experience and my years of knowledge to make the important decisions your next sheriff is going to have to make."



BILLY JOE CROUCH

OPENING REMARKS

"I've served Warren County for over 20 years as a volunteer with the Rescue Squad and as volunteer for Morrison Fire Department. ... I'm a patrol sergeant, a field training officer, and a past SORT team member," said Crouch who has worked across Tennessee eradicating meth labs.

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"I would say no. I am very proud of our teachers. We have some good teachers. They are like law enforcement. They are underpaid. They should spend more time on their students, getting their grades up so we can have a better education system. We have good SROs and I think we need to add some more SROs and training ... I'm afraid as an officer and a past SORT team member and trained in active shooter, I'm so afraid if you put guns in schools, a teacher would get excited and run out in the hall and when you tell them to drop their weapon they might end up pointing it at us and that would be our worst nightmare."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"We have good officers, they're trained well, but we just don't have the good radio equipment. Today, I worked an accident on Jacksboro Road. I tried to give information back to dispatchers so EMS would know what's going on and we were almost to Centertown and they could not hear my radio. Folks, we have problems with radio communication and we need to fix this problem for officer safety."

ON WORKING JAIL INMATES

"I have researched this and spoken to a lot of sheriff's departments throughout the state. Yes there are programs and you can work the inmates but it's not cheap. It's not easy. ... But I do believe in work crews like we have now, picking up trash on the side of the road and like it was mentioned planting trees and yes we can do that but we're going to have to have officers to supervise these inmates and that costs money. But we have to do something different and if we put our heads together I think we can do that."

IN CLOSING

"I am a public servant. When I put on the uniform in the morning and put the badge on and my utility belt, it's not about the paycheck. It's a calling. I believe I am the one to be sheriff of Warren County. I pray to God every day for guidance and if He wants me to be the next sheriff, I believe I will be."



BOBBY EDWARDS

OPENING REMARKS

"If I'm elected I want to keep everyone in Warren County as safe as you can possibly be. That's my promise to you. That includes churches, schools, everywhere, all of Warren County," said Edwards, who first became an officer in 1989 and later spent 18 years with Murfreesboro Police Department.

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"If I'm elected to be sheriff, that wouldn't be my call, but if the School Board decided to arm a few teachers, I'd be willing to train them. ... I would like to keep it at a minimum, I don't want very many teachers armed and our officers would know who they are and they would train with our officers, but that would be a decision the School Board would have to make."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"I have some different rehab programs I'd like to bring and one is the Renew Life Ministries out of Murfreesboro. Excellent program, excellent faith-based program. I want to bring more programs to the department like that. Also during the summer when the kids are out of school, I would like to have some of our SRO officers have programs and camps for school kids. One of them is Rad Kids. I'm a firm believer in Rad Kids."

ON WORKING JAIL INMATES

"I believe the inmates in there who are eligible for work release, put an ankle brace on them and let them work unless they mess up again and we have to bring them back. I'm sure they're doing all they can with all the inmates they have. I think they were working 65 on the road crew at one time and maybe dig a little harder and try to find some more inmates who can get on the work release program. If I'm elected sheriff, I want my deputies to write more misdemeanor citations instead of taking everybody to jail. That's one way to cut it down just a bit because a lot of times they go in for a minor offense and they can't make bond until they go to court so I'm going to stress to my deputies to write a misdemeanor citation every time they can."

IN CLOSING

"I want to be your sheriff and if you give me a chance with my 22 years of experience, I'd do a good job for you. I'd do my best to keep all the citizens of Warren County safe."



MARC MARTIN

OPENING REMARKS

"I've worked at the sheriff's department my entire adult life. I want to continue to work there. It's a profession I love. It's a profession that I'm passionate about," said Martin, who started as a jailer at age 19 and is currently chief investigator.

ARE YOU FOR ARMING TEACHERS?

"I know there are some teachers out there who are highly qualified, have been in the military and are highly familiar with firearms. I feel any teacher we give a firearm to should at least have minimal standards of law enforcement training and there would need to be background checks on them just like law enforcement ... I definitely want to educate myself and put some more thought into it before I would say really one way or the other."

NAME AN IDEA FOR IMPROVEMENT

"I'm a member of the Drug Court program here in Warren County. I think it's something which needs to be expanded upon. It works. It's not something where we take inmates from the jail and just throw them in the program. We actually interview them and make sure they're serious about getting rehab, getting help to become part of the community again."

ON WORKING JAIL INMATES

"There are not a huge amount of inmates who are in our jail who have committed just a single misdemeanor offense. They may be in jail for a DUI this time, but they may have had an aggravated assault last time. We use criteria before we put an inmate out working. We want to make sure they're not an escape risk and they're not a safety risk to the people of Warren County, but yet we still work a tremendous amount of inmates and we'll continue to do it. I think anybody who is elected sheriff would be crazy not to because it does save the county some money."

IN CLOSING

"If you work these inmates, they get out of jail in half the time. So let's just say you send someone to court and they get nine months in jail, that's good. That's nine months the citizens of Warren County don't have to worry about somebody coming and breaking into their house. ... We make jokes at times us investigators if we have a light day. Why do we have a light day? Well we must have the right people in jail. ... If you want a safe community, if you want to be safe in your homes then vote for me, Marc Martin."