

ELECTION SPECIAL

Tuesday, September 15 Primary — GOP Candidates for County Sheriff

The COURIER invited candidates participating in the September 15 primary elections to provide personal information and respond to a series of questions. There was a 100-word limit on responses to our questions and no word limit on personal profile data.



Donald B. Smith (Incumbent)

AGE: 61

FAMILY INFO: Married to Jane Powell Smith for more than 37 years; Father of two children: Christopher and Cheryl; Grandfather of five beautiful grandchildren

PARTY AFFILIATION: lifelong Republican endorsed by the Republican, Conservative, and Independence parties

EDUCATION: 1969 - B.S., United States Military Academy at West Point; 1974 - Master of Science Degree in Systems Management, University of Southern California; 1979 - Graduate of the U.S. Army and Command General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS; 1986- Graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and Fellow at the National Defense University at Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

CAREER: Served as a career military officer in the United States Army, culminating as the Assistant Division Commander at the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX; Achieved rank of Brigadier General; Major staff assignments - Chief of Armor Branch and Chief of Combat Arms Division at the Army's Personnel Command in Alexandria, VA. Served as the Deputy Director of Personnel Support Policy and Services in the Office of Secretary of Defense from 1991-93; Overseas tours-combat tour of Vietnam and a six-year tour in the 8th Infantry Division (Mechanized) during the Cold War in the Federal Republic of Germany; Awards and decorations - Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster; Deputy County Executive of Putnam County from 1999-01; Elected Sheriff of Putnam County in 2001 and 2005. Serving as Sheriff of Putnam County from 2002 through the present.

Emergency Response Team consisting of specially trained deputies and police officers who can respond to any crisis.

Putnam County has the lowest crime rate of any county in New York second only to Hamilton County with a population of 5,000. Crime has been reduced in Putnam County by nearly 19%, an overall decrease in the crime rate of 21.5% from 2002 through 2008. We have cracked down on drunken driving, almost tripling the number of DWI arrests.

In conclusion, we have changed the culture of the Sheriff's Office to one of serving the people with dignity and respect and being accountable to our citizens.

How have you served the public in the past?

I have used my West Point education to provide a lifetime of service to the nation and to my country. In the military, I served in combat in Vietnam and served for six years in the Federal Republic of Germany during the Cold War.

I have always been involved in giving back to my community by serving in numerous service and philanthropic causes to include: Carmel Rotary Club,

the American Heart Association, the March of Dimes, the Mental Health Association, the American Security Council Foundation, the Westchester/Putnam Council for Boy Scouts of America, the AMBER Alert Partnership, New York Military Academy, and as an officer in the New York State Sheriffs' Association.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

My principles are based on the West Point motto: Duty, Honor, and Country. In living up to those principles, I to serve my God, my country, my family, and my community. I believe in "servant leadership." The principles we have developed for the Sheriff's Office and Correctional Facility are:

- Do the right thing in enforcing the laws to keep Putnam safe
- Do the right thing for the citizens of Putnam County
- Do the right thing for the men and women of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office and Correctional Facility.
- Mission accomplishment
- Training
- Equipping
- Families
- Morale and Esprit de Corps



Jim Borkowski

AGE: 47

FAMILY INFO: Married (Linda) for 21 years; two children (Lauren, age 19 and Matthew, age 15)

PARTY AFFILIATION (as reflected on ballot lines): Republican
EDUCATION: Bachelor of Arts degree, SUNY Albany, 1984; Juris Doctorate, Boston University, 1987

CAREER: Assistant District Attorney; Attorney; Criminal Court Judge, Town of Southeast (1998-2009).

To what extent are you optimistic about the future of Putnam County and to what extent are you pessimistic?

Putnam County has many dedicated community servants, volunteers, and just regular folks who work hard, pay their taxes, and want to raise their families in a safe community. As a father, a husband, a former judge with overwhelming law enforcement support, I can provide the leadership to make Putnam County more safe and more secure.

I am not pessimistic. I believe so strongly that we need a change of leadership at the Sheriff's Office that I stepped down as judge so that I could run for Sheriff. I am concerned that Putnam County is at a tipping point with criminal illegal aliens, especially in Brewster and Mahopac.

What is the most important quality a Sheriff must possess to manage a police force?

Leadership. The Sheriff must be a strong leader who knows the law, because you must know the law to enforce the law. The Sheriff must be willing to roll up his or her sleeves and work to get the job done; to improve morale and keep the people of Putnam safe and secure. Unfortunately, these past eight years have shown us what detached leadership can do to a department and

how it can affect public safety. I will not be a detached, absentee Sheriff. I will be an engaged, full-time Sheriff and a strong leader. After two terms of the incumbent Sheriff, it is time for a change.

Why should you be elected Sheriff?

As a prosecutor, assistant district attorney, and criminal court judge for the past 17 years I have the experience, integrity and leadership skills necessary to be Sheriff. I have 360 degree experience in law enforcement; from arrest to putting criminals in jail. I earned a Juris Doctorate in law at Boston University, studying criminal law, criminal procedure, and trial work. I know what it takes to build a criminal case, and make an arrest stick. Being Sheriff is more than street cop work. Today, an effective Sheriff needs more skills. That's why the police overwhelmingly support me. I have been endorsed by more than 58 law enforcement organizations, including the New York State Troopers PBA. Every law enforcement organization within 40 miles which has given an endorsement has endorsed me. I was the first elected official in Putnam County to call for partnering with the Federal government to deport criminal illegal aliens, and I have a plan to greatly reduce drunk driving in Putnam County.

How have you served the public in

the past?

My entire career has been focused on public service and law enforcement. Even before graduating law school, my first two legal jobs in college were internships at the Albany County Probation Department, and at the Richmond County District Attorney's Office. My first job after law school was as an Assistant District Attorney. I also served as a Special Prosecutor in Putnam County. These experiences fueled my desire to later serve as a criminal court judge for 10 years here in Putnam, where I worked closely with Putnam County law enforcement.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

Independence, integrity, and hard work. I am a fiercely independent person who will not be swayed by politics or any other special interest. Serving as a judge for the past ten years provided me the opportunity to demonstrate my integrity; founded on a deep respect for the law. That means I will always keep an open mind, constantly seeking the advice of others, before reaching a conclusion. As a lawyer and judge, I worked two jobs, and typically work 60-70 hours per week. I take minimal vacation time. I believe my principles will provide the people of Putnam with an ethical, thoughtful and strong leader as their sheriff.

Kevin McConville, of Cold Spring, is the presumptive Democratic candidate for Putnam County Sheriff.

Before the general election on November 3, the COURIER will print profiles of all the remaining candidates vying for office.

Andrew DeStefano withdrew as a Republican candidate for Sheriff on September 9, citing a "dire family emergency."

The primary elections will be held on Tuesday, September 15 from 6:00am to 9:00pm

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Candidate for Carmel Town Council in the Independence Party Primary



Mark K. Pekowsky

AGE: 46

D.O.B: April 22, 1963

PARTY AFFILIATION: Democratic, Working Families, Independence

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

M.A. Educational Administration, Pace University 2003

M.A. Music Education, City University of New York, Lehman College 1993

B.A. English Literature, University of Rochester 1985

In addition, I have worked to increase my professional expertise by attending and earning further credits from such schools as the Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA, the City University of New York Professional Music Program and the Julliard School of Music in NY. I hold NY State Certifications in English Education (Secondary School), Music Education (K-12) and Educational Administration.

CAREER DESCRIPTION: I am a professional music educator who currently teaches middle school instrumental music in the Yonkers, NY public schools. I am also a free-lance musician currently playing with the Westchester Symphonic Winds and the Sonny Carroll Big Band, among others. Additionally, I am an advocate for the arts and arts education and currently serve on the Board of Directors of the Putnam Arts Council.

Openly, honestly and with a commitment to saving us money and bringing in new sources of revenue. The key to protecting taxpayer dollars is transparency and effective oversight. As councilman, I will demand that all facets of the town budget be available to scrutiny from both elected officials and the public. I will insist that the bidding process for town contracts be as competitive as possible. Very importantly, I will work tirelessly to ensure that fairness and equal treatment are the cornerstones of all town operations. Finally, I will do my utmost to encourage the people of our town to offer insights and suggestions that take advantage of the limitless skills and knowledge they have to offer.

How do you intend to balance the interests of open space advocates with the rights of individual property owners?

We both need and want to encourage economic growth in our community. All of us appreciate the sheer physical beauty

of our town, however, so we should offer economic incentives to encourage high architectural, aesthetic, and environmental standards and minimize unchecked sprawl. We must revisit our town's Master Plan and, together, decide what kind of a town we want not just in one year but also in 5,10,15, or more years. We have to clearly delineate our vision and streamline approvals processes to give our town a reputation that it is friendly to smart, quality development.

To What extent am I optimistic or pessimistic about the future of Carmel?

I am 100 percent optimistic about this great town's future. We are truly blessed to live in this wonderful and beautiful community and I have no doubt whatsoever that whatever challenges we face, we will face them together as friends, neighbors, and colleagues. There is absolutely nothing wrong with the Town of Carmel that cannot be solved by the people of Carmel! We are limited only by our imagination.

KEY PRINCIPLES?

I believe we have a right to expect the highest ethical standards in every aspect of our government. I believe that it is the duty of our elected officials to remember that it is our money they are spending; it is not theirs to waste. I believe in open and transparent government that encourages participation by the public it serves. I believe that secrecy is the enemy of democracy. I believe in the right of citizens to become engaged in the political process. I believe that government exists to serve the people. That is why our representatives are called public servants. I believe that we do not have to sacrifice the beauty and unique qualities of our town in order to create a strong local economy or sacrifice economic growth and stability to protect our neighborhoods, open spaces and environment. I believe that the motto of our town should be, "We are all in this together. Now, together, let's get to work."

What is the most important issue facing Carmel and how will I address it?

I believe that the most important issue facing Carmel is the ever-increasing tax burden our residents and businesses are being asked to shoulder. In 2009 we face many challenges such as a declining commercial tax base, the loss of jobs, homeowners who cannot afford rising property taxes, and development that is not in harmony with our aesthetic, environmental or economic needs, yet I believe that all these issues are solvable if we can bring residents and business owners together to discuss them in a frank and honest manner. The lack of transparency and openness that has characterized our town government and the suspicion, cynicism, and apathy it has bred in our community must be changed. As Town Councilman, I will actively seek out and encourage the public to take a role in the decisions that affect us all, free of rancor and needless contentiousness, to keep taxes low while still providing the quality services that we as a community both need and expect.

How will I be a steward of the taxpayer dollar?