

Morrow County Candidates' Forum

Morrow County Judge



Douglas C. Rathbun

Democratic candidate for Morrow County Judge Douglas C. Rathbun, 55, is from Heppner. He and his wife, Georgia, have three grown children, Carllena, 32, Christy, 29, and Charles, 24.

Rathbun came to Morrow County in 1975. He graduated from North Eugene High School and from Blue Mountain Community College with a degree in law enforcement. Rathbun served with the U.S. Navy for four years overseas. Rathbun has been employed with the city of Heppner as chief of police for 14 years. He has been the chairman of the board of trustees of the Nazarene Church for two years, co-chair of Oregon Together for three years and on the Criminal Justice Advisory Board for 10 years. Prior to being chief of police of Heppner, Rathbun was chief of police at Powers for five years and chief of police at Gaston for one year. He spent four years in the U.S. Navy as paymaster and one year Oregon Cummins Diesel paymaster and bookkeeping.

Why would a voter select you over your opponent? I worked 27 years in law enforcement, 20 years as chief doing budgets and working juvenile and court issues, providing a foster home and shelter home for all Morrow County kids, working with the public everyday. I am the most qualified candidate.

If elected, what is the biggest challenge facing you? CSEPP funds. Where is the money going? Keeping them on track and make Morrow County safe; promoting all Morrow County; having the county ready for the year 2000; communicating with all Morrow County.

What major project would you like to see accomplished? What is your first priority? Communication with all Morrow County. We need to unify differing needs by bridging the gaps and creating a full spectrum of public service for all Morrow County.

Please outline a brief plan to help North Morrow County accommodate growth? We need growth in all Morrow County. The Port of Morrow is doing an excellent job of helping with this. The county needs to help in any way they can.

How can you assist South Morrow County in retaining and creating jobs? The same as the North end needs to be done.

What is the major problem created by the plan to incinerate chemicals at the Army Depot? How would you address this problem? Money for safety items is the major problem. The county needs to stay right on this problem, get the items and stay right on track with this, keeping Morrow County safe.

Outline a brief plan to allocate Morrow County's tipage fees, or if you are satisfied with the present plan, explain that: I am not satisfied with the tipage fees. They need to go back with the first years where communities got a plan together and turned it into the county.

Briefly outline a plan to allocate county services, such as road construction and maintenance, among the communities: I am for growth in all Morrow County. This will mean more housing all over the county. We need a full spectrum of public services, no division between any part of Morrow County. I will work for the common goal for all Morrow County.

Are you in favor of establishing a road between Lone and Boardman? Why or why not? I believe we need that road as the county grows. We can get state funds and grant money for this like the Main Street project in Heppner.

Do you agree with the current county system of two commissioners and a judge elected at large? Why or why not? If not, what system would you propose? I agree with the current system of government. If it's not broke, why fix it?

Do you think the present Morrow County juvenile court system should be retained or should jurisdiction be transferred over to circuit court? Why? What are your qualifications for serving as juvenile court judge? Begin the chief of police right now and for the past 20 years, in law enforcement over 27 years, working with the Juvenile Dept. and Services to Family and Children all the time, and having a foster home and shelter home, it is not complex to a person who works in the system. I would not consider abolishing the Morrow County Juvenile Court to Morrow County Circuit Court. They are only in Morrow County two days a week and sometimes not at all, and not one of them live in Morrow County.



John F. Mollahan

John F. Mollahan, 62, Democrat candidate for Morrow County Judge, lives in Lexington with his wife, Christina Sharp Mollahan. He has a grown son and daughter, seven grown stepchildren, six grandchildren and 13 step-grandchildren.

Mollahan was born in Morrow County and graduated from Heppner High School. He attended Gonzaga University, WA, and Blue Mountain Community College and is several credits short of a degree in criminology at Blue Mountain Community College. Mollahan served in the U.S. Army from 1958-1960 as a payroll clerk, earning the rank of SP4. He was honorably discharged with a Good Conduct Medal.

Mollahan is retired, working as a part time farm worker. He is a member of St. Patrick's Church in Heppner and BPOE #358. He was city policeman of Heppner from 1964-1968 and was elected twice as Morrow County Sheriff, from 1969-1976.

I have knowledge of the juvenile code, the procedure of the courthouse, the duties of the judge. Among my other duties as sheriff, other than those of law enforcement, were tax collecting and civil defense. I had budgeting and payroll duties. I am familiar with the role of the county commissioner.

Why would a voter select you over your opponent? I enter this candidacy with ability and background; a strong, sense of the democratic process; a belief that good government is based on having a consensus on the issues; a willingness to listen and seek resolutions of issues affecting the citizens; that I take the future of Morrow County very seriously.

If elected, what is the biggest challenge facing you? The major challenge facing Morrow County will be the great effort that must be made towards maintaining its livability, lowering the crime rate, child abuse and maintaining our

medical services. Effort should go towards providing family-wage jobs in the area.

What major project would you like to see accomplished. What is your first priority? My first priority and major project would be towards the diversification of county economy. I would put heavy emphasis on recreation and a safe, healthy environment. The need for an "assisted living" facility for the county would greatly benefit the senior citizens and this facility would provide more job opportunities.

Please outline a brief plan to help North Morrow County accommodate growth: The county should participate in planning for growth and expansion of services to North Morrow County. This would include maintaining and improvements to infrastructure.

How can you assist South Morrow County in retaining and creating jobs? South Morrow County needs to engage in vigorous planning to meet the challenge of Kinzua reductions or closure. Cooperative retaining programs will need to be available from BMCC, EOSU and private industry. Invite diversification by attracting new business and industry to South Morrow County.

What is the major problem created by the plan to incinerate chemicals at the Army Depot. How would you address this problem? Department of Defense is in charge of this project and if problems do arise, the county will have full and complete federal and state participation. The county court should act in an over-sight role to protect safety and health of our residents.

Outline a brief plan to allocate Morrow County's tipage fees, or if you are satisfied with the present plan, explain that: The tipage fees should be managed as all county funds are managed. They should not be held as a slush fund of the county court. Citizens need to be consulted on the use of the funds before they are allocated or pledged as these fees concern all of Morrow County.

Briefly outline a plan to allocate county services, such as road construction and maintenance, among the communities: All road work should be allocated on a "real need" basis. The necessity for farm to market roads, recreational access, safe bus routes and economic development should play a role in all allocations.

Are you in favor of establishing a road between Lone and Boardman. Why or why not? I am in favor of establishing a road between Lone and Boardman as we need a more direct and shorter route to Boardman. This would benefit the transportation of farm commodities, faster access to the freeway and quicker response time for police officers to the Boardman area.

Do you agree with the current system of two commissioners and a judge elected at large. Why or why not. If not, what system would you propose? I agree with the current system because it reflects the one person, one vote, on a county wide basis, "Democracy in action".

Do you think the present Morrow County juvenile court system should be retained or should jurisdiction be transferred over to circuit court. Why? What are your qualifications for serving as juvenile court judge? I believe that the jurisdiction of juvenile court should be retained as it is now handled. Juvenile court is able to handle local juvenile and family problems effectively. I feel fully qualified to address the problems of juvenile court from my past training and experience.



Terry K. Tallman

Terry K. Tallman, 52, Republican candidate for Morrow County Judge, lives in Boardman. He and his wife, Cheryl, have three children, Jonathan, 22, Crystal, 19, and Derrin, 16.

Tallman, who came to Morrow County in 1978, graduated from Adrian High School, Adrian, in 1964. He attended Treasure Valley Community College, the University of Oregon and Oregon State University.

Tallman served with the U.S. Navy as a petty officer 2nd class, and saw both US and overseas duty. He served in Vietnam from 1967-71. He was honorably discharged in 1971.

He is self-employed with Keith Tall and Sons from 1974 to present.

He has been a Little League coach, Columbia Youth Basketball coach, is a member of the Riverside High School Booster Club and the Boardman Chamber of Commerce.

Tallman has been mayor of the city of Boardman from January 1997 to present. His political experience also includes: planning commission, city of Boardman, 1985-96 (chair 1991-96); budget committee, city of Boardman, 1987-89; Morrow County School District Computer Technology Advisory Committee, 1989-90; board member, Port of Morrow/Umatilla Development Fund Committee, 1990-95; board member, Morrow County Unified Recreation District, 1995-present; Morrow County Budget Committee, 1997-present; Morrow County Transportation System Planning Committee, 1997; Boardman Community Strategic Planning Committee, 1997-present; and Boardman Area Emergency Planning Group, 1997-present.

If elected, what is the biggest challenge facing you? My biggest challenge will be keeping everyone happy in Morrow County. Communication and open access will be key in accomplishing this goal.

What major project would you like to see accomplished? What is your first priority? The major project of the next judge will be finding enough money to fund all the services the citizens of our county have come to expect and do it without cutting personnel.

Please outline a brief plan to help North Morrow County accommodate growth; how can you assist South Morrow County in retaining and creating jobs? Most growth is going to take place within the boundaries of our cities. We need to be ready to assist them, when we can. Growth throughout the county is going to come about because of the efforts of the Port of Morrow. We need to maintain open communication with the port manager and the commissioners. I see the county's job as keeping informed, helping find funding and staying out of the way, letting the port function as the "economic engine." Our county economic coordinator will also assist and lead the way to help with finding funds for the county and cities, if they want and need the help.

What is the major problem created by the plan to incinerate chemicals at the Army Depot? How would you address this problem? My major efforts will be to keep the citizens of Morrow County safe. In order to do that, we must have help from the Army and Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Pro-

gram (CSEPP). The Army has been mandated to safely burn these chemicals and CSEPP is to keep the citizens safe as this is done. I intend to make sure both carry out their responsibilities by seeking the proper equipment and training and reasonable storage fees as allowed by law.

Outline a brief plan to allocate Morrow County's tipage fees, or if you are satisfied with the present plan, explain that: Presently, I do not think I would change the process for allocation. There is a need for some discretionary funds and then allocate the rest through the State Economic Revitalization Team (SERT) process. Everyone needs to know what the ground rules are for this process and have access based on those rules.

Briefly outline a plan to allocate county services, such as road construction and maintenance, among the communities: As with any service, a need must be established and where needs often outrun resources, priorities must be determined. This implies a plan. In the example of road and maintenance, we need a formal road plan based on priorities and greatest need. The three commissioners would establish the policy and county employees would carry out these policies.

Are you in favor of establishing a road between Lone and Boardman? Why or why not? I would not be against the road. The major issues facing the county will be the route and funding. The route is being planned. The funding will come from us, the citizens, and be determined by a vote. If anyone has a rich uncle, we could talk to him too.

Do you agree with the current county system of two commissioners and a judge elected at large? Why or why not? If not, what system would you propose? We have had a vote in the recent past to determine if we needed a change. I don't think it is broke. I would not change our present form of county government.

Do you think the present Morrow County juvenile court system should be retained or should jurisdiction be transferred over to circuit court? Why? What are your qualifications for serving as juvenile court judge? I would leave the court in its present system. We maintain local control with no change. The circuit court has its hands full now. Another judge would be needed and we would have to find more money if we made a change. If I am elected, I believe I can perform those duties needed to be juvenile judge.



Keith E. Lewis

Keith E. Lewis, 66, Republican candidate for Morrow County Judge, lives in Heppner. He and his wife, Sharon, have four grown children.

Lewis came to Morrow County in 1983. He graduated from North Powder High School and has taken numerous college courses.

He served with the U.S. Navy, CS2, in the Korean conflict for four years.

Lewis is employed with Heritage Land Company, as co-owner of the real estate company in Heppner for the past 15 years. He retired from the Oregon State Police after 27 years of employment. He was chief of investigation for the Baker district. He has also been an Oregon State Lottery Commissioner for five years.

He is a member of the BPOE, Heppner lodge, and the Heppner Chamber of Commerce.

He was an Oregon State Lot-

tery Commissioner for five years and a member of the Morrow County Planning Commission for one year. Lewis has had experience working with juveniles both in and out of the criminal justice system and experience with budget, finance and public administration.

Why would a voter select you over your opponent? By positively comparing my experience in court procedures, budget, finance and public administration with that of my opponents'.

If elected, what is the biggest challenge facing you? The safe and orderly destruction of chemical weapons at the Umatilla Army Depot, including ensuring that all emergency agencies county-wide are properly equipped to safely respond to emergencies during the decommissioning process. We must also be properly compensated by the U.S. Government for the infrastructure costs born by county governmental bodies for development and service costs of the site and its employees.

What major project would you like to see accomplished? What is your first priority? Assisted living for seniors in the Willow Creek Valley. Any project which efficiently benefits the senior citizens and the youth of Morrow County.

Please outline a brief plan to help North Morrow County accommodate growth: The most important process in guiding the growth of a city or area is proper, proactive planning. We need to ensure that new employees have stable neighborhoods, schools and economic services from the private sector. All county/city services should be coordinated in efforts to build a smart and efficient living and working environment.

How can you assist South Morrow County in retaining and creating jobs? This area of the county offers a unique attraction to the right people and businesses. Due to our distance from product delivery systems, it would not be reasonable to suggest that we could accommodate the needs of a manufacturing concern. However, nationally, we are changing to a service-based economy instead of a manufacturing one. We can attract the "telecommuters" to our area. Our quality of life will create others to bring opportunity to the south of the county.

What is the major problem created by the plan to incinerate chemicals at the Army Depot? How would you address this problem? Of course, safety, but our concern must turn to the imposition placed upon our government services. We must continue with area-wide, but mostly North County capital investments in schools, roads, etc. The Army must pay its fair share. I would also like the Army to secure a replacement employment base once the incineration plant closes from among its defense contractors.

Outline a brief plan to allocate Morrow County's tipage fees, or if you are satisfied with the present plan, explain that: We should select county-wide representation to work on a committee which would establish and prioritize the selection of projects and groups eligible to received money from this fund. These recommendations should be forwarded to the county court for consideration and approval.

Briefly outline a plan to allocate county services, such as road construction and maintenance, among the communities: Government exists to help individuals and communities meet their needs. It is the need for services which should dictate their delivery. Simply put, where the strongest demand for resources exist, the strongest argument for service delivery exists.

Are you in favor of establishing a road between Lone and Boardman? Why or why not? I have not made up my mind on this issue. I do know that I will propose a feasibility study regarding this issue which would include poll of the people in both communities.

Do you agree with the current county system of two com-

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