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On the Campaign Trail with Bob Thomas

Knox County resident Suzanne Prince holds the umbrella while Bob Thomas places his sign in her front yard while visiting during his door-knocking tour during his campaign for county mayor. Below, Knox County Mayoral candidate Bob and wife Kim visit neighborhoods and knock on doors on the campaign trail.



By Rose King

Tuesday's Knox County Primaries will determine the candidates for the August General Election. The Republican nominee for mayor could very well be the mayor of Knox County for the next four years.

Current County Commissioner at Large Bob Thomas believes he has the business experience and commitment to the community to successfully lead the county. He says his experience in operating a successful business, working within budgets and meeting payrolls has helped him develop skills needed to manage Knox County's \$800M annual operating budget efficiently and effectively. He also pointed out that "working in the broadcasting industry for 30 years has added business management and communication skills that are essential to working with government agencies, organizations and citizens to achieve positive growth for Knox County."

Bob told The Focus, "As my dad always said, 'There is no teacher like experience.' I've owned a successful business and have developed the experience and skills necessary to lead Knox County forward."

A lifetime resident of Knox County, Bob has been an active public servant and community volunteer. He has worked with many organizations, from helping to revive the Knoxville Christmas Parade in 1975, to serving on the Board of the Cerebral Palsy Center as president during the building of their group home, to currently serving on boards ranging from the American Cancer Society, Metro Drug Coalition and Young-Williams Animal Center. Bob has shown a deep commitment to help make Knox County a better place to live.

Bob and his wife Kim have three children and six grandchildren. Bob has worked to encourage school bus safety by implementing the bus driver safety award program. Bob is committed to working with the school board and administration to give Knox County students the best educational opportunities available.

Over the past three months Bob and Kim have visited over 6000 homes to introduce themselves, share Bob's vision for Knox County and hear what is important to people.

"I have listened and I am committed to work hard for low taxes, safe schools, improving our county roads and infrastructure, the honor and care of our seniors and veterans, improved educational opportunities for our children, growing the local economy and better paying jobs. I would appreciate the opportunity to continue to work and be the voice of the people of our county."

Early voting as heavy as expected

By Mike Steely
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The Republican Primary for Knox County Mayor and Sheriff drew twice as many early voters as four years ago and spurred what is expected to be about 50,000 to 60,000 voters at the end of all voting on Tuesday evening.

Cliff Rogers, director of the election commission, told The Focus Thursday that despite the rains last week the turnout is about what he had hoped for. Even the Democratic Primary drew more voters than the previous election but Republican Primary voters outnumbered the Democratic voters about 6 to 1.

Total early voting and absentee ballots cast were 26,083. Thursday, the last day of voting, added 4,892 to the final count.

Rogers thanked the Knox County Commission for approving the rental of a larger space in the Downtown West

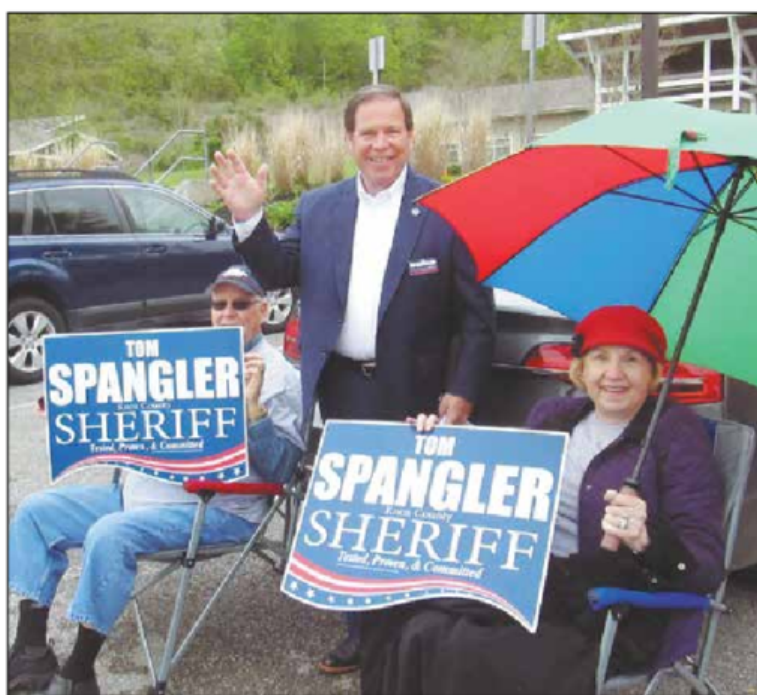


PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

Sheriff candidate Tom Spangler stopped by the New Harvest Park early voting precinct and visited with John and Charlotte Langley who braved the rain to help their candidate. Turnout during Early Voting was heavy everywhere with New Harvest Park seeing more than 3,000 people cast their ballots.

Shopping Center, a precinct that always has a higher voting turnout than any other place in

the county.

He said that 240,441 people are registered to vote in Knox County

so the turnout, although the final turnout is heavier than usual, will be about 25%.

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