

GENERAL CANDIDATES FORUM

OCT 9th, 2024

ELECTION DATES

- Tuesday, October 15 - Deadline to register to vote or update your voter registration information to participate in the 2024 general election.
- Early voting begins on October 21, 2024 (in Franklin County)
- Tuesday, October 29 - Last day to apply for an advance voting mail ballot.
- Monday, November 4 - In-person advance voting ends at 12:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 5 - GENERAL ELECTION

Event Sponsored By:

- Franklin County Farm Bureau Association
- Messenger's Home Furnishings
- Ottawa Memorial Auditorium

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Meet the candidates

SHARICE DAVIDS-(Democrat) U.S. House of Representatives, District 3

Sharice Davids was raised by a single mom who served over 20 years in the US Army. A proud graduate of Leavenworth High School, she was the first in her family to attend college. Sharice worked her way from Johnson County Community College to Cornell Law School, juggling multiple jobs to put herself through school. After law school, she worked in economic and community development on Native American reservations and as a White House Fellow in the Department of Transportation under Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump. In 2018, Sharice ran for Congress to give Kansans a voice that represents their values and interests. She became one of the first two Native American women ever elected to Congress, representing Kansas' Third District. Since then, she has focused on lowering the cost of living, creating job opportunities, supporting Kansas farmers, and ensuring the government serves the people, not special interests.

RICK KLOOS - (Republican); Kansas State Senate, District 3

In these challenging times, we face numerous hurdles—from rising costs to higher taxes. While we've made progress, there's still much to be done. I am committed to advocating for policies that benefit our communities directly. Change takes time, and our journey is just beginning. I am excited to have the opportunity to represent the Ottawa community and be a part of ongoing efforts to make a positive impact. I hope you will join me in continuing this journey and making a difference together. My wife, Pennie, and I have dedicated most of our lives to public service, celebrating thirty-nine years of marriage and raising four boys: Ricky, Michael, Matthew, and Nathaniel. We are also blessed with seven grandsons. The past fifteen years, we have served the Topeka community through God's Storehouse Ministry, a church-run thrift store that we founded together and now employs 80-plus people. My youngest son calls me the Community Man because always about the needs of the people. Additionally, my wife and I spent 20 years in the real estate industry. My record in the Senate has been CLEAR: Cutting Taxes; Limiting Regulations; Ensuring Safety; Advocating for Property Rights; Reducing Government Size. Our progress has been possible thanks to the dedication and support of people just like you. Visit www.rickkloos.com, and please consider joining me by volunteering or donating today. Together, we can keep moving forward.

Connie O'Brien (Republican); Kansas State Board of Education District 4

I live in Tonganoxie. I am a mother and grandmother, my 11 children are graduates of Tonganoxie High school. Former Kansa State Representative (2008-2016), teacher, substitute teacher, 4-H Superintendent, served on the Real Estate Commission Board, and Director of Religious Education at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. I graduated from the University of Saint Mary with a BA in Social Studies/Secondary education.

MICHAEL LEWIS (Democrat); Kansas House of Representatives, District 59

Michael Lewis is a 38 year old father of 2 who has called Ottawa home since 2013. His hands-on experience in the workforce has shaped his understanding of the struggles and aspirations of everyday Kansans. As someone who has navigated various industries, Michael knows firsthand the importance of secure jobs, fair wages, and opportunities for growth. His time at a local distribution center, working alongside others who rely on these industries for their livelihood, has only strengthened his resolve to ensure working families are represented in the Kansas legislature. Additionally, his passion for supporting small businesses and family farms is a cornerstone of his campaign, as he believes they are vital to the local economy and community. Running for Kansas House District 59, Michael aims to bring practical, common-sense solutions to the challenges facing his community. His platform is built on advocating for affordable healthcare, access to quality education, and sustainable economic policies that benefit everyone, not just the privileged few. By focusing on the needs of working-class citizens, small businesses, and family farms, Michael is determined to make sure that every voice is heard and that Ottawa, and the entire district, has a stronger, more secure future.

CARYN TYSON - (Republican); Kansas State Senate, District 12

Caryn Tyson is known for her conservative values, diverse background, and real-world experience. Caryn has an impressive record of cutting waste and taxes. This year, Caryn was instrumental in providing tax-cuts for all Kansans and leading the successful effort exempting Social Security from state income tax. It is another of the many reasons she continues to be re-elected.

Caryn was born and educated in Kansas. Her education includes two Bachelor of Science degrees from KSU – one in Math and one in Computer Science. While working in the IT (Information Technology) field for over 35 years, Caryn continued updating her education, completing her Master of Science in Engineering Management at KU and project management certifications. This deep and extensive IT background has saved Kansans in securing cost-efficient solutions. Her conservative values stem from working in her youth in her parents' business followed by 30 years in the ranching operation in Linn County, their home, owned by Caryn and her husband, Tim, of 35 years. They are fifth generation Kansans – just one more important part of their lives

DENA SATTLER - (Democrat); Kansas State Senate, District 3

Dena has a long and successful record of service at the local, state and federal levels. A veteran of the U.S. armed forces and career journalist, Sattler spent many years as a respected, award-winning newspaper publisher in Kansas. She transitioned to serving the State of Kansas in her recent role as Senior Director of Public Affairs for the Kansas Department of Commerce, and before that Director of Public Affairs for Governor Laura Kelly. She was a longtime editor-publisher of The Garden City Telegram before adding four more area papers as a regional publisher: The Dodge City Daily Globe, The Pratt Tribune, Kiowa County Signal and St. John News. She also spent time at The Ottawa Herald and The Hutchinson News, and was an editorial writer for The Topeka Capital-Journal and its sister papers throughout Kansas. A winner of state and national honors for editorial writing, Sattler is a past president of the Kansas Press Association board of directors and served as the board's legislative director. She received the state press association's Boyd Award for Community Service for The Garden City Telegram's part in raising awareness of problems at the local animal shelter, with her editorials calling for a new shelter that currently serves the community. She also was honored with the Clyde M. Reed Jr. Master Editor Award given for a lifetime of achievement that involves commitment to community, the Kansas newspaper industry and the state. Sattler now works from her home in Topeka as a freelance writer and consultant for organizations throughout Kansas. She's a trustee for the Kansas Newspaper Foundation and the William Allen White Foundation at the University of Kansas. Sattler also served as a board member for the Garden City Area Chamber of Commerce, Garden City Downtown Vision, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Finney and Kearny Counties, the Finney County Humane Society and Franklin County Habitat for Humanity. She currently is secretary of the Friends of Ted Ensley Gardens board of directors in Shawnee County. Sattler is a graduate of the University of Iowa, and an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. Army Reserve and Iowa National Guard. She received the National Defense Service Medal, established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, for her service during the First Gulf War. She and her husband, Ed, a retired design engineer, live near Lake Shawnee in Topeka with her mother, Ruth Ann, and rescue dog, Ellie.

CARRIE BARTH - (Republican); Kansas House of Representatives, District 5

Representative Carrie Barth lives in rural Baldwin City, and was elected to Kansas House District 5 taking office January 2023, and she is working to be reelected. District 5 covers parts of four counties, including Douglas, Franklin, Miami, and Johnson. Carrie has been active at the local, county, state, and federal levels advocating for Kansas. Carrie is a mom of two daughters who are both in college, and has been married to Dallas since October 20th, 2000. Carrie's professional career for over 20 years has been working with employers their employees specializing in employee benefits, and is passionate about innovative game-changing and life-changing affordable benefit solutions working with self-funded employers. Carrie's focus on healthcare is improving healthcare outcomes, lowering healthcare costs, and providing a better experience for employer's and their employees. What she likes best about these solutions is that they save employers on average 30% on what is typically their second most expensive budget line item and on average their employees spend less than \$100 on healthcare during a plan year. Carrie is an action-taker, goal-getter, and cares deeply about the people in House District 5. As a freshman legislator, representative Barth wrote a bill and lead the charge on getting a bill passed to stop human smuggling which is rare for a freshman legislator to accomplish this. From day one, Carrie dove in on the issues that matter most to people in House District 5, as it relates to lowering taxes, family friendly rights, health freedom, protecting our 2nd Amendment, limiting government, freedom of speech, protecting private property rights, reliable affordable energy and business friendly legislation removing red tape. Her passion to protect human rights and private property rights is building momentum in Topeka and across the state as a leader in the Kansas House

HENRY JOHNS - (Democrat); Kansas House of Representatives, District 5

I live in rural Douglas County, where I raised horses. My work career path began over 50 years ago, in high school, weekend working nights in a small Florida hospital to pay for a car. I served in the Army as a Clinical Laboratory Specialist afterward attending the University of Kansas and later Creighton University's Respiratory Therapy program. I have a BS in Organizational Management from Friends University. I worked as a licensed Respiratory Therapist in the Emergency Dept, Intensive Care Unit as well as pulmonary & cardiology labs, before going into sleep medicine and becoming a registered Polysomnographer. I have worked in private practice as well as public sector. I spent the last 20 years of my career as a manager in both private practice and at the Veterans Administration. During that nearly 50 years, I learned the need for compassionate care; as well as the importance of the business side of medicine.

(Henry Johns Continued) I feel that bodily autonomy, the right to make decisions about your own body without coercion, or intimidation, is a critical issue. Politicians should never come between a medical provider and patient. I support Medicaid expansion in Kansas, for the working poor, to bridge the gap between those who qualify for Medicaid and those who can afford health insurance. I support a fair tax plan that will support growth and still bring noticeable relief to Kansans. I feel that restarting the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund(LAVTRF), a program that worked well from 1937 until it was stopped in 2003 and then killed in 2024, to return State tax dollars to the counties and help keep property taxes down. Public dollars for public schools. Ensuring our schools are fully funded and teachers fairly treated. Kansas teacher's retirement plan is ranked 35th in the nation. Kansas legislators have a plan ranked 3rd in the nation. Our K-12 education is ranked 24th in the nation. We can do better. Public schools and education are one of the foundations of our nation. I believe as Kansans, there is more that unites us than divides us. It is always possible to find common ground.

REBECCA SCHMOE (Republican); Kansas House of Representative, District 59

Rebecca Schmoe, a Franklin County resident for over 20 years, working locally, raising a family, and supporting community businesses, has successfully taken the voice and values of Kansas House District 59 to Topeka. Meeting with community members, business owners, and experts on a variety of topics, she has been our strong voice on the issues which affect us most here at home. The past two years Rebecca has served on the Financial Institutions and Pensions Committee, the Education Committee, and the K-12 Budget Committee. She has fought for tax relief for all Kansans, cutting bureaucratic red tape so our local business can flourish, fostering a culture of life, protecting the vulnerable, educational opportunities and accountability, making individual liberty a priority, and ensuring that the future of Franklin County is a place where you can successfully grow a family, a business, and a community which we are all proud to call home.