

Answers to questions posed by The Dallas Post. All candidates were asked identical questions in the same order. No previews of questions were given.

**Q: Would you briefly summarize your reasons for seeking the office, and your qualifications to serve?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "I have always been involved with service to people. In 1973, my first elective office was with the project area committee of the flood project. It was a citizen liaison between the SBA and the community to help handle the \$60,000,000 that was coming into our town because of the flood.  
 "Service was always one of my main motivations for anything I do in life. I belonged to the Jaycees for eight years and I do a lot of volunteer things. I have faced the electorate probably a dozen times and have been elected each time. I have a deep and abiding interest in the job."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I'm a lifelong resident of the area, I have a concern for our community, which has grown over the years. In dealing with public figures, I think I can do as well if not better.  
 "I have a personal desire to help the community; I think I can because of my background in television. For 15 years I have covered the entire 17 counties of our TV coverage area, and I got to understand the people and the problems of the area.  
 "My qualifications are my news experience in dealing with the people and problems, different agencies and local community groups."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "Basically, I began thinking about seeking the office about two years ago. I think that in the Back Mountain as well as the others areas I would represent, like Wyoming, Kingston and Forty Fort, we have an intellectual population that has a lot of creative ideas. If we can amalgamate them in some way we should be one of the leading districts in the state.  
 I don't see a lot from our representative in a creative vein. I've been kind of disappointed with the way our representative has been going."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "I am seeking the office because I want the job; and I think I would be really good at it. I have extensive background working on issues. My background is with the League of Women Voters. I have been a member for about 10 years now and I was president for four years ending in 1989. I really dealt extensively with a variety of issues; local, state and national.  
 "I was able to form coalitions to work on problems. I was able to encourage citizen participation in government, which I think is very important."

**James Phillips**  
 "My reasons for seeking the office are that I have always had a strong interest in government at all levels. Over the years I have participated since the early '60's in campaigns at all levels. I have seven years of county government in now, and I felt the opportunity was there to move up to the state level. I recognize that a lot of problems in the county are created at the state level and I am very familiar with what those problems are. I could go down there and try to do something about them."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "I have had a lot of experience in many areas that are important to the community; important to the welfare of our area and I think my background is excellent for some of the most serious legislative problems that are on the Pennsylvania agenda. I have been encouraged by many of my friends to use my experience to advantage.  
 "I gave it very serious consideration for a long time because I like the job I have. I'm involved in many interesting things. But I also thought the people who were urging me were right, I had a lot to offer."

**Q: Should recycling be made mandatory for everyone?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "Yes. It already is. Act 101 is putting the people on line by population in a step by step basis.  
 "If we mandated recycling for everyone immediately, we would have no place to put the recyclables. We'd be in a miniature landfill crisis all over again. We must take it step by step, and that's what we've done."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I think we should get into recycling quicker than what our present state law says. I think it should be stepped up. If we're going to be serious about it, we should do it as a whole.  
 "I think it should be mandatory, and I think we should step up the process."

**Clarence Michael**  
 I think right now the state is addressing that issue. I think recycling should be made mandatory, but you have to plan on tax incentives and things like that if you are going to make it mandatory. If we get people doing it at a local level, we then we won't have to worry about the landfill issues."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "Yes, and I believe it will be. We have to reduce our waste stream in order to survive. We are going to run out of landfill space and we are going to have to turn to other methods of disposing of our wastes, which will not be palatable, unless we start to recycle now."

**James Phillips**  
 "Well, it is going to be mandatory for most everybody. I would imagine that in some areas it is just completely impractical.  
 "I could see certain places where it just won't happen; right here, take out in the boonies where the houses are so far apart I don't see where it would be practical."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "I think eventually it should. I think it has to be a gradual process. I think the program the state now is encouraging is a good one. In some areas it's going to be difficult. They're going to need help in getting the program off the ground. If the government is going to mandate they should provide the funds, especially for the smaller communities."

**Q: Should Pennsylvania have a bottle bill?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "I am pretty well convinced not that we should have a bottle bill. There are very strong lobbying efforts against a bottle bill; they come from the manufacturers, grocery stores and unions. I would like to see it as a container bill covering plastic, cans and bottles.  
 "Why are we making things that we can't recycle?  
 "Why not have an industry that thinks about recycling as the products are made? Maybe government could make it happen."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I would like to see one. In other states it has been accepted fairly well by the people. There's a concern not only for beauty, but for the economy of the farmer and the ecology of the area."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "Yes, if you look at our landfills and roadsides much of what is there is the bottles. What we have to do is determine how we can do it cost effectively. I think if we have the right people sitting down we can keep jobs as well as having a bottle bill we can live with and we will have a cleaner environment because of it."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "I'm in favor of a bottle bill, although I don't believe that it will come to pass, certainly not in the short term. I would work for a bottle bill in the legislature. I think it would go along way toward alleviating our litter problem and toward the recycling issue."

**James Phillips**  
 "It won't be needed, I don't feel, under the present circumstances. With recycling being mandated, the bottles will find their way back in.  
 "The other thing with a bottle bill, it still doesn't eliminate the underage drinkers. They are not going to bring the bottles back, and they are the ones throwing them out the window half the time. I am for stronger enforcement of the (littering) laws we have."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "Yes, I think we should. But again, I think these things have to be a process and I think Pennsylvania is in the right direction at this point."

**Q: What, if anything, should be done to protect the wetlands in the Back Mountain?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "First you have to define wetlands. The definition is what some person in DER says it is. Some farmers disagree with the definition. Some of them can't use land they have been using. The problem is we need a good definition of wetlands and then true wetlands need to be saved. They are a natural habitat for many species of life. It's tough to manufacture wetlands.  
 "Let's give some definition to this thing."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I think we should protect the wetlands; they're vital to ecology and to the water in any area. PennDOT now has a program with construction that if they destroy a wetland they will rebuild one somewhere else. I don't know if man can rebuild a wetland properly. I'd like to see the wetlands left where they are and let man build around them."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "I can't see just coming in and building without having some planning. One good thing we have in the Back Mountain is the Back Mountain Planning Commission. If we have some leadership in that area, I think that will help keep some of the wetlands so that it helps us environmentally, it helps us for the beautification involved, and it has a productivity sense also. It helps our water supplies and everything else."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "Wetlands, in general, should be protected. There is a bill sponsored by Senator Musto, at the moment, regarding wetlands. Frankly I am not in favor of that bill because it reimburses people for the wetlands on their property.  
 "Things that I would be in favor of in terms of protecting wetlands and protecting property owners is that all wetlands should be registered. So when someone goes to buy a piece of property it's right there as to whether there are wetlands on that property or not."

**James Phillips**  
 "I feel the legislation in Harrisburg now I would support. Some of the rules right now are ridiculous. A lot of farmers are screaming now that they're restricted in the use of their land. There has to be a larger area to be designated as a wetlands than there is now."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "I think the laws now on the books are quite good. The problem is that the definition of wetlands is not always clear.  
 "I have seen some of the new pending legislation on wetlands and I have some questions on it. It seems to divide wetlands into those that would be very serious to disturb and others that wouldn't be so critical. I'm afraid that would mean the ones that aren't so serious would lose consideration."

**Q: Under what circumstances, if any, should abortion be allowed?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "My personal opinion is that it should only be allowed in the case of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother.  
 "Pennsylvania enacted a common sense, rational, abortion control act which says that after the 24th week you can't get an abortion unless it is to save the life of the mother or to prevent serious bodily harm.  
 "I support any effort to bring a wholesome, straightforward, frank discussion of sex education into the public schools or churches or private schools; it matters not where. If we do that, perhaps we can help prevent these unwanted pregnancies."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "The only way I would allow abortion is in the case of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother. I think we have to be sensitive to a woman's needs in that time of crisis. I support the bill that the state recently passed."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "Well, abortion is a very, very emotional issue. I see extremists at both ends. A lot of the public is right in the middle of that. Even the people who are saying they are pro-life say, 'But if'. Now there are a lot of these 'But if' questions. 'If there incest, if there is rape, if the mother's health is in danger then we should not permit it' and I can agree with that.  
 "As an educator I have to believe that we should go into more family planning and sex education. If we do a better job educationally we won't get to the point where we have the abortion."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "I believe in the individual's constitutional right to privacy in making reproductive choices. The only restriction I would put on abortion at this point in time is that I would ban abortions, as Roe vs. Wade did, in the third trimester. I believe that the decision whether to have a child or not should be made within the privacy of the family; should be made between a woman and her physician; and should not be interfered with by government."

**James Phillips**  
 "Rape, incest, life of the mother and extreme deformities. Same as the bill that was in Idaho. I am pro-life."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "I believe that government should not intrude itself into private affairs. This should be up to the family and to the doctor. I really think in many cases it's a medical decision. I wouldn't attempt to say when it should or shouldn't be. I think the present law under Roe vs. Wade is a good one.  
 "I don't think that government needs to intervene in that. That law is established and clinics follow it with only a few exceptions. I think that the new state law is interference."

**Q: Do you favor consolidation of government services in the Back Mountain?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "I would leave that up to the folks in the Back Mountain. If they feel that there is cooperation and agreement between fire and police services, I would think that's the logical thing to do. This is a local decision."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I think we could use some consolidation of services; police, fire and ambulance. They are blending together now, which is good, because every community cannot staff those departments adequately. I think they should continue to strive toward more unified, regional police and fire and ambulance services for the Back Mountain.  
 "The way the community is growing, we should think more on a regional basis for services like that."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "I see with the advent of our water supplies, water company prices and things, that we have to be cost effective. I would have to favor consolidation. I know that you go into the fact that you have your individual towns, but I think if we're going to worry about cost effectiveness, if we have to take that pie and work together in order to formulate some answers. Through zoning and through a water authority we are beginning to think as a region in the Back Mountain."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "That's an issue I haven't looked into too extensively. I understand that the Back Mountain is more rural in nature than other areas of the county. I would certainly encourage cooperation between communities for police, fire, and whatever is necessary. In general terms, without having studied the issue, it sounds cost effective. In many areas of the 120th they do rely on each other for fire and police protection when there is a problem or a shortage."

**James Phillips**  
 "I have no objection to combining the police force. I believe that is a municipality question that should be put on a referendum, just as they did with the school district. I would not favor passage of any bill that would mandate municipalities and force consolidation on them. I don't doubt that it would be good with the police force and certain others. I would leave it up to the voters to decide on how far to go."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "I think our townships serve an important purpose. But I think they could have many more cooperative agreements. I think they could have one body that is not a legal one but a working one. In the area of zoning it would be very helpful to have zoning laws that would be responsible within the townships. I would be in favor of a Council of Governments; not in taking away the powers of the townships and boroughs. I think they work together in many areas now."

**Q: What would you as a representative do to make available more affordable housing?**

**Scott Dieterick**  
 "We could encourage builders by giving tax credits to build affordable homes. I hesitate about warehousing people; you can't build apartments and put them in pigeon holes. We could offer tax credits to banks to make low interest loans or accept lower down payments.  
 "We have the PHFA in Pennsylvania to help first home buyers; we might be able to put extra dollars in there, but we have a revenue shortfall in the state. One other idea is to sell tax-free bonds, turn around and loan the money to first-time home buyers."

**Andrew Kotch**  
 "I haven't thought much about making housing more affordable. What I would like is to help the area out with better-paying employment opportunities that can help people purchase houses. People can't survive on \$5.00 an hour jobs.  
 "Maybe the FHA type programs can be expanded to allow more participants. In today's age, with the type of income people receive, maybe there should be tax breaks as an incentive for people to have the opportunity to afford a house."

**Clarence Michael**  
 "I think through low interest loans, and I like the idea of the 'Habitat' concept where people are helping people. I think we have to get more of that involved where we are not just giving people something without having some sweat and equity involved."

**Phyllis Mundy**  
 "There already is a council that works on that issue at the state level. In talking to other area legislators, I am told that very little will be done to make housing a separate item, in so far as it's not already a separate item. I think we need to work on that issue.  
 It is an issue that is very important, not only for the homeless but for first time homebuyers, for people who are at the lower end of the scale who may never be able to afford housing except by renting. I do think we need to address the issue."

**James Phillips**  
 "On a state level, I can't say what I would do. I would actually be against any raise in Pennsylvania taxes, which also makes it difficult to own a home these days. Perhaps a tax break could be given for first time owners or a rebate on tax dollars. It's a tough question."

**Anne Vernon**  
 "First we need to prove that you can build at low and moderate income housing that looks nice and will not be a detriment to the environment. Once we prove that it is feasible, there would not be so much objection from people about townhouses and so forth. I think we also need to solve some of the other problems like transportation. If you build a townhouse and you're going to have traffic backed up for two miles, naturally people are going to object."