

Latah County Republican Candidates

Primary Election, May 15, 2018

The League of Women Voters of Moscow asked each candidate two questions. The responses are grouped by the positions sought. The candidate statements appear as submitted without analysis, edits or commentary by the League.

District 5 – Republican Candidates

Republican Senator Candidates: Marshall Comstock, Dan Foreman

Marshall Comstock

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

My involvement with Local and State government for the past 40 years has given me a great insight and education of how local government works. I've also learned how the different entities in our state work together.

I have served on scores of boards, commissions and task forces for schools, Cities, County, State, and National agencies. I have served 2 terms on the Moscow City Council and 2 terms as the Mayor of Moscow. I currently am employed by Latah County in the Planning and Building Department as a Building Inspector. I work with zoning, land use issues, and local and State and Federal codes every day.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

I would say that the most pressing issue facing the State Of Idaho is the underfunding of public education. The ultimate goal should be to give our children the best education possible. To achieve this goal, we need to train, retain and attract the best educators possible. We also need to provide the best learning environment with our facilities and provide the best teaching materials and supplies that we can.

These goals are dependent on the financial backing of the State of Idaho. When the State fails to fund the needs adequately, the school districts are forced to ask the local patrons for the difference through property tax bond levies. This is no guarantee of funding and shifts more burden upon the local property owners.

If elected I would propose increasing the Idaho State Tax Credit percentage on gifts and donation to education entities from 50% to a higher percentage.

I would also research and question the Lottery dividend allocation percentage that goes directly to public schools and higher education.

Dan Foreman**What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?**

I have been a public servant for almost forty-four years. This service includes thirty years as a commissioned officer, aviator and combat veteran in the United States Air Force, almost twelve years as a commissioned law enforcement officer and approximately two years as the current Idaho State Senator for Legislative District Five. Decades of experience in dealing with the public and relevant issues of concern has given me the depth of background and knowledge required of an effective state senator.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

The most pressing issue facing the State of Idaho is the decay in the moral fiber and backbone of America. This moral degradation manifests its existence in numerous symptomatic ways. The breakdown in the family unit, the alarming spread of illegal drug use, increasing occurrences of insane violence and terrorism and the rapid rise in mental health related issues are all indicative of a society grappling with a loss of focus with respect to moral issues. I plan to address this pressing issue by continuing to speak out on that which has sustained America since its beginning - belief in the Almighty and a desire for small, non-intrusive government. I will continue to remind Idahoans to stand on guard against selfishness and demanding too much of government. I will continue to stress the need for strong families, active religious communities, patriotism and service before self. And I will continue to push for more representative state government that gives the people the voice they should have. This final effort will require necessary changes to some of the internal procedures and policies of state government. These changes will only occur at the urging and insistence of strong-willed liberty legislators willing to stand up against the entrenched supporters of the status quo in Boise.

Republican Representative Seat A Candidates: Bill Goesling, Hari Heath**Hari Heath****What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?**

To answer your first question, I have helped numerous campaigns in the past and have been a student/researcher/writer of the problems and solutions to issues of governance, as well as the foundational principles of our nation and state for several decades.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

To answer your second question, there are many pressing issues facing our state. As a legislator, I plan to address them as they come up with positive solutions where they can be found and within the principles our state government is founded upon.

Bill Goesling

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

My entire adult life has been spent serving others in a variety of capacities. As a long-term resident of Moscow, I believe the citizens of our district deserve consistent representation by a fiscal conservative who understands the needs and goals of our district. The unique combination of education, experience and understanding of working families that I bring to this position will accomplish that and more.

It has been my honor to serve our nation for 24 years as a navel officer and aviator where I earned numerous awards for organizational leadership, problem solving and airmanship including the Distinguished Flying Cross. I have served Idaho as a member of both the State Charter School Commission and State Board of Education and our community as a Regent of the University of Idaho and Moscow School Board. (continued on page 3)

As a strong believer of the concept of “paying it forward.” I am currently serving our community as s CASA/Guardian Ad Litem for nine foster children as a mentor in District II Veterans Treatment Court.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

Latah County, like other counties in our State faces issues in education, affordable health care including mental health, attraction and retention of quality medical professionals, taxes, living wage jobs, access to lands, and a variety of others.

With a PhD in Education from the University of Idaho, I am most aware of the challenges our K-12 schools face, from 3rd grade reading requirements, to high school graduation rates, to go-on rates, to the lack of quantity career/technical opportunities, to teacher compensation, to the lack of state support.

In the two counties represented by Seat 5A, there are more than 47,000 permanent residents. Education tops our District economy employing some 27percent of our residents. While our health care, manufacturing and agriculture sectors employ fewer residents, we must work to understand and meet their needs as well.

I believe that the difference between a state representative by title and one that serves successfully, is the latter’s ability to meet and listen to their constituency. The needs and goals as families with children should drive the legislative agenda. Similarly, a great representative will listen to business, non-profit and cultural make-up of the communities because these are the lifelines for their residents. The two are interwoven.

Finally, tall problems encountered in political representation of people must come to a productive solution based on common sense and respect for others points of view.

My life has been spent predicting, identifying and acting to produce successful solutions to problems. In combat and test flight, solving problems means you live to fly another day.

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(Bill Goesling continued.)

As a financial consultant for over 450 clients who entrusted me with over \$ 50 million of their hard earned assets, problem solving means they prosper, their children can mature and grow, and people earn financial freedom for their retirement.

Thank you and I respectfully request your vote on May 15.

Republican Representative Seat B Candidate: Caroline Nilsson Troy

Caroline Nilsson Troy

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

Latah and Benewah counties are resource rich – with vast agricultural and timber assets, a resilient business community, hardworking folks, the headquarters of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, and a pool of talented faculty and researchers at our flagship university. I have the proven leadership and organizational skills to develop collaborative results that benefit this diverse District– and those results have been realized over the past 4 years in Boise. Highlights of legislation has included:

- Suicide prevention training for all school personnel, not just teachers;
- Increasing tax credits for 529 college savings programs;
- Additional training for bullying in schools;
- “Medical amnesty” for minors in possession or consumption who seek emergency medical help (that has already resulted in a 9% increase in emergency responses state-wide);
- Providing for disabled Idaho citizens to participate in an “Americans for Better Living Experience” savings accounts;
- Numerous bills that support our growing wine industry;
- Expanding the ability to recruit family practice doctors through the J-1 Visa Program (at the request of Gritman Hospital)
- Resolutions recognizing historical milestones for the University of Idaho, Benewah County, the Diocese of Boise, the State Seal (the only one designed by a woman), the Idaho Community Foundation, and beloved Vandal Jerry Kramer’s induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

I’m most proud of my efforts outside of legislation, including:

- The pilot project for “remote testimony” where those citizens living further than 100 miles from Boise can testify before the House Education Committee. It was amazing to have one of our own Moscow residents be among the first to take advantage of this opportunity!
- Co-chairing the “Respectful Workplace Task Force” to develop policies to address harassment in the statehouse.
- Bringing together a diverse group of gun owners, mental health professionals and representatives from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to develop a “Lethal Means” educational campaign for gun shops, gun clubs and shooting ranges.
(continued on page 5)
- Serving on the Idaho Suicide Prevention Council and the Idaho Rural Partnership Council. *(Continued next page.)*

(Caroline Nilsson Troy continued.)

My background is as diverse as District 5, giving me a unique appreciation of the constituents. I've lived overseas, farmed, ranched, and worked as a fundraiser for the University of Idaho and Washington State University. I currently own a small business, as does my husband. My kids are the fourth generation of my family to graduate from the University of Idaho.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

- Supporting our public education system, where I'm most concerned about teachers – including further increasing salaries beyond the “career ladder”. We must also resolve the growing disparity between the urban “have” schools and the rural “have not” schools to ensure the “uniform” education called for by the Idaho constitution.
- Rural issues, especially behavioral health, lack of doctors, better roads and creating paths to better economic opportunities. The Idaho Rural Partnership is the designated economic development arm for Rural Idaho, and yet there has been zero state funding since 2009. With strategic direction and a solid funding plan that includes state, private and philanthropic support, this organization could help lead the way to more vibrant and healthy rural communities across the state.

Latah County Republican Candidates

1st District Republican County Commissioner Candidate: Tony R. Johnson

Tony R. Johnson

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

I've been a self-employed business owner for over 20 years. Worked in the family business 30 years. Served on Moscow City Council from 1994 to 2000. Presently serving on the Latah Planning Commission. Business management, budgeting, payroll, problem solving, all come with owning your own business and city council work. Qualifications all suited for being a county commissioner.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

Revenue is always a very large issue in government. There is never enough money for all the necessary needs required. Law enforcement funding is crucial in Latah County. Having the best trained personal and equipment is a very high priority. Retaining deputies through a competitive wage package will help accomplish this goal. The prosecutors office looks to be stretched very thin. More case loads means more expense to the county. Money that just isn't there. I would look to see what state and federal funds are available, and look into grant programs to help relieve some of this financial strain on the county. Our Vets seem to get left behind. I would like to see the county become more involved with the men and women who have served our country. We budget a small amount of money for them now, I believe we can, and should, do more. This is a topic all branches of government, city, county, state, and federal, all need to step up and embrace and now serve those who served us.

3rd District County Republican Commissioner Candidate: David McGraw

David McGraw

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

In addition to spending the last 7-1/2 years serving as one of your three Latah county Commissioners, I have spent my entire adult life both owning and managing business's. Policy, personnel, and financial decisions at the county level are very similar and comparable to those same decisions in private business.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

In the first half of 2017 felony cases in Latah county were up 18-1/2%, while in the same period mental commitments were up 20%. Ever increasing case loads in our justice system will continue to put more and more pressure on all areas of our county's budget including the sheriffs dept, Prosecutor's office, public defenders contracts, and the courts.

Through constant monitoring of the county budget, sound financial decision making, taking advantage of Public defender grants offered through the state, and working with our legislature to help relieve budget restrictions placed on the counties, I/we will continue to find creative ways to fund our justice system.

Latah County Treasurer Republican Candidates: Cindy Agidius, Jan Ahles, James "Jimmy G." Gilder, Peggy Gottschalk

Cindy Agidius:

What experiences has prepared you for the position for which you are now a candidate?

I bring over 30 years of job employment to this endeavor with specifically 12 years of bookkeeping and banking experience. Right out of college I worked as a full charge bookkeeper for the Nobby Inn. I went on to work for Idaho First National Bank and later Presnell, Gage & Co. accounting firm. As an Executive Director for a small state agency, I was responsible for the preparation of our budget as well as it's presentation to JFAC-the Joint Finance Appropriation Committee for the Legislature. Most recently as your State Representative, I served on the House Tax & Revenue Committee which has given me insight into our state tax structure. For the past 17 years I have run my own real estate business which has given me a good working knowledge of the county's property tax system.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

Fortunately, the Treasurer's office has been well managed and has no dire problems that need to be fixed immediately. I wish to take in all recommendations by the outgoing Treasurer as well as poll the employees that work in that office and know it's needs best. *(Continued next page.)*

(Cindy Agidius continued.)

I think it is best as an elected official to learn the job first before promising to change things that might be working just fine.

I believe it would benefit the county and the taxpayers to have an advisory committee made up of people from the financial management industry within in our community to advise us in our investing. Counties are limited by state code differently than are cities, and probably with good reason. However, with the right kind of advisory committee in place we may be able to see other opportunities available to us that do not exist now. This would require working with our County Commissioners, State Legislators, and the Idaho Association of Counties, all of whom I have an established working relationship with.

Jan Ahles

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

My 45+ years of business experience is based on honesty, integrity, credibility, compassion and respect for others. I am also hard working and take pride in each job or task I take on. These personal core values have helped me to succeed in a career of serving others. They have lead me on a path rich in personal experienced. I have managed single-person up to 6+ employee departments along with 30+ event staff. Each position along my career path of 45 years have increased my financial and business experience. Some of my top skills are cash receipts, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, budget management along with extraordinary management and leadership skills.

My natural talents include problem-solving, communication, attention to detail and time management. I have worked for small businesses up to international corporations, profits and non-profits.

I am a Moscow Chamber of Commerce Ambassador (15 years) and am completing my 5th year as a Latah County Fair Board member.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

The office of Latah County Treasurer office operates quite smoothly due to the past management and responsible staff. The most important thing, I believe, that needs to continue from the past management into the future is the customer service provided to ALL who live in Latah County. This department of the County should serve all equally with respect, transparency and accountability.

Having worked with some great computer programs during my career. I want to upgrade Treasurer Department's computer system. A new computer system is needed that will serve the treasurer's office and interface with other County departments. An updated computer system will increase efficiency for interdepartmental transactions and improve customer service. A taskforce will need to be created to begin the discussion of departmental computer needs. Research of programs being used in other Idaho counties will be a good place to start in the search for a computer program that will meet the County's needs. I have learned most of the time it is better and more cost effective to use programs already created than it is to "create the wheel" again.

James “Jimmy G.” Gilder

Hello, my name is James Gilder, but many know me as Jimmy G. I am running for Latah County Treasurer. I am a happily married man of twenty-one years with two dynamic daughters. I am a fifth generation resident of Latah County and the Palouse and my roots run deep in this area and community. I hope you find that my diverse experience, hard work ethic, and leadership qualities make me your best choice for the office of Latah County Treasurer.

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

Small Business Owner – Jimmy G’s Motorsports

- Owned and operated my own business
- “Ground-up” business start up
- Worked, developed, and implemented my own business plan
- Prepared my own budget, financials, and three year forecast and managed my own books
- Mentored and provided job shadowing opportunities to many high school and college students who were interested in the industry
- Strong business acumen

Treasurer’s Office

- Currently employed at the treasurer’s office as a part-time employee. In March I was sworn in as a deputy treasurer
- I have been in training by the whole office collectively and their 52+ years of experience
- I understand the challenges, duties, responsibilities, and expectations of the treasurer’s office
- I have worked and communicated with the courthouse family and have been well received
- I am endorsed by Lois Reed – our current treasurer – who reminds me that she hand-picked me to succeed her in her retirement

Farmer/Rancher

- Part-time farmer and rancher with my father
- Prepared financials, budget, and managed farm operating loans

Manufacturing & Logistics Industries

- Recognized and groomed for management and leadership roles
- Supervisor, United Parcel Service
- Supervisor development program, ATK/Vista Outdoor/CCI-Speer where I believe in the Servant Leadership concept of management
- Problem solving solutions like 8-D, lean manufacturing, 5-S, and organizational tools

Community Leadership Roles

- Served on the Latah County Fair Board, 1 term as vice-chair
- Current Troy FFA Alumni president
- Volunteered my time to many organizations and non-profits
- Organized fundraisers
- AAU girls basketball coach
- Moscow Parks and Rec youth girls basketball and fast pitch softball coach
- High school girls fast pitch softball volunteer
- St. Mary’s Church

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(James "Jimmy G." Gilder continued.)

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

From my experience while working in the treasurer's office, I believe the most pressing issue facing the Latah County Treasurer's Office is the proposed transition from the AS400 operating software – a DOS based program – to the new state-wide, untested operating system. If you are unfamiliar with this system, it is used to communicate with the assessor's office and in daily office functions like billing and receiving funds for the county. When the new program is implemented it will be unfamiliar to everyone and the transition period and learning curves are unknown. Because of this, the office will have to rely on the experience of their respective offices and ability to transition smoothly. This brings me to the transition from the retiring treasurer to the new treasurer and my ability to get up to speed in the office faster and more efficiently because of my working experience in the Latah County Courthouse as a deputy treasurer. I believe my fellow candidates underestimate the duties of the office of treasurer. I know what the job description of treasurer says, however I don't think my fellow candidates truly understand what the role of a new treasurer would be and the amount of work it will take to continue to operate under a tight budget and be an effective leader in the treasurer's office and the court house family. The new treasurer will have to pull their own weight in the office. I will get up to speed faster than any other candidate and will be the first one in the office and the last one to leave. I will make sure that the office continues to run efficiently and effectively for the constituents of Latah County.

Peggy Gottschalk

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

I earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Accounting from the University of Idaho, and have been working as a bookkeeper, a treasurer, and an accountant for over 30 years. I have been a full charge accountant for several businesses and managed my own bookkeeping business for 15 years. I have served as treasurer for the Latah County Republicans, the Potlatch Youth Baseball, and have served as treasurer for my church for over 20 years. I currently work for a local public accounting firm where I help businesses keep their finances in order, prepare tax returns, and help employers with payroll. I am also adept at reconciling accounts and preparing financial reports. My education and experience has prepared me to be an excellent treasurer for Latah County.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

As a Latah County taxpayer I am always expecting efficient use of tax dollars by the government. As treasurer, I will strive to maximize the resources given to the department. I will make the transition to a new treasurer as smooth as possible and will listen to the employees and learn about the procedures and protocols of the office. I will always be looking to
(Continued on next page.)

(Peggy Gottschalk continued.)

make the office streamlined and efficient and will assess the needs and methods of the treasurer's office as I work daily with the staff. If changes, updates or upgrades are needed I will consider them if it is feasible. In this age of digital information the county should strive to make it as easy as possible for the taxpayers to access information and pay their taxes.

I will be a fiscally responsible and transparent treasurer to the citizens of Latah County.

Latah County Assessor Republican Candidate: Annette Bieghler

Annette Bieghler

What experience has prepared you for the position for which you are a candidate?

I have 15 years of leadership and managerial experience. As a successful business owner, I am a team player who has experience creating, implementing, and maintaining policies and procedures with a positive attitude. With forward thinking and planning, I have continuously managed an average of 20 people at any given time using my strong skills in human resources, community and minority relations, communications, and problem solving. As a self-motivated administrator, I managed finances, records, inventory, taxes, sales, marketing, and payroll. Efficient multi-tasking and prioritization are essential in the administration of a smooth-running agency. My moral and ethical courage grants me the ability to apply action where it is needed.

I am confident in my ability to fill the position of assessor, and to make a positive and smooth transition of leadership.

What is the most pressing issue facing Latah County or State of Idaho (depending upon the office for which you are a candidate) and how do you plan to address it if you are elected?

I do not believe there are pressing issues within the Latah County Assessor's office. I am a very dedicated and ethical person who will lead the office lawfully and with transparency.