

Marshall County voters to weigh in on pardoning power

BY MICHAEL CRIMMINS
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Voters in Marshall County, and throughout Kentucky, will be asked to weigh in on the governor's pardoning powers during the Nov. 3 General Election.

Aside from the typical races — like U.S. senator, U.S. representative, state senator and representative, county clerk, county judge-executive, and others — people will be asked to vote yes or no on a proposed constitutional amendment.

If passed, the amendment would limit the governor's ability "to grant

pardons or commute sentences" during the 60 days before a gubernatorial general election and "ending when [they are] sworn in, according to the Marshall County sample ballot, which can be found at the Kentucky Secretary of State website.

Section 77 of the Kentucky Constitution gives the governor broad power to "remit fines and forfeitures, commute sentences, [and] grant reprieves and pardons," according to the Legislative Research Commission.

This proposed amendment will appear on everyone's ballot regardless of precinct, the sample ballot stated.

Marshall County Democrats encourage public to get out and 'Rock the Vote'

BY TRIBUNE-COURIER STAFF

Marshall County Democrats gathered at the Joe Creason Building in Benton for their second annual "Rock the Vote" community day to advocate and encourage the public to vote ahead of this upcoming election season.

The event featured several democrat speakers such as candidate John "Drew" Williams who spoke at 11:30 a.m., gubernatorial candidates Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman; and Will Coursey speaking on behalf of candidate Rocky Atkins at 2:00 p.m., as well as many other local office candidates like Jim Sloan for Marshall County Judge-Executive, Ross Jameson for First District Commissioner, Eldon Nattier for Second District Commissioner, and Laura McHugh for Third District Commissioner.

Williams said the event aims to bring the community out for a day of fun while also encouraging people to get out and vote.

"Last year we had was our first annual community day," he said. "We bring in...people who want to like teach craft or share some kind of knowledge or play games with kids. We got blow up balloon rides in the back... We're gonna be having hot dogs and waters and candy and some kids' games, and just want everybody to come out and have a great time."

Williams, who is running for a seat in the United States House of Representatives for the First Congressional District, spoke about the importance of the event in helping people to learn more about their local candidates and encouraging them to vote.

"We have many candidates here in Marshall County that are running for city council, magistrate, judge-executive, and we want to make sure that everyone knows that there are options in November," he said. "And we want people to be excited to go out and vote, regardless of how you vote. We want a high turnout because a high turnout means that democracy is working."

Williams said he believes the need to encourage voters to get out to the ballots is becoming increasingly important as conversations regarding things like AI and Data Centers become more common.

"As we've seen with the whole data center conversation across the country, the local



Josh Bayan | For The Tribune-Courier

The Joe Creason Community Building is located at 1600 Park Avenue in Benton.



Josh Bayan | For The Tribune-Courier

John "Drew" Williams's wife and Chair of the Marshall County Democratic Party, Eryn Williams, welcomes visitors to the event.

governments are really the last bastion for a lot of these communities in terms of having good representation, and so when you know the state government or the federal government isn't carrying their weight, it's really important to know who your city council representatives are, who your judge-executive is, who your magistrates are, and your mayors," he said. "So that you can actually have some input into how the community is built and where we go forward with."

He said that despite his own vying for a federal office, he believes local elections are still very important.

"Local elections are so

important, and they're really where things get done in our government, in our cities, and the things you see," he said. "And so that is just so important that people have some civic action and mentality about knowing who they're going to vote for before they get there, having done the research, talked to their neighbors, and really tried to push a level of community engagement [that] I think we're losing in our country right now."

He spoke to attendees about a variety of topics such as media engagement with politics, quality of life, housing and property taxes, profiteering politicians, and government accountability.



Marshall County Schools

Despite a lack of official declarations in Kentucky, many schools and libraries across the region hosted their own form of Dolly Day, adding to the nationwide celebrations, starting with the students at two local elementary schools.

Calvert City Elementary celebrates Parton on '9-2-5' day

BY GRACE BOATRIGHT JACHIM
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Calvert City Elementary School students and staff donned their best rhinestones, cowboy hats, and anything pink to mark Sept. 25 as Dolly Parton Day.

Chosen for the date's numerical resemblance of Parton's song titled "9 to 5," school staff set out to tie the theme into curriculum and initiatives, and ultimately opted to connect Parton's legacy of kindness and service with the school's idea of the "Three Rs," responsible, respectful, and ready.

The initial idea came from a kindergarten teacher, and was presented as an activity to keep things fun in the school.

"One of our kindergarten teachers, Miss Bean, she came to me," said guidance counselor Rayghan Vilt. "We have what's called the Sunshine Committee here. We established it at the beginning of the school year, and it's just a committee of teachers who wanted to be invested in creating a little more fun and positivity throughout the building just to give teachers something to look forward to."

As the date approached, the need to connect the theme into school initiatives came into discussion. Vilt and principal Amanda Melton began to consider the school's various initiatives that could be connected to the theme.

"The closer we got to the day, it was kind of like, 'Well we can't just say it's Dolly Day,' like we have to tie it into some of our school initiatives," said Vilt. "Everybody in the district, we're all PBIS schools. So that's Positive Behavior Interventions and Systems... I'm our building coach for PBIS so [Melton] said, 'Well, how can we tie Dolly Day into our PBIS initiatives?' The three Rs. So our school operates on, we are respectful, responsible, ready."

This led the staff to connecting each piece through a single word; kindness.

"Dolly was all about kindness, and she respected everybody and valued their differences," said Vilt. "She was an advocate for learning, there's the Imagination Library. So, we kind of just tied them all together. All week our word of the week, we call it our 'wow word,' has been kindness. That's kind of a littler character education lesson the whole building gets at our morning meeting, and so we've been hitting on 'What is kindness? What does it look like in our school?' All week we've been tying it back to, you know, Dolly Parton was a huge advocate for all things kindness, and learning, and literacy, and she would stand for and appreciate everything that we're trying to implement here for you at school."

The morning meeting



Marshall County Schools

Even the SRO got in on the fun, commemorating the legacy of Dolly Parton.

on Sept. 25 not only saw a lesson on kindness and respect, but students and staff alike danced and sang along to "9 to 5."

While the idea began broadly, many teachers began to develop ideas specific to their grade level. The first grade teachers opted to put a focus on Parton's legacy of literacy, incorporating their own version of the Imagination Library.

First grade parents were encouraged to send their children's favorite book to school with them for the students to do activities about and to share their favorite books with each other.

In addition to the dressing up and character based lessons, teachers were given a special "cup of ambition" where a local dirty soda trailer was invited to set up in the teacher parking lot for a portion of the day.

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