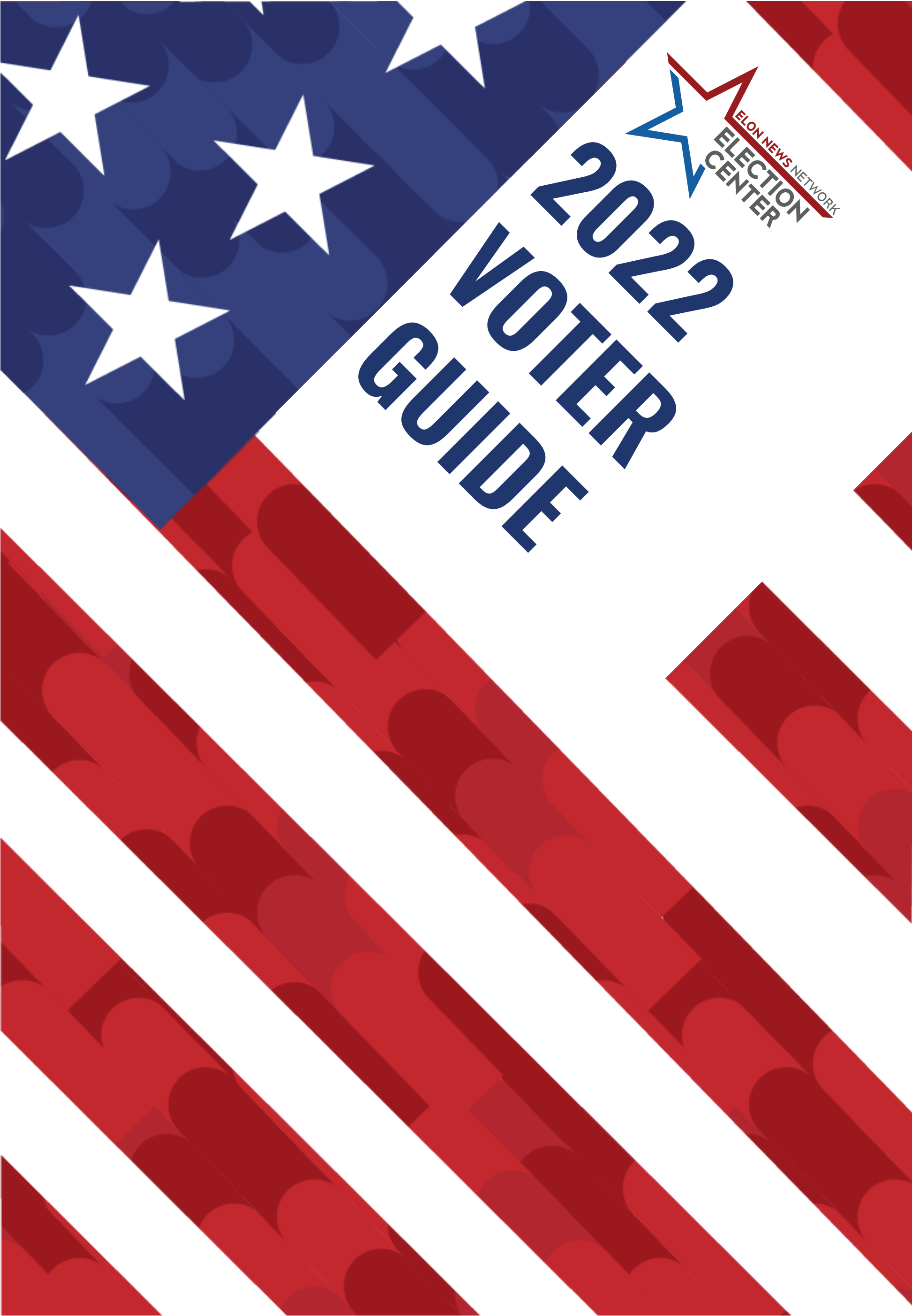


# THE PENDULUM

Candidates grapple with misinformation in campaign advertisements  
**PAGE 9**

Abortion access top of mind for North Carolina candidates, voters  
**PAGE 10**



CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF

# THE PENDULUM

A PUBLICATION OF  
**ELON NEWS  
NETWORK**

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Volume 52, Edition 9

Elon News Network is a daily news organization that includes a newspaper, website, broadcasts and podcasts. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to [enn@elon.edu](mailto:enn@elon.edu) as Word documents. ENN reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of ENN and will not be returned.

**KYRA O'CONNOR**  
Executive Director of Elon News Network

**SOPHIE ROSENTHAL**  
Managing Editor of The Pendulum

**MIRANDA FERRANTE**  
Managing Editor of [elonnewsnetwork.com](http://elonnewsnetwork.com)

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**CHLOE FRANKLIN**  
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**MADALYN HOWARD**  
Chief Copy Editor

**CAROLINE MITCHELL**  
Design Chief

**AVERY SLOAN**  
Politics Director

**MASON WILLET**  
Sports Director

**ABBY SHAMBLIN**  
Analytics Director

**ANNA TOPFL**  
Social Media Coordinator

Max Wallace, Paige Millard, Hannah Sharpe and Erin Martin contributed to the design of this edition. Gram Brownlee, Abigail Hobbs and Ryan Kupperman contributed to the copy editing of this edition.

### EDITORIAL POLICY:

ENN seeks to inspire, entertain and inform the Elon community by providing a voice for students and faculty, as well as serve as a forum for the meaningful exchange of ideas.

### CORRECTIONS POLICY:

ENN is committed to accurate coverage. When factual errors are made, we correct them promptly and in full, both online and in print. Online corrections state the error and the change at the top of the article. Corrections from the previous week's print edition appear on this page.

Contact

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### WHEN WE PUBLISH:

**The Pendulum**  
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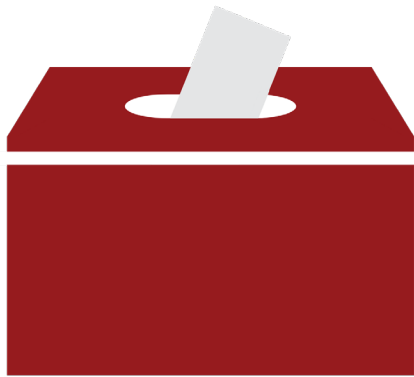
**Elon Local News**  
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**ENN On Air**  
uploads Tuesdays at 6 p.m.

**[elonnewsnetwork.com](http://elonnewsnetwork.com)**  
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## CORRECTIONS

There are no corrections from the last edition of The Pendulum.



## IMPORTANT DATES

### One Stop Early Voting

☐ Oct. 20 to 21  
8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

☐ Oct. 22 to 23  
CLOSED

☐ Oct. 24 to Nov. 5  
8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### Absentee Ballot request form deadline

☐ Nov. 1  
5 p.m.

### Election Day

☐ Nov. 8  
7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

# Where to vote in Alamance County

## Early voting one-stop polling places

One-stop early voting: individuals can register and vote at the same place.

- 1 Graham Recreation Center  
311 College St., Graham, NC
- 2 Kernodle Senior Center  
1535 S Mebane St., Burlington, NC
- 3 Elmira Community Center  
810 Wicker St., Burlington, NC
- 4 Mebane Arts & Community Center  
633 Corregidor St., Mebane NC
- 5 Elon South Gym  
329 S. Antioch Ave., Elon NC

## VOTING PRECINCTS

During early voting, voters can cast their ballots at any of the five polling locations. On Election Day, voters must go to their assigned polling place. There are 38 precincts within Alamance County, in order to find your polling place, go to **[alamance-nc.com/elections/](http://alamance-nc.com/elections/)** If a voter goes to a different polling location, they can cast a provisional ballot.

## To read more of ENN's coverage:

FOR MORE COVERAGE ON THE MIDTERM ELECTION, SCAN THIS CODE.  
ENN WILL AIR A SPECIAL ELECTION BROADCAST ON ELON LOCAL NEWS AT 7:30 P.M. NOV. 8.

SCAN TO FIND ELON NEWS  
NETWORK'S ELECTION CENTER  
OR VISIT  
[ELONNEWSNETWORK.COM](http://ELONNEWSNETWORK.COM)



1. Open your phone camera
2. Focus on the QR code
3. Click the pop-up link

# VOTER GUIDE

**WEDNESDAY 3**  
**OCTOBER 19, 2022**

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Sample Ballot

Alamance County, North Carolina

November 8, 2022

B0002

BALLOT MARKING INSTRUCTIONS:

A. With the marking device provided or a black ball point pen, completely fill in the oval to the left of each candidate selection of your choice as shown.

B. Where authorized, you may write in a candidate by filling in the oval and writing the name on the write-in line.

C. If you tear, deface or wrongly mark this ballot, return it to request a replacement.

FEDERAL OFFICES	NC Court of Appeals Judge Seat 9 (You may vote for ONE)	DISTRICT OFFICES
<div>US Senate (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div><div><div></div>Brad A. Salmon Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Donna Stroud Republican Party</div></div>	<div>NC District Court Judge District 15 A - Seat1 (You may vote for ONE)</div>
<div><div><div></div>Matthew Hoh Green Party</div><div><div></div>Cheri Beasley Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Shannon W. Bray Libertarian Party</div><div><div></div>Ted Budd Republican Party</div><div><div></div>Write in</div></div>	<div>NC Court of Appeals Judge Seat 10 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div><div><div></div>Brad Allen Democratic Party</div></div>
<div>US House of Representatives District 4 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div>NC Court of Appeals Judge Seat 11 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div>District Attorney District 17 (You may vote for ONE)</div>
<div><div><div></div>Valerie P. Foushee Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Courtney Geels Republican Party</div></div>	<div><div><div></div>Darren Jackson Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Michael J. Stading Republican Party</div></div>	<div><div><div></div>Sean Boone Republican Party</div></div>
STATE OFFICES	NC State Senate District 25 (You may vote for ONE)	COUNTY OFFICES
<div>NC Supreme Court Associate Justice - Seat 3 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div><div><div></div>Sean C. Ewing Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Amy Scott Galey Republican Party</div></div>	<div>Board of Commissioners (You may vote for TWO)</div>
<div><div><div></div>Richard Dietz Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Lucy Inman Republican Party</div></div>	<div>NC House of Representatives District 64 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div><div><div></div>Steve Carter Republican Party</div><div><div></div>Anthony Pierce Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Craig Turner Republican Party</div></div>
<div>NC Supreme Court Associate Justice - Seat 5 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	<div><div><div></div>Ron Osborne Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Dennis Riddell Republican Party</div></div>	<div>Clerk of Superior Court (You may vote for ONE)</div>
<div><div><div></div>Sam J. Ervin IV Democratic Party</div><div><div></div>Trey Allen Republican Party</div></div>	<div>Alamance County encompasses two North Carolina House districts, 63 and 64. Depending on your address, your ballot may have District 63 listed instead. District 63 candidates will appear in order, Ricky Hurtado and Stephen Ross. You may vote for one. Elon University falls under District 64.</div>	<div><div><div></div>Meredith Tuck Edwards Republican Party</div></div>
<div>NC Court of Appeals Judge Seat 8 (You may vote for ONE)</div>	- VOTE BOTH SIDES -	<div>Sheriff (You may vote for ONE)</div>
<div><div><div></div>Julee Tate Flood Republican Party</div><div><div></div>Carolyn Jennings Thompson Democratic Party</div></div>	North Carolina	<div><div>The other side of the ballot follows the same format and includes the nonpartisan races for Alamance-Burlington Board of Education and Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor. The candidates for Alamance-Burlington Board of Education will appear, in order, Leonard Harrison*, Dan W. Ingle, Chuck Marsh, Charles Parker, Seneca Rogers and Avery Wagoner, and you may vote for three. The candidates for Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor will appear, in order, Ortha C. Hawkins, Willie Holliday, David Morrow, Richard (Ricky) Reid, Donna Vanhook and Brandy Whittaker, and you may vote for two.  *Leonard Harrison is no longer running, but his name will still appear on the ballot.</div><div>CONTINUE VOTING NEXT SIDE ➡</div></div>
		Ballot Style B0002

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ CAMPAIGNING FOR US SENATE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Miranda Ferrante | Managing Editor of elonnewsnetwork.com | @ferrantemiranda

Cheri Beasley (D)



COURTESY OF THE RALEIGH NEWS AND OBSERVER

Cheri Beasley is a Democrat running for U.S. Senate. She has spent more than two decades in the judicial system and formerly served as chief justice in the North Carolina Supreme Court from 2019 to 2020.

Beasley is competing against Republican Ted Budd, Libertarian Shannon Bray and Green Party member Matthew Hoh for a soon-to-be vacant Senate seat held by Republican Richard Burr, who is not running for reelection.

The North Carolina race is one of several in the U.S. that could affect the majority in the Senate, which is currently split 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats. Democrats control the majority through the tie-breaking vote of Vice President Kamala Harris.

According to a statement on her

campaign website, Beasley is running because she believes families like her own in North Carolina are “struggling,” and Washington D.C. can do more to help.

“I’m running for Senate to be an independent voice who stands up for North Carolina and what’s right for our state—regardless of the politics,” Beasley wrote in a statement on her campaign website. “And I will bring the same values I was raised with — hard work, integrity, and justice — to fight for every person in our state.”

Beasley and Budd held one lone debate in Raleigh Oct. 7, where Beasley expressed support for expanding health care access, codifying Roe v. Wade and reforming America’s criminal justice system.

Beasley did not respond to Elon News Network’s multiple requests for comment.

“

I’M RUNNING FOR SENATE TO BE AN INDEPENDENT VOICE WHO STANDS UP FOR NORTH CAROLINA AND WHAT’S RIGHT FOR OUR STATE—REGARDLESS OF THE POLITICS.

**CHERI BEASLEY**  
CANDIDATE FOR US SENATE

Ted Budd (R)



COURTESY OF THE RALEIGH NEWS AND OBSERVER

Ted Budd is a Republican running for U.S. Senate. He has served as the U.S. representative for North Carolina’s 13th Congressional District since 2017, which covers the north-central part of the state including Alamance County.

Budd is running against Democrat Cheri Beasley, Libertarian Shannon Bray and Green Party member Matthew Hoh for a soon-to-be vacant Senate seat held by Republican Richard Burr, who is not running for reelection.

Budd faced solid competition in primary elections but received endorsements from former President Donald Trump, Senator Ted Cruz and the conservative super PAC Club for Growth.

According to Budd’s website, he is running for Senate to represent everyday families.

“I am gravely concerned about our

country’s future, because North Carolina families, our values, and our jobs are under attack every day in Washington,” Budd wrote in a statement on his campaign website.

Budd was raised and currently lives on a farm in Davie County with his wife and three children. Budd is also a small business owner. Budd is the owner of ProShots gun store and shooting range.

In Budd and Beasley’s lone Oct. 7 debate, Budd emphasized his opposition to abortion —as a representative, he recently cosponsored a bill making abortion illegal after 15 weeks, except in cases of rape or incest — his support for securing the U.S.-Mexico border and defense of the Second Amendment.

Budd did not respond to Elon News Network’s multiple requests for comment.

“

I AM GRAVELY CONCERNED ABOUT OUR COUNTRY’S FUTURE, BECAUSE NORTH CAROLINA FAMILIES, OUR VALUES, AND OUR JOBS ARE UNDER ATTACK EVERY DAY IN WASHINGTON.

**TED BUDD**  
CANDIDATE FOR US SENATE

★ ★ ★ CAMPAIGNING FOR US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ★ ★ ★

Valerie Foushee (D)



COURTESY OF VALERIE FOUSHEE

**Betsy Schlehuber**  
Elon News Network | @betsyschlehuber

North Carolina State Senator Valerie Foushee is running for the U.S. House of Representatives in District 4 as a Democrat and was previously elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives in 2013. She was appointed to the North Carolina Senate later that year where she still serves now.

Foushee said growing up in poverty in Chapel Hill, her parents made sure she understood the value of education.

Foushee graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2008, started out working at the Chapel Hill Police Department and was appointed to serve on the Coalition for Battered Women in Orange County. When her two sons were enrolled in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, she said she became invested in how education

in the public sector could be improved. Foushee ran for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School Board in 1997 after receiving encouragement from her peers and won.

“My goal was always about public service and giving back to the community,” Foushee said. “I grew up understanding and believing that to whom much is given, much is required.”

Education became one of Foushee’s main platforms and, if elected to the House, she said she would prioritize making public education accessible to everyone, regardless of zip code, and work to address the teacher shortage by raising their salaries, putting less pressures on them and training them better.

If elected to the House, Foushee said she would work to protect democracy to avoid another conflict like the Jan. 6 insurrection. She would do this by voting “yes” on the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. This act would restore and strengthen parts of the

Voting Rights Act of 1965, such as making districts get federal permission before changing their voting laws.

“I think that we should be working to ensure that every eligible voter gets the opportunity to vote and that every vote counts,” Foushee said. “We should all be able to exercise that right without fear or intimidation.”

To accomplish these goals in the House, Foushee emphasized working across party lines to ensure that the government can provide for everyone when necessary.

“It’s not about what I can do because certainly I can’t do anything alone. ... Even when we don’t share the same opinion on things at the beginning, I do think that as we talk about what’s best for the people whom we serve, there are points of intersection,” Foushee said. “My willingness to do that is what I have used as a member of the General Assembly in the minority for 10 years.”

Courtney Geels (R)



KYRA O’CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Avery Sloan**  
Politics Director | @AveryLSloan

Courtney Geels said as someone who has never been a politician before, running in the primary elections was intimidating because there are so many polarizing topics that could irritate people before a conversation has begun. Geels said as a nurse, she knows how to talk to different kinds of people, and she has employed this same skill while campaigning.

“Nursing is actually really similar because all patients are going to be very different, and just learning how to talk to people from their perspective rather than my perspective,” Geels said.

Geels is a Republican running for the U.S. House of Representatives representing District 4. She said after the federal government instituted a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for frontline essential health care

workers, she was moved to go into politics to represent not only herself as a nurse, but also her parents, who are respiratory therapists.

“Maybe six months before that, they’re being praised for, ‘You’re putting your life on the line, thank you for going to work, thank you for risking your lives, thank you for saving all these people,’” Geels said. “Six months later, the federal government decides, ‘Oh, we’re going to force this, ... thank you for killing yourselves for the past six months at 60 years old. You’re almost about to retire, but guess what, we’re going to fire you if you don’t comply on this.’”

Geels also said she felt misled by rhetoric surrounding the vaccine. She said the vaccine was advertised as a way to prevent infection, but in reality, it is more effective at protecting infected people from getting seriously ill.

“The rhetoric around the vaccine from

the rollout to about six months in when they started mandating, it was that we’re going to protect the patients, we’re going to protect the vulnerable, and really that rhetoric was related to the underlying premise that taking a vaccine helps other people,” Geels said.

Geels said she has traditionally conservative opinions. As someone who supports interpreting the Constitution exactly as it was written, one of Geels’ platforms is protecting the Second Amendment.

Geels said that while she personally feels better, as a woman, being able to protect herself with a gun, that isn’t the main reason she believes protecting the Second Amendment is important.

“It was really an additional checks and balance on the federal government,” Geels said. “When it comes to power, I think when you give people too much power, they abuse it, and that’s just a natural human reaction.”



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ CAMPAIGNING FOR NC SENATE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Avery Sloan | Politics Director | @AveryLSloan

Sean Ewing (D)



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sean Ewing, current member of Mebane’s City Council, said that running for North Carolina State Senate is the right thing to do. Between his working relationship with other legislators and personal record getting bills passed in his position, he believes he is the right person to be a voice for people.

Ewing is a Democrat running for North Carolina State Senate District 25. He said as a Mebane councilman, he has not only learned how government works, but also how to work across different councils to help serve people both within his district and outside of it.

“If someone has, let’s say a Mebane address, but they’re actually out of city limits, ... that means I need to work with the county elected officials and the county government to help resolve the issue for the person or point the person towards the county commissioners,” Ewing said. “Same thing with our surrounding sister cities and towns — so Haw River, Graham, Burlington,

Green Level.”

Health care is one of Ewing’s top issues, and he said that, if elected, he wants to expand Medicaid eligibility — as North Carolina is one of only 12 states which have not adopted the expansion.

“There’s a real, real legitimate opportunity right now to get Medicaid expansion passed in the North Carolina General Assembly,” Ewing said. “I hope we can lean into that as much as possible and find common ground with everyone to get that passed.”

Ewing also said, while he identifies as socially liberal, a main priority for him is to find common ground with everyone involved. This includes not being afraid to work across the aisle. He also said his own Democratic party affiliation does not determine everything about his own campaign.

Ewing, an electrical engineer by trade, said protecting the environment and clean energy are also significant platforms for him.

“I have a really strong focus in electric vehicles as well as clean technologies,” Ewing said. “Not only just helping out the environment, but also, how can we bring new jobs for these green technologies to North Carolina? We have a novel opportunity to invest in solar, ... and many other clean green and clean technologies to quote-unquote fuel our electric vehicles.”

Ewing said continuing to grow the economy is crucial to his campaign and has been through his time on city council as well. He said Mebane has done a good job growing its economy and bringing jobs to the area, and he wants to continue that growth and ensure new companies come to the area, resulting in more jobs.

“How do we make sure that the people that have been here for generations are able to get into these jobs?” Ewing said. “I want to make sure that the people that are already here have a great opportunity to get better paying jobs.”

Amy Galey (R)



COURTESY OF AMY GALEY

Amy Galey said she is proud to be from Alamance County and works hard to represent her district as a senator in the North Carolina General Assembly. Galey is a Republican currently running for reelection and said she has learned a lot through serving in this role.

One of Galey’s biggest concerns currently is the economy and creating jobs for more North Carolinians. She said this is something that she is concerned about, even though within Alamance County, the unemployment rate has decreased.

“Many experts predict that we are headed into a recession, and it’s important that we have good financial stewardship at the state level,” Galey said.

Galey said that something she has already been a part of was co-sponsoring a bill that helps incarcerated women, called the Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act,

which particularly addresses the needs of pregnant women.

“I really focus in my work on that bill on the harm being done to the unborn baby as a result of the mother’s incarceration,” Galey said. “She is under enormous stress because she’s being shackled or otherwise put under a lot of psychological stress. That has a big impact on that baby. And I thought was a really great way to address some important pro-life issues for a very vulnerable population.”

Galey said while she knows she is unable to appeal to all of her constituents, she feels it’s important to her that she still represents all of them.

“It’s my job to help them when they interact with state government, to make sure that they’re being treated fairly and that they’re getting whatever services that they’re entitled to, they get what they’re

supposed to from state government,” Galey said. “So constituent services and representing all the people is incredibly important to me.”

“

MANY EXPERTS PREDICT THAT WE ARE HEADED INTO A RECESSION, AND IT’S IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE GOOD FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AT THE STATE LEVEL.

AMY GALEY  
CANDIDATE FOR NC SENATE

★ ★ ★ CAMPAIGNING FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY SHERIFF ★ ★ ★

Avery Sloan | Politics Director | @AveryLSloan

Kelly White (D)



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kelly White comes to the Alamance County sheriff race with over 20 years of experience serving in law enforcement. White said he is running because it’s time for change in the county, including the role of sheriff.

“Just time for a new administration to work to unify the law enforcement community to increase transparency in the public, and the public trust in Alamance County,” White said in a previous interview with Elon News Network.

White plans on bringing Alamance County together and building back trust in the community through law enforcement. He said his plans are to meet people where they are at and understand what community members are looking for in a new sheriff.

“There’s so much that has happened across the nation that has caused people to distance themselves from law enforcement, and also in supporting law enforcement

as well,” White said. “Here in Alamance County, there’ve been a few incidents that drove a wedge between community members and law enforcement. ... In order to move Alamance County forward, we have to have the community’s support.”

White also plans on strengthening Alamance County’s Stepping Up Initiative, a mission organized to help reduce the amount of people with mental illnesses in the criminal justice system. This program provides services and support for people with mental illnesses and decreases arrests for small offenses.

White said he recognizes the mental health issues on college campuses, and he hopes to improve the relationship between law enforcement and students through mental health support. He said he plans on doing this through having trust talks, which he said includes sitting down with students and setting expectations for their

expectations of law enforcement.

“The key is communicating with the community, with the Elon University students, their concerns, and how we can modify what we were doing to make it apply to what needs to work, or how we can modify what we’re currently doing and make it better,” White said.

White currently serves as Winston-Salem University’s deputy chief of police and said his experience in law enforcement has shaped his values.

White said he plans on bridging gaps within Alamance County between people who have different preconceptions of law enforcement by working with local law enforcement agencies and hearing from residents to understand what they are looking for.

“I call my office the people’s office,” White said. “Not so much the sheriff’s office.”

Terry Johnson (R)



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

After 20 years of serving as the Alamance County’s sheriff, Terry Johnson is running for reelection in the county’s first contested sheriff race in 12 years.

Johnson has 50 years of experience in law enforcement, but his first term for the Alamance County sheriff began in 2002 when he said he wasn’t pleased with the level of training for law enforcers.

This year, his main goals are to make Alamance County safer and to improve diversity.

Johnson gained national attention in 2020 during the Graham protests surrounding the 30 foot tall monument of a confederate soldier located in front of Graham’s courthouse. People were protesting for the removal of the confederate monument, following national protests after the death of George Floyd. Making national news at the time, Johnson said he didn’t think his office’s response of

pepper-spraying and arresting protesters was wrong.

“We handled everything the way it should have been handled,” Johnson said. “I also believe, with the First Amendment, if they want to use that they have a right to, but you don’t have a right to throw water bottles at opposing opponents. You don’t have a right to be running gasoline generators. ... We are going to enforce the law, period.”

Despite the negative media attention Johnson said he received, what matters to him more are the opinions of people who work with him and know him. Johnson also said those who know him understand that he values diversity within his office and is working to improve diversity of gender, race and educational background in the Sheriff’s Department.

If he is reelected, Johnson said he plans on increasing mental health resources

for the county. Mental health became a personal story for him when, during the first call he received as a deputy in 1972, Johnson watched a man who had been in and out of a psychiatric hospital commit suicide in front of him.

Today, Johnson said he is now an advocate for better mental health resources because of this experience. Johnson plans on creating a mental health diversion center, so people who are continually arrested for low-level crimes have another option. The goal of the mental health center is to get people back on track, rather than focus on punishment. He said he plans on having this open in one year. Johnson said that while these are his goals for reelection, his main priority is to serve everyone across party lines.

“I’m a Republican, but when I win sheriff, I’m everybody’s sheriff,” Johnson said. “Politics should not come involved.”



# CAMPAIGNING FOR NC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 63:

Avery Sloan | Politics Director | @AveryLSloan

## Ricky Hurtado (D)



GRAYSEN SHIRLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ricky Hurtado grew up living paycheck to paycheck in a family that worked multiple jobs. Hurtado said that having this background has influenced him, as an educator and a politician, to keep working class families in the forefront of his mind.

Hurtado currently serves as a North Carolina Representative for District 63 and is running for reelection as a Democrat. Hurtado said he prioritizes making life more affordable for working class families and increasing education opportunities for children, specifically focusing on public education issues — specifically referencing the 1997 North Carolina Supreme Court case, *Leandro v. the state of North Carolina*, which ruled that right to an education is within the state constitution.

“Previously to 2020, we did not have a legislator from Alamance County that truly championed public education and understood the needs of working families,” Hurtado said. “And so I’m proud to be one of the primary

sponsors to several bills to fully fund our public schools, which means having enough educators to serve the needs and that’s in direct response to *Leandro’s* case in North Carolina, which said that North Carolina is not meeting their constitutional duty to provide a sound basic education for every child.”

Another issue that Hurtado said goes hand in hand with working with working class families is affordable housing. Championing this, alongside affordable childcare, is something he said is important.

“Rents are soaring, housing prices are through the roof,” Hurtado said. “And I want to make sure that local governments have a partnership with the state government for us to invest in affordable housing because it makes sense for North Carolina economically speaking.”

Throughout his time in office, Hurtado said he has been able to appeal to both Democrats and Republicans by being available to the

community and working towards solutions instead of simply thinking about politics.

“A lot of folks in the community have my cell phone number, they know they can reach me through multiple emails,” Hurtado said. “One of the biggest things I heard in the last election was that so many people in our county felt like they had no voice, no representation due to previous legislators, a lack of connection to the community.”

Hurtado said with his experience serving in the legislature, he understands what it takes to create change. He said he gets calls from students and parents who have concerns about the public school system, and being in a position of power pushes him to serve his community even more.

“Staying close to the ground keeps you humble and allows you to really see and feel what the community is feeling,” Hurtado said. “Which creates that much more urgency for what we’re doing in Raleigh every day.”

## Stephen Ross (R)



COURTESY OF STEPHEN ROSS

Stephen Ross is a Republican running for the North Carolina House of Representatives District 63. After losing the same position by only 1% of the vote in 2020, Ross, an Alamance County native, is running again.

According to Ross’ website, he has previously served as a Burlington city council member, mayor of Burlington, and was the state representative for House District 63 in Alamance County from 2013 to 2020.

One of Ross’ main platforms is the economy and creating more jobs. Ross wrote on his website that after he served in the state legislature, North Carolina is now widely recognized for their job growth.

“We enacted job-creating regulatory reform, passed historic tax relief, rolled back government red tape, and balanced the state budget,” Ross wrote on his website. “These reforms led to an all-time low in unemployment, over 500,000 new jobs

created, and more money in the pockets of hard-working families.”

Ross wrote in terms of education, while serving in the state legislature, he focused on reducing class sizes, prioritizing early education and teacher salary. He is also against the idea of teaching critical race theory in schools and wrote, “schools are for learning, not for indoctrination.”

He also wrote that he is against “activist judges,” and he supports interpreting the constitution exactly as it was written.

“The greatest danger to our freedom, including our Second Amendment right to bear arms, is a government that disregards the Constitution,” Ross wrote. “I will vigorously defend the Second Amendment, the right to life — including the life of the unborn — liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Ross did not respond to Elon News Network’s multiple attempts to interview.

“

WE ENACTED JOB-CREATING REGULATORY REFORM, PASSED HISTORIC TAX RELIEF, ROLLED BACK GOVERNMENT RED TAPE, AND BALANCED THE STATE BUDGET.

STEPHEN ROSS  
CANDIDATE FOR NC HOUSE

# CAMPAIGNING FOR NC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 64:

## Ron Osborne (D)



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Nyah Phengsittih

Elon News Network | @nyahphengsittih

Ron Osborne said he always considered himself a behind-the-scenes person when it comes to politics — from assisting with campaigns, to attending hearings and voting in elections. But come this fall, he’ll be in a different position when he sees his name on the election ballot.

The first-time candidate will run against incumbent Dennis Riddell for NC House of Representative representing District 64 in the November general election. But what makes Osborne different in this race, he said, is not necessarily the fact that it’s his first election, but rather that he’s representing more than one political stance.

“From a fiscal standpoint, I’m pretty conservative. From a social standpoint, I’m liberal. To me, that’s a nice combination,”

Osborne said. “We need to be forward looking and make sure everybody has a seat at the table, regardless of your background.”

Before declaring his spot in the race, he spent 35 years with Duke Energy and retired in 2019 as the Emergency Preparedness Manager for the Carolinas. He’s now running his homestead farm in Alamance County, working with Quaker House Fayetteville.

His campaign tackles Medicaid expansion, rural broadband issues and the need for funding in education and sustainable energy. He’s fighting for fair maps, too — an issue he’s been advocating for since his involvement in speaking in front of the North Carolina General Assembly Committee on Redistricting last fall.

Osborne also recognizes Second Amendment rights in his campaign. As a gun owner, he believes that “personal freedom and personal responsibility go hand-in-hand,” but that also comes with universal background checks, red flag

laws, mandatory waiting periods and other reasonable measures to handle gun safety in the U.S.

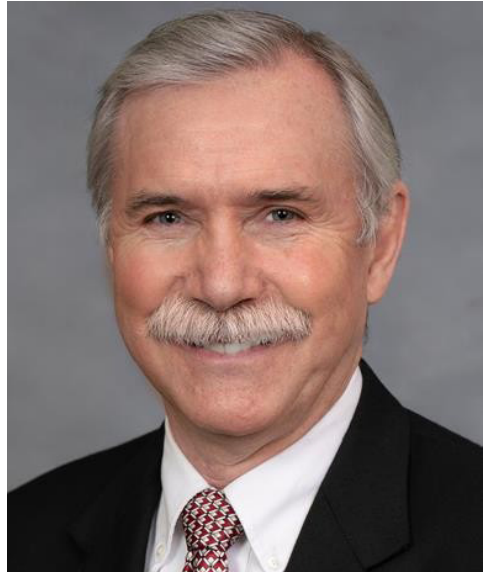
Each of his values and issues acknowledges his life growing up in North Carolina — a southern Guilford County native, he grew up on a dirt road spending summers priming tobacco and winters splitting firewood.

“I have an appreciation for what it’s like to live out where you’ve got to fend for yourself,” Osborne said. “If we could realize that we have so much more in common than we have differences and work for that commonality, it would be a much better world.”

This fall, Osborne hopes voters consider the future generations today. He said he wants this election to lead to a better, cleaner future, even when it’s unclear what it will look like.

“They’re the ones who are going to have to live in this warmer, more stormy world,” Osborne said. “We shouldn’t do nothing because we can’t do everything.”

## Dennis Riddell (R)



COURTESY OF DENNIS RIDDELL

Avery Sloan

Politics Director | @AveryLSloan

Dennis Riddell decided in 2012 to run for the North Carolina House of Representatives because as a father, he said he was concerned for the direction the state was headed. Since then, Riddell has served in the state legislature and said one of the most important things he has done is helped maintain a balanced budget while reducing taxes.

This is in line with what Riddell said was one of his biggest concerns for the state — North Carolina’s high tax rate and spending.

“We are the second highest tax state in the entire southeast,” Riddell said. “Nationally, a concern was the national debt and runaway spending. Runaway spending leads to large deficits, deficits lead to the national debt that your generation will end up paying off.”

As a part of his fiscal policy, Riddell said

he implements evidence-based spending as a measure to spend less and spend more effectively. Riddell said this method of spending was created by the Pew Foundation and is something he believes in.

“It’s trying to implement a more analysis, data analytics, evidence-based process upon which to build a budget instead of giving money to a program because we’ve done it for the last umpteen years,” Riddell said.

Regarding gun violence after the mass school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, Riddell said he was moved, as was any person with a heart. He also said because he and his family live in a rural area, he would not feel safe without knowing he had protected access to a firearm. He said these factors combined have led him to his platform of focusing on what leads to mass shootings, and what mass shooters have in common.

“Most of them seem to be young white men who come from a dysfunctional family where there is no solid or consistent parental

influence,” Riddell said. “Our families are really your basic unit of government. In your family, you learn to share, you learn to be patient. ... And I think if we focused on that, as much as we have, say, the opioid crisis, I think we would find solutions where they’ve always been, which is to keep our families intact, healthy, safe, environment in which children can grow up.”

Riddell feels he has been working to help improve North Carolina’s economy, and he hopes to have the opportunity to continue doing so.

“Being able to have represented Alamance County, part of Alamance County, for what will be 10 years now in the legislature has been one of the best opportunities I’ve had in this life,” Riddell said. “In these 10 years, we’ve changed North Carolina’s economy. When I got there, we were barely scratching along, making ends meet. We reduced taxes, we reduced regulations. We got North Carolina’s economy moving again.”



★ CAMPAIGNING FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY COMMISSIONER ★

CRAIG TURNER (R)



EVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Annemarie Bonner  
Elon News Network | @ABonnerNews

Local attorney Craig Turner is putting his name on the ballot for Alamance County Board of Commissioners. The Alamance County native is running for reelection as a Republican.

Turner started his term in February 2021 and is hoping to be elected and serve four more. He said he wants to increase teacher salaries and provide more resources for substance abuse, with a long-term goal to create more accessible treatment centers in Alamance County for those suffering from addiction to go.

“You either divert them from the jail into long-term care or you divert them from the emergency room to long-term care,” Turner said. “We’re working with health professionals here in the county to create a space, a building really close to the hospital that will allow mental health, substance abuse folks to receive

care and also connect with long-term care.”

Another component of Turner’s reelection campaign is to continue to increase funding for law enforcement. In 2021, the current board increased funding for Alamance County Sheriff’s Office by 5%.

However, three departments under the law enforcement category did not see an increase in funding: Emergency Medical Services, detention officers and the Department of Social Services. Turner said he would like to see funds distributed more evenly.

Turner was raised in Alamance County. He graduated from the Naval Academy and served as an officer in the U.S. Navy from 1998 to 2001. Afterward, he came back to North Carolina to get his law degree from Elon University.

He said even though he has a close connection with Elon, he is not just looking to reach Elon students.

“The things that we’ve done on the commission over the past two years

benefits all of Alamance County,” he said. “My campaign, the message is something that everybody would want to accept.”

Among Turner’s other platforms are expanding ROTC programs in local public schools and backing our farmers and protecting agriculture.

Turner said one of the biggest problems he has seen in Alamance County is a lack of retention in various departments, including schools and law enforcement. He said his hope is that with increased funding and reduced taxes, that problem will dissipate.

“That’s important for the county to have a competitive tax rate with respect to the counties that are around it, that encourages economic development, allows for businesses to keep more of what they earn and also individuals,” he said. “That encourages job growth in the county. So that’s been a good thing that we’ve done. We’ve also focused on retaining and recruiting quality people to serve the county.”

ANTHONY PIERCE (D)



EVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Michael Leung  
Elon News Network

Anthony Pierce is running for the position of Alamance County commissioner in the Nov. 8 midterm elections. He once ran for the position in 2020 as a first-time candidate, and he is running again as the only Democrat against Republican candidates — Craig Turner and Steve Carter — for a seat on the all-Republican board.

Pierce is a North Carolinian native, growing up in Durham for most of his childhood. Currently, Pierce works on the Alamance Planning Board and Emergency Management Committee.

Pierce said there is a need for leaders that can relate to the citizens they serve. He said he does not believe the current board of commissioners takes the time to truly invest in understanding what are the issues all across the county, leading some residents to feel they are not being heard. Pierce said his election as county commissioner would benefit Alamance County, because his

experience in public service will bring new insight to the board.

“It starts with leaders who care, and can be the voice and the change the county really needs,” Pierce said.

Should he be elected, Pierce aims to tackle Alamance County’s “competitive” education system, as he said the education system is the foundation of Alamance’s Community, but there are also large disparities in the quality of education between schools. The Board of Commissioners is responsible for setting the county’s budget each year, which includes determining how much funding to provide to local public schools. Pierce believes the solution to education disparities is relocating resources from tax and sales dollars toward education.

“Our kids and teachers have been underserved and operating in less-than-ideal conditions far too long and we need to fully fund our school system so that our kids can learn in environments that are conducive to learning and in a place that they feel proud of,” Pierce said.

Pierce said he also believes Biden’s policy

to waive student loans would help many college students in Alamance, but his main plan is to focus on the public school district so students can learn in an environment they can truly be proud of.

Another platform, Pierce said, is to make sure Alamance County residents have access to health resources, no matter where they are in the county. The Board of Commissioners approves the budgets for local health agencies and helps promote public health in the county. Pierce said he would like to further fund Alamance’s first responders and establish more partnerships with the overall health care system in Alamance County.

He believes this will not only make health care more accessible to people in more rural areas of Alamance county, but could also possibly lower the cost of health care.

“We can explore incentives perhaps that can lower the cost of health care for Alamance County residents,” Pierce said. But that would be a conversation that would involve all of them.”

STEVE CARTER (R)



COURTESY OF STEVE CARTER

Michael Leung  
Elon News Network

Steve Carter, a Republican hoping to be reelected as an Alamance County Commissioner, was first elected to the county commissioners in 2018 and reelected once more in 2020.

Before being elected to a seat on the Alamance Board of Commissioners, Carter spent 35 years working as a commercial banking manager. He also organized and led a local tea party group, Alamance Conservative, in 2010, which encompassed volunteers from Alamance and other local counties.

Now, Carter acts as the vice chair for the Board of Commissioners, overseeing county activities and working to ensure that citizens’ concerns are met, federal and state requirements are fulfilled and county operations run smoothly.

According to Carter, one of his largest concerns is school safety within Alamance County. The Board of Commissioners

is responsible for managing the county budget each year, including how much funding to provide public schools. It is also responsible for establishing and enacting ordinances administered by the county manager and staff.

This year, he and the board placed a school resource officer in every school in the county, raised the sheriff’s pay scale and devised a program to help with staff recruitment for Alamance’s detention center. He also said he raised the county’s teacher supplement pay to the 10th highest in the state in order to obtain and keep teachers for Alamance schools.

A main issue Carter is currently focusing on is fiscal responsibility and transparency in the budget process. Carter believes that elected officials should have knowledge of financial affairs and be able to manage public finances responsibly. However, Carter said the employment market is very competitive, making it difficult to both provide for citizens and lower taxes at the same time.

“This is going to be an issue,

compensation for all departments, for the foreseeable future,” Carter wrote in an email to Elon News Network.

The Board of Commissioners do not have the power to regulate state or federal laws, but they can express their opinions if they cause a moral issue. Carter said he has concern regarding President Joe Biden’s policy to waive student loans, for example, as he feels this will hamper Alamance County. As a former banker, Carter said he feels that because of Biden’s policy, current tax payers will have to pay more to compensate for the money lender’s loans.

“We will have people who have not borrowed the money, being taxed to pay the debt for those who have,” Carter wrote. “That just doesn’t sound right.”

Carter said as a commissioner, his job is to represent the entire county.

“It doesn’t make any difference to me what political party you prefer, what religion, race or personal preference you have in life, if you need my help I will try to find a solution,” Carter wrote.





★ ★ ★ Campaigning for ABSS Board of Education ★ ★ ★

Seneca Rogers



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Kyra O'Connor**  
Executive Director | @KO\_reports

Seneca Rogers ran for the Alamance-Burlington School System Board of Education in 2020, when the world was experiencing the height of the global pandemic, and much of his campaign took place on Zoom. Two years later, Rogers said he is ready for round two.

Since his last run for school board, he has talked to a lot of students, parents, teachers and community groups within Alamance County to learn more about the challenges facing education in the district.

“I’ve always been a person who advocates for public education, it’s very important to me,” Rogers said. “Our next generation is important to me, and how can we make things better for them, but also have a better impact on what education looks like for them going forward.”

Rogers said he appreciates the work Elon University does to bring teachers to Alamance

County and would love to see partnerships with other universities, such as North Carolina A&T, take shape in Alamance County as well.

“As we see everywhere, there is the shortage in teachers, but also a lot of teachers feel like there’s a shortage in the respect that they receive for their position,” Rogers said.

While ABSS has begun giving new teachers a signing bonus, Rogers said he would like to look into retention bonuses, as well.

“We want to keep a lot of our teachers with us and not lose them to neighboring counties,” Rogers said. “Sitting down with our actual teachers and talking to them about what does taking care of you look like, so we can make sure that they’re heard, to where their voices can have a true impact on what we do.”

Between taking classes at the United Citizens Police Academy, talking with school resource officers and guidance counselors, Rogers said he wants to look at school safety from a holistic perspective: tackling both structural safety of schools and the intangible elements of safety,

such as mental wellbeing.

Rogers said he understands that many Elon University students who are heading to the polls may not feel like they have much of a stake in the ABSS school board candidates. But he hopes students remember they are part of the community the ABSS school board is part of.

“You are here, and truly us here in Alamance County want the students and their great talent and what they’re learning here at Elon to stay here,” Rogers said. “If those great talents can stay here in Alamance County, who knows what kind of jobs and opportunities can be created by what our students here at Elon bring to Alamance County?”

Ahead of midterm elections, Rogers said he hopes citizens remember that because the ABSS school board election is nonpartisan, his campaign is not about a political agenda.

“Our students and our schools shouldn’t be a battleground for political fights,” Rogers said. “They need to just be a place where everybody is working for the best of our students.”

Charles Parker



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Ryan Kupperman**  
Elon News Network | @ryandkupp

As a North Carolina native, husband of 23 years, father to three children and scientist and laboratory director at Duke University, Charles Parker said he is running for the Alamance-Burlington School System’s Board of Education and aims to enhance school safety, improve communication and transparency from schools to the community, recruit and retain teachers and address learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It just felt like there was no urgency on the board when it was doing a lot of damage for kids,” Parker said. “I’m really trained to look at data and make decisions based on it as a scientist, and so I feel like I could add something there because if you’re not trained in that area, it’s hard to get a report from an expert and translate that into policy.”

In terms of school safety, Parker said that although ABSS has established one school resource officer for each school, it utilized single year and grant funds instead of incorporating

the expense on the continuation budget so that SROs can be funded each year.

Parker also said he believes there can be a lot more done to secure buildings. To do this, he suggested creating a safety taskforce to work with the sheriff’s office, as well as local law enforcement, to conduct school walkthroughs and assess what needs to be improved, changed and prioritized. According to Parker, this will make it easier to fix things such as windows and doors that don’t lock.

Parker said enhancing school safety will also help with teacher recruitment and retention.

“I want to help make the best education system for every student at every school in our county,” Parker said. “Making sure that the superintendent has the tools to work with principals so that our schools are safe and classrooms are orderly — and it’s a good learning environment — I think will go a long way towards keeping teachers.”

According to Parker, a lot of teachers retired, moved or simply stopped teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. While he agrees with providing teachers signing bonuses

— something he said the board is already doing — Parker also thinks ABSS should be providing recruitment bonuses to teachers who refer other teachers to ABSS schools.

For parents in the community, one of Parker’s biggest platform points is increasing communication and transparency from the school system to parents and members of the community. He also said parents should have easier access to seeing what their children are doing in the classroom.

“My sixth grader has dyslexia and it’s very slow for her to read, and sometimes I need to go along with things with her and she can’t always access assignments from home,” Parker said. “We went virtual, so all of the infrastructure is in place, but making sure that that is easily available to parents — I think is critical.”

Parker also said in the spirit of communication and transparency, the board should be publishing their meeting agendas further in advance for people who have interest in commenting or providing feedback.

“I’ve learned a lot along the way,” he said. “It’s been good to really be able to meet people all across the county getting input from folks.”

Dan Ingle



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Margaret Faust**  
Elon News Network | @MargaretFaust5

Dan Ingle wears many hats. A representative in the North Carolina General Assembly House, town of Elon chief of police, Alamance County commissioner and Elon University criminal investigator are a few of Ingle’s past positions. Now, the 69-year-old retiree is running for a seat on the Alamance Burlington School System’s board of education.

Ingle said he has a vision for the future of ABSS. He wants to refine the school system so students will be prepared for whatever comes after high school — higher education, a technical or trade school or job.

“That vision means that we are a world-class school system,” Ingle said. “That [the students] are ready to face the world and take the world on.”

Ingle’s campaign focuses on three things. The first is safety. He said he is concerned about the threat of school shooters and the mental health of students. In addition to more student resource officers in schools, Ingle proposed cameras in hallways and on the schools’ perimeters to further protect students.

“That’s our most important asset — these kids and whatever we can do to keep them safe,” Ingle said. “Whenever they are with us, we need to do that.”

Ingle’s second concern is the board’s ability to be available to parents. He feels there is a disconnect between the school system and the greater community.

The last issue Ingle wants to address is athletics. He said certain students are advantaged over others because their families have the means to be on travel teams. He wants to level the playing field by adding additional sports teams to schools.

Ingle said he has read about critical race theory and has mixed opinions.

“When the Declaration of Independence was written, it says all men are created equal. That was a lie. It was not true. And the kids need to know that,” Ingle said.

But he said he doesn’t support every aspect of the academic concept.

“As far as where I draw the line: all people of one race or not racist,” Ingle said.

Ingle is father to two ABSS teachers, father-in-law to another, grandfather to two ABSS graduates and grandfather to three current ABSS students. He said he has seen firsthand the strain the COVID-19 pandemic has had on teachers and students and wants to focused on creating and maintaining a positive work environment in the school system.

“Hey, the school board has your back,” he said. “If you have a problem, they will respond and take care of it immediately.”

Chuck Marsh



AVERY SLOAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chuck Marsh is running for ABSS Board of Education against four other candidates.

Marsh is a local radio station owner and said at the ABSS Board of Education forum Oct. 11 that it is important to work with other elected officials.

According to an article from Alamance News, Marsh agrees with Superintendent Dain Butler’s decision to ban “Gender Queer: A Memior” from Western High School’s library because of sexually-explicit content.

He said at the forum he wants members of the board to engage parents attending who make a public comment.

“When they would have a public comment. I noticed that the school board members would just unplug,” Marsh said. “I want to be the voice for parents, give you your voice back and also be an advocate for the children and focus on the children, as opposed to all of the politics that have crept into our classrooms.”

Marsh was not available for an interview.

Avery Wagoner



COURTESY OF AVERY WAGONER

Burlington resident Avery Wagoner is making his first run for public office for a seat on the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education.

Wagoner serves as vice president of wholesale marketing with Cary Oil company and has two children, both of whom graduated from Walter M. Williams High School, according to past Elon News Network coverage.

An active member of First Presbyterian in Burlington and board member for Positive Attitude Youth Center, Wagoner also has volunteer experience as a youth sports coach and with the Alamance County Special Olympics.

At an Oct. 11 candidate forum, Wagoner said ABSS is in need of creative solutions to maximize its budget, which is lower than neighboring school districts.

“We’re the 16th largest school system in the state right now,” Wagoner said. “But if you compare ourselves to the counties that touch us and our competition around us rather, we’re underperforming in that part. We can step up the plate a little bit because the teacher attrition rate and the competition for teachers is paramount to our future success.”

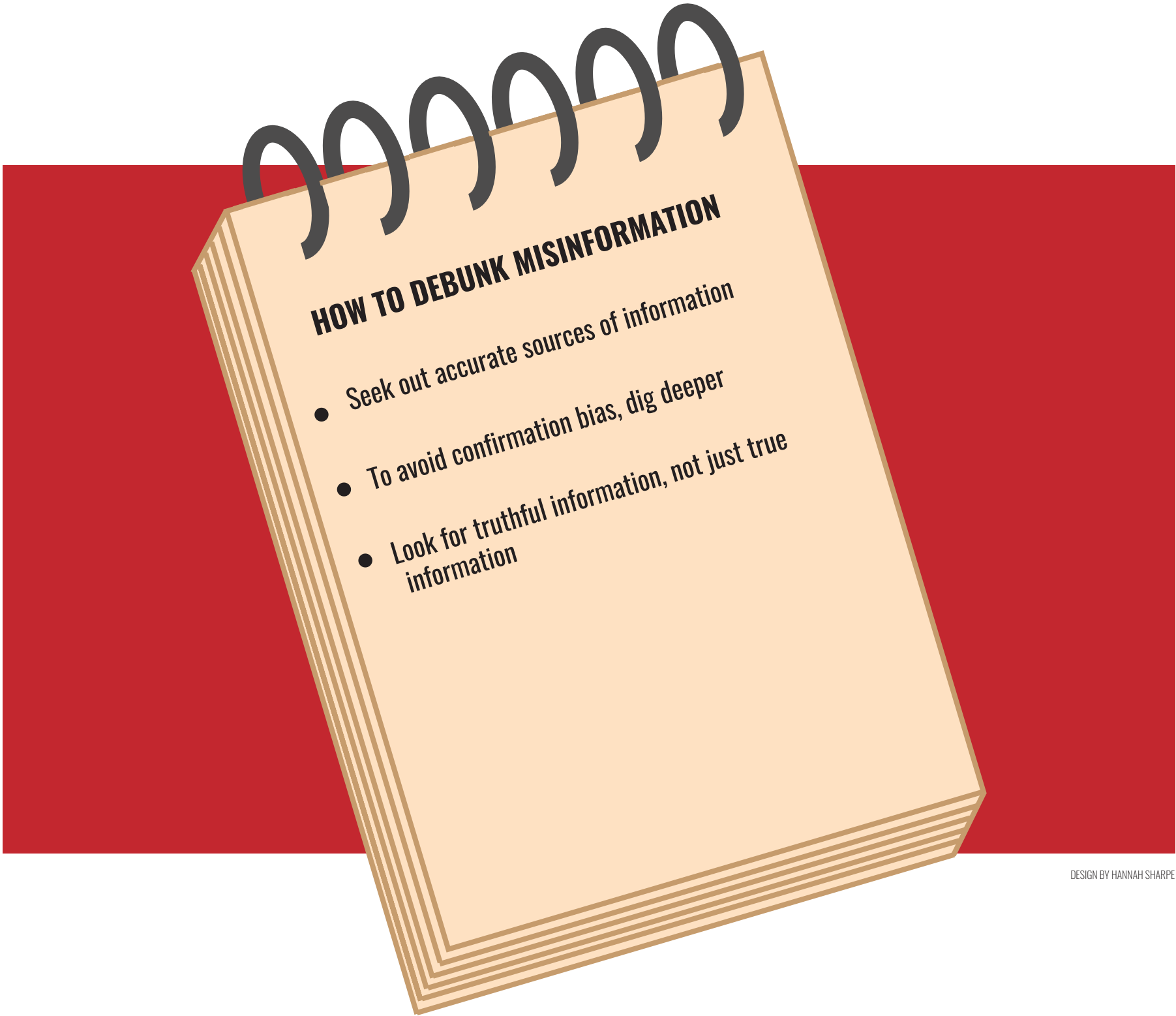
Wagoner was unable to provide comment before publication.

**Abigail Hobbs**  
Elon News Network | @Abigailhobbss

**Madalyn Howard**  
Chief Copy Editor | @madalynhoward\_



# Misinformation plagues Alamance County campaigns



DESIGN BY HANNAH SHARPE

As midterm elections near, some candidates are battling more than just political opponents

**Kyra O'Connor**  
Executive Director | @KO\_Reports

Over the midterm election cycle, Quinn Ray, Alamance County voter and town of Elon council member, has listened to campaign advertisements play on the television in his office and appear in local newspapers.

Even as a politician himself, he has never liked political ads, but Ray said this year's assortment in Alamance County feels different.

"Most elected officials know, especially when it's partisan, you're going to have a lot of people that don't like you," Ray said. "But when you flat out lie about somebody and where now these people have these preconceived notions that no matter what you do, they're not going to believe you. ... I don't know if I really like all this."

Campaign advertisements must include a legend or statement including who paid for the ad, and the content is governed through a North Carolina General Statute and enforced by the North Carolina State Board of Elections.

The 1931 statute states that it is a crime for any person to publish information they know to be false, most recently and publicly used in a court case regarding campaign ads in the 2020 election. But the protections afforded to both media and candidates under the First Amendment make fighting

misinformation an uphill battle. "Everybody's ready for election season to be over, campaign season to be over, because they hate the ads," Ray said. "People talk about it on both sides of the aisle, it just gets ugly."

## Why misinformation sells

Ricky Hurtado, incumbent candidate for NC House District 63, never stopped campaigning. Even after his win in 2020, Hurtado said he was back on the trail, delivering resources and talking to voters. While Hurtado said he is used to answering people's questions about his campaign, this year, he has spent a lot of time addressing a different election topic: misinformation.

"Our campaign has been really disappointed to see all of the misinformation, the lies and the fear mongering that has come from my opponents: Steve Ross and the Republican Party," Hurtado said. "It's actually quite disrespectful of voters to need to lie to them for a power grab as opposed to actually working on the issues that matter to our community."

Hurtado referenced two campaign ads: one that labeled him as a "paid protester," which was paid for by Steve Ross for NC House and approved by Ross, and another that portrays that he supports defunding the police, both of which are unfounded. Hurtado is one of many candidates spotlighted in opponent advertising: both Cheri Beasley and Ted Budd, candidates vying for U.S. senator, have been targeted in television ads and mailers as well.

Elon University professor of journalism Amanda Sturgill said misinformation is often attractive

to potential voters when it inspires emotion. Sturgill has studied disinformation throughout her career and wrote "Detecting Deception," a book about fighting "fake news."

"It impairs your critical thinking process a little bit," Sturgill said. "Because of that, you're more likely to kind of want to share it without thinking, was this really true?"

For Ray, the difference this election cycle is how well he personally knows Hurtado, but he said misinformation in this election cycle has not been limited to a particular candidate or party.

"I don't think this is a Republican Democrat issue, it's just a dirty side of politics," Ray said. "For me at least, this is the first time I've ever really known the person and I'm probably not the only one."

To run an impactful, successful campaign, candidates need to reinforce ideas that voters already have or disrupt the narrative of their opponent — professor of strategic communications Kathleen Stansberry said. But misinformation can be part of all of these effective strategies, Stansberry explained, especially through social media.

"That can mean speaking very highly of your own candidate, trying to explain why they are going to uphold the things that their supporters value in whatever position they're going to hold," Stansberry said. "It also can work to show that your opponent will not uphold their supporters' values in their position."

Stansberry said candidates can also point to their roles or their opponent's roles outside of politics, which tends to be compelling for

offices such as school boards or law enforcement positions.

Misinformation that aligns with a person's previously held beliefs acts like "brain candy," Stansberry said.

"Things that are faults, but confirm what people want to believe, can actually be incredibly effective, and it's very difficult to dispute misinformation," Stansberry said.

This type of information can often be difficult to disprove, even when people are confronted with evidence contradicting the false information.

"When confronted with evidence that something's not true, one would think that people are likely to change their minds. But what actually happens oftentimes is they dig their heels in, and really cling to their beliefs, and it becomes an us-versus-them," Stansberry said. "That's when it really gets difficult to change any minds or change behavior, because it becomes more about your team winning against an opponent, then it is about the best candidate."

## How to debunk misinformation

When looking for false or misleading information, Stansberry said voters should be aware of true, but not truthful, information — such as information that only tells half a story. An example Stansberry mentioned is talking about a specific event or action, but not talking about anything outside of that scope.

"This is something I see all the time in political campaigning. Information can be accurate and true, but not truthful, and ethically,

absolutely, there's issues with that," Stansberry. "But misinformation is intentionally untrue, with an intent to mislead."

For candidates trying to fight misinformation, Stansberry said the best tactics are to correct the information publicly and not to dwell on the false information.

"Rather than fighting the opponent, which ultimately can cause their supporters to dig in harder ... instead show disdain for that sort of tactic," Stansberry said. "Because that is something that can make supporters uncomfortable, rather than fighting the information or responding with negativity as well."

Sturgill said for voters, it is important to scrutinize the information they are using to inform their vote before heading to the polls by asking three questions: who is reporting the information, what are their qualifications and why does the person or entity sharing the information want voters to know this information?

"They help you set your mind back in the critical thinking brain, even if it's something that's making you emotional," Sturgill said.

Especially as Elon students get ready to vote — often for the first time in North Carolina — thinking critically about the information they see online and on social media is even more important, Sturgill said.

"It's very hard for college students to vote for a whole bunch of different reasons," Sturgill said. "But the quality of information and their ability to go out and find good information to answer their questions is a big one."





# ABORTION on the BALLOT

North Carolina and U.S. Senate candidates share differing views on abortion

Avery Sloan  
Politics Director | @AveryLSloan



The debate over abortion rights has become inseparable from this year's midterm election campaigns, with 50% U.S. voters reporting they are more motivated to vote this fall because of the U.S.

Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, according to recent polling from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Now that the power to regulate abortion access has returned to state legislatures, races in swing states such as North Carolina could have significant effects on reproductive rights across the country.

Democratic candidate for North Carolina Senate Sean Ewing said abortion is a major issue in the election across the ballot. Ewing, who currently serves on Mebane's City Council, said he is worried that if Democrats do not gain control of the North Carolina House or Senate, the right to an abortion — which is currently restricted after 20 weeks — could be further restricted.

But the abortion debate is not limited to local races and has been central to the platforms of both Ted Budd and Cheri Beasley, North Carolina's Republican and Democrat Senate candidates respectively. Budd is currently serving District 13 — which covers Alamance County — in the U.S. House of Representatives. Beasley has

most recently served as chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

On Sept. 13, Budd cosponsored national bill H.R.8814, the Protecting Pain-Capable Unborn Children from Late-Term Abortions Act, which would make abortion illegal after 15 weeks, except in cases of rape or incest. However, in order for these exceptions to be viable, the rape needs to be reported 48 hours before the abortion, and the person must either be a minor or have gotten counseling, medical treatment or received an injury as a result of the rape.

Ewing said in the district he currently serves in Mebane, most people he has interacted would not agree with having a 15 week abortion ban.

"They're very pro-abortion rights," Ewing said. "They're very pro-women's health. And we're getting more and more people moving in every day that are appalled by what's happening."

State House of Representative member Amy Galey said her stance on abortion is more nuanced. Galey, candidate for the North

Carolina Senate, said she does not campaign for a specific week limit through which an abortion ban is appropriate.

"I think that it's really unfortunate that we've fallen into camps that are labeled pro-life and pro-choice," Galey said. "My understanding is that people can choose either of those labels for themselves when they essentially agree on the same thing."

Galey said while she isn't informed enough on H.R.8814 to have a stance on the bill itself, she wants to hear from her constituents and see what people's opinions are before fully forming an opinion. She has yet to come up with a full stance on what her role as a legislator should be regarding abortion after Roe v. Wade was overturned by the United States Supreme Court over the summer, especially regarding a timeline of how many weeks abortion should be protected for.

"I think it is extremely important to consider the developments that have been achieved and our understanding of fetal development, since Roe v. Wade was decided in the early 1970s. You wouldn't want your cancer treated the same way, with the same medicine, the same approach in 1972,"

Galey said. "We should ... apply those to our understanding of when does life begin."

Ewing said he is against any idea of an abortion ban, and while the idea of a ban is not something that would come up in his current role as a councilman, abortion rights have the possibility to come up in other forms if people voiced their opinions regarding Planned Parenthood clinics in the area.

"If a clinic were to come here, I'm sure people would definitely want to voice their opinion about that," Ewing said. "So we just need to make sure that we're doing everything we can to hold on to the rights that we have right now."

Galey said her own opinions changed on abortion after becoming a mother. She said when she was in law school, one of her professors said that every law was made to either protect life or property, which she said changed her view on abortion as well.

"When I became a mother and my first child was crying inside my womb, I thought about that some more," Galey said. "And I thought, you know what, there is a point in the growth of this baby inside of me that she cries, that she became a life, that deserved the protection of the law."





# ANALYZING THE COST TO CAMPAIGN



Elon News Network compiled the most recent, available data from the Federal Election Commission, the North Carolina State Board of Elections and the Alamance County Board of Elections to assess how much money candidates raised in total contributions, individual contributions and how much candidates spent in the election so far.



**Kyra O'Connor**  
Executive Director | @KO\_Reports

## In total

**By the numbers**

In total, of the **35 candidates and 17 races** Elon News Network is covering,

**\$42,450,519.41**

have been contributed. The candidates have spent a combined total of

**\$38,626,831.80**

this election cycle so far.

## In total

**By the numbers**

13 Democrat identified candidates raised

**\$31,175,359.39**

and spent

**\$27,855,180.19**

this election cycle so far. Of the just over \$31 million raised, roughly \$27.5 million came from the U.S. Senate candidate Cheri Beasley.

## In total

**By the numbers**

16 Republican identified candidates raised

**\$11,255,166.13**

and spent

**\$10,767,058.81**

this election cycle so far.

## Cheri Beasley (D)

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**\$27,411,424.54**

The candidate with the largest total contributions is Cheri Beasley, with \$27,411,424.54. She is also the only candidate with over \$10 million contributed or spent in all of the races Elon News Network is following this election cycle.

## Charles Parker

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**\$56.78**

Charles Parker, one of five candidates for the Alamance Burlington School Systems Board of Education, spent the least amount of money this election cycle: just \$56.78.

The Federal Election Commission collects data on how much individuals donate to campaigns. Of all of the people who donated and listed Elon University as their employer, 278 donations were made through ActBlue, a non-profit organization that provides an online fundraising platform for Democratic candidates, progressive organizations and nonprofits. Donations made through ActBlue make up 93% of all donations made.





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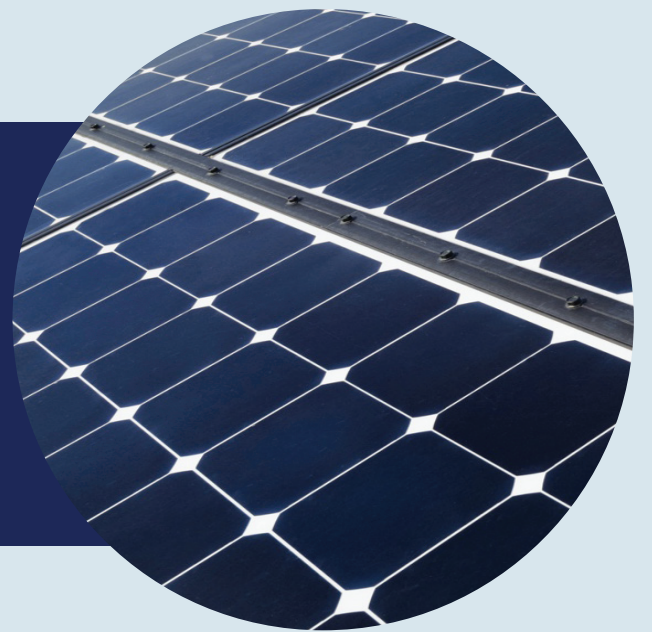
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