

The Bandera PROPHET

December 12, 2023

Will Dietrich announces for Bandera County Sheriff

My name is Will Dietrich, and I am seeking your support to serve as your next Bandera County Sheriff.

Background: I was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, and raised in Sweetwater, Texas. I am a part of a close family involved in the law. I have two sisters, one of which is an attorney, and the other is an Assistant Chief of Police. My grandfather, who raised me, retired from the Texas Department of Public Safety when I was 11. For me and my family, working with and for the law is a lifelong passion. As for me, I have over 30 years of Law Enforcement experience including 20 years in East Texas before coming to Bandera in 2012. In Bandera I served as a Deputy Marshal for a year and then as the City Marshal for 9 years. My wife Misty is my rock and shares my conscience and ethics. She has been a long-time resident of Bandera for over 29 years, and we are proud to call Bandera County our home. We have three wonderful grown children and 3 amazing grandkids. Simply said, we are residents and are tied to Bandera County and proud to be a part of Bandera. We are as invested in our community as anyone. I will continue that commitment as your Sheriff.

Qualifications:

- Texas Commission on Law Enforcement – Master Peace Officer
- Graduate – Kilgore College East Texas Police Academy – 1993 (Valedictorian)
- International Association of Police Chiefs West Point Leadership School – Graduate
- Texas Police Chief’s Association Member
- Currently undertaking Texas Certified Public Manager Program – 80% Complete

- Active Shooter Response Training, A.L.E.R.T. and F.L.E.T.C. (Federal Law Enforcement Training Center)
- State of Texas Certified Intoxilyzer Operator
- Certified Firearms Instructor
- Certified Court Security Officer
- Field Training Officer
- Stinger Spike System Instructor

Experience:

Longview Police Department – Head Warrant Officer & Supervisor overseeing staff and administrative positions. Worked cooperatively with patrol, citizen’s neighborhood watch, Drug Task Force, SWAT, and the U.S. Marshal’s Office.

Kilgore Police Department:

- Senior Officer (6 months after hiring)
- Corporal (within 2 years of hiring)
- Sergeant (within 3 years of hiring)
- Numerous awards and letters of commendation from both the Department as well as citizens.
- Nominated for Kilgore Supervisor of the Year

City of Bandera:

- Deputy Marshal (1 Year)
- City Marshal (9 Years)
- As City Marshal, we improved the Department in both size and professionalism. We improved technology, adding body cameras and vehicle computers to improve officer safety and efficiency. As the City Marshal, we improved community relations by expanding National Night Out and initiating the “Nightmare on Maple Street” Community event promoting a safe, crime-free, no-cost Halloween for thousands of Bandera County youth. During my time with the City of Bandera, I was recognized with the Wilton Crider Cowboy Preservation Award from the Bandera Chamber of Commerce in 2017 and was nominated for Bandera

Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the year in 2022. Currently, I serve on the Board of Directors for the Flying L Public Utility District.

Vision & Outlook:

Community Involvement: I am from here and have been for a long time. I understand our culture and our lifestyle and am dedicated to preserving it but allowing for growth at the same time. I live here as your neighbor. I believe in supporting a team effort with improved visibility. I want to see you and I want you to see me. It is my intent to wherever possible attend our Community Events and assist with non-law enforcement activities. I don't want to be just seen as a Sheriff, but also as an approachable neighbor. Let's meet and talk across the fence.

There are numerous agencies in and around our County that can assist with drug addiction. Our job will not change. Our job is to enforce drug laws and we will dedicate ourselves to do that. However, at the same time we will treat everyone with compassion and respect even if they are in our custody. Those same agencies can work cooperatively with the Sheriff's Department to reach our youth with education and involvement.

Service: I believe that Law Enforcement is a service job. Once I became a supervisor, I became aware that it is a job that requires building relationships in our Community. We have fostered many positive relationships in Bandera County and I will strive to build more with a true focus on proper service. I will foster an environment where I can be approachable and reachable. I will insist on the same from my team. I want to talk with people and assist them in their worst circumstances or their best. This job is about caring. In my opinion there is more to caring than paperwork. Genuine caring is being available and accessible as your Sheriff. I work with you and for you. I won't ever forget that as I work hard to give you a seasoned agency with trained, professional, and courteous Deputies.

Professionalism: The Office of the Sheriff is truly the people's office. I will never lose the understanding that I was supported and elected by you to protect and to serve you and Bandera County. I will strive to be

the Sheriff you can be proud of. A part of professionalism is understanding that we will still enforce the law but do it respectfully and be respectful of our neighbor's rights. We will strive to treat everyone, including suspects professionally and courteously.

Leadership: Leadership and Professionalism go hand-in-hand. I believe that accessibility is a strong indicator of leadership. I will be out in front, visible in your neighborhoods in full uniform in a marked patrol vehicle. I will be accessible, talking to my fellow Bandera County neighbors and yes, sometimes my being on patrol will involve traffic stops and arrests. I won't expect my deputies to perform any duties or perform any less than my best effort or theirs. The deputies will see the same thing as the Bandera County Community sees; me, on patrol with them, working with them as I will work with my neighbors. I will be a leader that leads by example, by being on the street, minimizing office time and being present at major crime scenes and activities.

Bandera County is growing. More people, more businesses and with those may come more crime. I believe our Sheriff's Department should not stand still but it should grow accordingly in both mindset and equipment to match that growth. I will be proactive on patrol when I can and will expect the same from the Deputies. I will also expect them to act and perform the duties of traffic stops, drug interdiction and deal with crime prevention proactively, not merely respond to calls. I will expect nothing from them that I don't expect of myself. I will be of service and help, and I will expect the same from the County Deputies. I will oversee more qualified deputies, better trained deputies and put them on patrol in Bandera County neighborhoods whenever possible and have them away from the desk and behind the wheel.

It is well-known that we need to provide a competitive pay structure to retain our Deputies and not lose them to better paying departments once we take the time, effort, and time to train them. You have heard the phrase "time is money". I believe this to be true and wouldn't want to see someone get 4 months of training only to take that experience elsewhere.

Transparency & Accountability:

I believe in transparency within the Sheriff's Office. We will share important information with citizens via social media, the news media and press conferences. When we are all challenged with bad situations, I feel it is important to insure that the public is notified quickly with details that can be released. We need to work together for better public safety. Making the community aware will promote cooperation between the Sheriff's Office and those we serve. We need to work together to improve our County on even supposedly small issues, such as trash and litter control. For example, we have a Bandera County ordinance that addresses this. If it's not working, let's work together with the Commissioner's Court to strengthen it and enforce it. Many have voiced their concern about returning to values that reflect allowing for growth but at the same time allow for the preservation of all that makes Bandera County what it is. This is a place welcoming of families. My approach is to make it more so with a return to values that promote that.

I understand that being your elected Sheriff also accounts for fiscal responsibility. While I push for more funds to assist in making our agency the best it can be, I will also be responsible fiscally with our funding and apply it where it can be best useful to all of us as neighbors. I will strive to manage the budget and resources to give us the most crime prevention I can. Crime prevention is our job at the Sheriff's Office, and I won't lose that focus and will entertain any suggestion or question that promotes that.

Making Bandera safe again is something that all the neighbors and residents of Bandera County strive for. Let's work together as a team with that focus in mind. This is why I am asking for your support in the March 2024 Primary.