

The Bandera PROPHEET

February 20, 2024

Candidates Q&A - Bandera County Republican Party Chair

The Bandera Prophet invited the candidates for Bandera County Republican Party Chair to participate in a Q&A. Each candidate's response is published in alphabetical order by their last name.

The questions and answers were as follows:

1. Why are you running for Bandera County Republican Chair?

Mark Miller: Embracing my republican values since the age of 21, I've felt a growing concern over the state of our country in recent years. Witnessing what I believe to be a disregard for American lives, and our core values, I could not stand idly by. As a devoted Christian, I sought guidance from God to identify where I could make a meaningful impact. After attending Bandera County Republican executive meetings and gatherings it became evident to me just how uneasy the public was. Numerous individuals have expressed their relief at my candidacy, emphasizing the urgent need for a shift.

Bandera County is a proud community with wholesome values. Seeing themselves on TV news channels and in newspapers in a negative light is not something they wish to see or hear about.

Conrad Striegl: I am Conrad Striegl, and I am running for election as the Bandera County Republican Chair. As a veteran of 27 years, two months and one day in the United States Army and fought in two wars, three peace actions with numerous engagements, I am uniquely qualified to judge the condition of this great country. I retired from the military as a Lieutenant Colonel with numerous awards. I am a second-generation legal German immigrant. My Grandfather came to our new home in the

late 1800s. My Father was born here and fought in the 4th Infantry Division during WWII.

There has been a Striegl defending this country in almost every war since we immigrated here. During both wars and the many engagements, I fought in, I was never concerned that we may lose our fight. We had swagger, we were bold, aggressive and yes fearless.

Fast forward to today. Our County, our State, our Country is crumbling. Our very existence is in jeopardy. Quite frankly I am afraid for my grandchildren and the many that are yet to be born. I am of the warrior ethos as was my father and my uncles were. I am running for election to finish the job I started to save this County, State and Country.

I will end this question with a conversation my father had with me when I graduated from Southwest Texas State University. I had just gotten married and started a lucrative job and was prepared to start my life as a husband and raise a family and be a contributing member of the great State of Texas. My father's words still ring in my mind. He said, "son there has always been a Striegl defending our new home." As the eldest son this mantel of responsibility now falls to you. It is now your responsibility to defend our adopted home with the last breath in your body. As an obedient son I put my life and family on hold and joined the Army as a Special Weapons Tech. I served until my father and all my uncles who fought in the many wars had passed.

Now I fight for this County. I fight for this State and this Country. And that's why I am running.

2. What are the roles of the county republican chair, and what qualifies you to fill those roles?

Miller: COUNTY CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Overseeing Elections: County Chairs are responsible for overseeing primary elections, candidate filing, and other local elections within their county. They play a crucial role in ensuring fair and efficient electoral processes.

2. Chairing County Executive Committee Meetings: As the leader of the local party, County Chairs preside over County Executive Committee Meetings. These meetings involve discussions, decision-making, and planning related to party activities and strategies.
3. Organizing and Leading the Local Party: County Chairs provide direction and vision for the local party. They work with other party members, volunteers, and officials to organize events, campaigns, and outreach efforts.
4. Assisting with Conventions: County Chairs may oversee or assist with precinct, county, or Senate District Conventions as required. These conventions are essential for party organization and decision-making.
5. Enforcing Laws Pertaining to County Government: County Chairs ensure that federal, state, and local laws related to county government are followed. This includes compliance with election laws, financial regulations, and other relevant statutes.
6. Mentoring and Guidance: Voters in the county look to County Chairs for guidance and mentorship. As a leader in the party, County Chairs set an example and provide support to fellow party members and candidates.

Qualifications for Office: Why I Am Prepared to Lead: As a candidate for office, I bring a wealth of experience, values, and dedication that make me well-suited for this role. Let me share with you why I believe I am qualified:

1. Clean Record: Throughout my life, I have maintained an impeccable record. I have never been charged with any crime or arrested. My commitment to integrity and responsibility is unwavering.
2. Guided by Principles: My decision-making process is rooted in two fundamental sources: the Holy Bible and the United States Constitution. These timeless guides shape my perspective and inform my actions.
3. Spiritual Guidance: When faced with important decisions, I seek divine wisdom through prayer. My faith provides clarity and strength as I navigate complex issues.

4. Loyal to My Party: For over five decades, I have consistently voted Republican. My loyalty to the party reflects my alignment with its core values and vision.
5. Leadership Skills: Having worked as a Controls Engineer at Ford Motor Company for 23 years, I possess strong organizational skills and leadership qualities. I managed multi-million-dollar budgets, demonstrating my ability to handle responsibilities effectively.
6. Transparency and Communication: I firmly believe that transparency and open communication are essential. By addressing challenges proactively, we can prevent problems before they arise.
7. Equitable Approach: Treating everyone fairly and equitably is at the heart of my interactions. I believe that trust should be extended to all until proven otherwise.
8. Sense of Humor and Approachability: People are drawn to my sense of humor and my ability to put them at ease. Effective leadership involves connecting with others on a personal level.
9. Community Service: I actively participate in community service. One of my cherished projects is laying wreaths on the graves of fallen service men and women during the “Wreaths Across America” initiative. As a member of the National Rifles Association (NRA), American Legion Post #410, and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), I am committed to honoring our heroes. Samaritan’s Purse; Shoes Boxes for Kids.
10. Memberships: My memberships include Christians United for Israel, Western Heritage Cowboy Church, Toys for Tots, Pro Life initiative, KLOVE radio, Arbor Day Foundation, NRA, American Legion, and VFW.
11. Supervisory Experience: At the Cornyval Festival in Helotes, I served as a supervisor for young women. This role allowed me to mentor and guide future leaders.

In summary, my qualifications extend beyond professional expertise—they encompass integrity, compassion, and a genuine desire to serve. I am ready to lead with honesty, transparency, and dedication.

Striegl: Simply put the Republican Party of Texas (RPT) stated tasks requires the County Chair to grow the party and to get out the vote. However, there are literally 100s of implied tasks. Those include attending as many State Republican Executive Committee meetings in Austin as possible to support the RPT, assist the RPT with training not only of Bandera County but other counties as well, fund raising for the County and the RPT, assisting the State Chair when asked, attending all state conventions no matter how far one must travel, serving on State committees when asked and of course running all elections within the county and finally acting as a deputy voter registrar. Along with many other tasks.

WHAT ARE MY QUALIFICATIONS? I served my country for 27 years. After that, I worked for the U.S. Air Force as a material developer for five years and then back to the Army as a Civilian in the homeland defense area for 10 years. Upon retirement, I worked on Congressman's Chip Roy's Veterans advisory group for two years assisting all Texas veterans. I was also the Bandera County Groundwater District Director for Pct. 1 for over four years, protecting Bandera County ground water. In my free time, I worked at the election polls for the last seven years, served as the election judge for Pct. 102 and other voting Pcts., was a Pct. chair, Secretary of the Bandera County GOP and finally the Bandera County Chair. I completely rewrote the bylaws making them a functioning document. I started a program to move GOP meetings to each voting Pct. so all voters could participate. I started a planning group that magnifies the voting effectiveness of Bandera County voters by tenfold. Finally, I made 17 trips to Austin during this last legislative session getting many child protection laws passed, helped pass five pro second amendment laws and helped defeat 250 anti 2A bills from California and was able to obtain some property tax relief and so much more. Ok, why all the trips to Austin? We do not live in a vacuum; Austin is where the laws are passed. If we want to take care of our County and our State, then we have got to fight the devil on his own ground. I don't want Satan coming to Bandera County. I want to take him on in the open so I can adjust fire, and maneuver in his house.

So, you be the judge. Do you think I am qualified? One last point. I am sure you are aware of Andrew Murr; he is your Texas House representative (53). I wrote the first censure of Murr in Bandera County and got it passed by an 80% vote at county level. That was not good enough. I pushed the county censure to the State and got him censured there by a vote of 61 for 0 against. First time in history a sitting representative received a unanimous vote to censure. He decided not to run again. You won.

3. What do you believe is working well for the Bandera County Republican Party, and how do you plan to preserve that?

Miller: I don't feel the Bandera County Republican Party is working well. Externally, the party may project unity and assure you that everything is fine within the party. However, local republicans are absent from meetings and events. Voter attendance was down in 2022. There is a clique that exists within the Bandera Republican Executive Committee. They are content with the status quo. Not all members of the Executive Committee are in the clique, but those have been ostracized. The precinct locations are having to be combined because of the lack of poll workers. I have listened to several ex-poll workers who have stated, "I just didn't want to take the abuse anymore." (Meaning they were treated badly as poll workers).

Striegl: What is working well for the Bandera County Republican Party and how do I plan to preserve it. There are so many wonderful things that your GOP is doing. Remember the RPT is a private organization, and all the members receive no pay. The Democratic party is a thinking enemy, and that's what they are our enemy. They want open borders; they support child porn in school libraries and socialism. So, we must adapt our procedures and continually adjust policy at the County, State and yes the Federal level. Two weeks ago, when we were in San Antonio at a Ken Paxton (our attorney general) event he told me that we were in a fight for our lives and that if we lose this next election this country

may cease to exist as we know it. That scared the hell out of me. There is always room for improvement. I will look at policies and procedures that are working well and update them. Those that are performing marginally, we will modify so they are effective and if required, we will implement new procedures. One such procedure I am already looking at is a split primary so only republicans are allowed to vote at the republican primary polling site. This will reduce the possibility of voter fraud and cheating. The other issue I am looking at is paper ballots and moving voting control and management back to Pct. level (currently at county level). I am sure a lot of what I am saying sounds strange to you. But I have the experience, training, and knowledge to accomplish all these tasks. The tasks I have described will reduce voter fraud. I have been asked numerous times the question “Does my vote count?” I would like to say yes. But until I can implement the previous policies and procedures, I cannot answer that question Yes or No. Finally, our outreach program to other counties and the State Republican Executive Committee is successful beyond belief. There are only a few counties that have achieved this level of success.

4. What are your biggest concerns for the Bandera County Republican Party?

Miller: The Republican party’s greatest asset lies in its dedicated residents. In Bandera County, we are fortunate to have a community of kind-hearted individuals who actively contribute to making our area a better place to live. From parade organizers and business owners to community leaders, peace officers, and volunteers, our Republicans play a vital role in keeping our county running smoothly. Their commitment is truly the cornerstone of the Republican party’s success.

Strengthening Our Local Republican Party: A Vision for Bandera County

As a candidate for the position of County Chair, I recognize the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Let me outline my vision for our local Republican Party:

1. Unity and Community Engagement:

- The lack of unity within our organization is concerning. Currently, a small clique holds sway, and community input is minimal. To address this, we will foster inclusivity and encourage active participation from all members.
- While state and national issues are crucial, we cannot neglect our local party. Building a strong foundation at the county level is essential. Only then can we effectively address broader concerns. A county chair can lead lobbying efforts and organize others to do the same, but he, himself cannot fix the border crisis, take away your property taxes or keep your children safe. He can do nothing more than you or I can do as a citizen.

2. Balancing Priorities:

- Our committee's focus on state and national matters is vital, but not at the expense of our local Bandera County Republican Party. Let's strike a balance—strengthening our local presence while remaining engaged in broader political discussions.

3. Real Challenges: Border Crisis and Property Taxes:

- The border crisis and property tax issues directly impact our community. As voters, we elect state and federal legislators to tackle these pressing concerns. Our local party should actively advocate for solutions.

4. County Chair's Role:

- As County Chairs, our primary responsibility is overseeing fair elections. We must ensure transparency, integrity, and accessibility in the electoral process.
- The County Chair serves as the leader of our local Republican Party. My role would extend beyond administrative tasks—it's about inspiring and guiding precinct chairs to engage residents, to register voters, and encourage turnout.

5. Education and Empowerment:

- My goal as County Chair is to prioritize education. We'll collaborate with high school leaders and local youth groups.

Our Juniors and Seniors need to understand the importance of voting and civic participation.

- Lets organize workshops, forums, and informational sessions to help voters navigate issues and learn about candidates. An informed electorate is essential for a thriving democracy.

6. Critical Choice in November:

- November represents a pivotal moment in American history. We face a fundamental decision: freedom or slavery. Every eligible voter must participate.
- I urge everyone to attend the polls, exercise their right to vote, and shape the future of our great nation.

Together, let's build a resilient, engaged, and informed Republican Party in Bandera County. Help me lead the Bandera County Republican Party into the future. I am asking for your vote. Vote Mark Miller for Republican Bandera County Chair. www.markmiller4bcchair.com. Early voting is Feb. 20-March 1. Election Day is March 5. Vote!

Striegl: My biggest concerns for the Bandera County Republican Party? As a trained war planner, I think three dimensionally. I look at cause and effect. I look short, mid and long term probabilities. I am not only concerned for this county but the State of Texas as well. What do I mean? Look at the Highway 16 expansion. They will soon start the widening of Highway 46 between Borne and Highway 16 as well. This will open the flood gates for growth and a mass migration from Bexar and surrounding counties into Bandera. The Democratic party knows that Bandera County and many of the rural counties are red. Their goal is to turn us blue. The Dems have already achieved that goal in Bexar, Harris, Travis, Dallas, and many other counties, especially along the border. They only need to turn seven or eight more rural counties blue to take our State. My job in conjunction with the RPT is to stop that from happening and that's why I go to Austin. We cannot win this fight by ourselves. We need help.

As your Attorney General said, we are in a fight for the very soul of this State and for that matter this country. If we fail at the State or Federal

level Bandera County will be no more. And that is why I am running again. I will take the fight to those Godless SOBs in Austin, I will not back up, I will not cut deals, I will not compromise. Texas has become the Alamo of this great nation and I am glad to stand on her ramparts.

~ Early voting for the March 5 election begins Tuesday, Feb. 20 and continues through Friday, March 1.

Early voting locations are at the:

Ray Mauer Courthouse Annex, 403 12th Street, Bandera: Tuesday through Friday, Feb. 20-23, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 24: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, Feb. 25, 1 - 7 p.m.; Monday through Friday, Feb. 26 to March 1, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Lakehills Area Library, 7200 FM 1283, Lakehills: Tuesday through Friday, Feb. 20-23, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Monday through Friday, Feb. 26 to March 1, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Medina Annex, 161 E. Parker Street, Medina: Tuesday through Friday, Feb. 20-23, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Monday through Friday, Feb. 26 to March 1, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Election Day by precinct is Tuesday, March 5, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Please see more election information at <https://www.banderacounty.org/page/elections.current.elections>