



# UNDER THE DOME

See who is in the race to lead Luzerne County



**VOTE**  
on Tuesday,  
November 5, 2019



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2018 LEGACY BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



# ANUP PATEL

LUZERNE COUNTY COUNCIL



(PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF ANUP) 

**SEND US INTO THE FUTURE WITH:**

**PENNSYLVANIA SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL CANDIDATES**

**DAN McCAFFERY  
AMANDA GREEN-HAWKINS**

**LUZERNE COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATES**

**TIMOTHY McGINLEY                      PATRICK BILBOW  
JANE WALSH WAITKUS                      ANUP PATEL  
ROBERT SCHNEE                      JOSEPH SEBASTIANELLI**

**PLEASE VOTE TO RETAIN JUDGES:  
ANNE LAZARUS, TINA POLACHEK GARTLEY,  
WILLIAM AMESBURY, THOMAS F. BURKE**

**VOTE STRAIGHT DEMOCRAT**



Paid for by Luzerne County Democratic Party

80945200

# Greg Wolovich for Luzerne County Council



## KEY ISSUES

- Standing up for families and property owners alike. Property taxes are both crippling and chasing away those who call Luzerne County home.
- Focused on finding ways to cut spending, taking the burden off of all tax paying residents.
- Promoting increased communication between State, County and Local officials to effectively solve problems in a joint effort.

I cannot do this alone. In order to succeed, I need your opinions, support, and most importantly your vote in being able to make this happen. I want to go to council with your thoughts and ideas in my back pocket, and not those of special interest groups.

*Let's do this together!*

**Contact**

**570-266-2027**

**gregwolovichjr@gmail.com  
and on Facebook at  
Greg Wolovich for Luzerne  
County Council**

**Live. Love. Luzerne County.**

*Paid for by Citizens for Wolovich*

*“Let’s make Luzerne County a destination  
and not just a stepping stone to get some-  
where better.” -Kendra*



# KENDRA RADLE

## FOR LUZERNE COUNTY COUNCIL

- FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY– BREAK THE CYCLE OF TAXING AND SPENDING
- BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS - OPENING LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS
- COMBATTING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC



PAID FOR AND AUTHORIZED BY KENDRA RADLE FOR LUZERNE COUNTY COUNCIL

# About Luzerne County Council



Times Leader file photo

**Election day is Tuesday.**

The county's voter-approved, January 2012 switch to a customized home rule government structure put 11 elected council members and an appointed manager in charge of decisions previously made by three elected commissioners and several row officers.

The four-year council post pays \$8,000 annually.

Council duties include approving the budget and larger contracts, appointing members to outside county boards, enacting codes and ordinances, confirming nominations to eight division head positions and hiring and evaluating the manager.

The manager approves many contracts that don't meet the council voting threshold, oversees day-to-day operations and budgets in more than 50 departments and hires and fires workers in most departments.

## Nov. 5 election day basics

A total of 208,966 Luzerne County residents are registered to vote in Tuesday's general election — 105,548 Democrats, 77,577 Republicans and 25,841 not signed up for either of those parties, state statistics show.

Polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The county election office has posted a list of all Nov. 5 general election candidates and races under the "on election day" section of its page at [www.luzernecounty.org](http://www.luzernecounty.org).

Also under this link is a listing of all polling places, with changes highlighted. Some locations have moved due to a reconfiguration to address population and registration growth or decline and for other reasons, officials said.

Voters with concerns or questions, including the correct location of their polling place, should contact the county election office at

570-825-1715.

After the polls close, live election results will be posted on the county website.

The public also is invited to monitor election results after the polls close Tuesday night on the second floor of the county's Penn Place Building at Market Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in Wilkes-Barre.

This will be the last countywide election using the current electronic voting machines.

Counties must pick a new voting system by the end of the year and start using it by the April 2020 primary under a state mandate requiring paper ballots or receipts that can be checked by voters and kept in case tallies are questioned.

Council plans to vote on the county manager's recommended system in December.

Keep moving Luzerne County  
*in a positive direction*



✓ Efficiency

✓ Accountability

✓ Fiscal Responsibility

Reelect

Timothy ★★★  
McGinley  
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Luzerne County Council

Remember to vote

Tuesday,  
November 5

Paid for by Friends of Tim McGinley

83945190

The logo features a green background with two orange stars of varying sizes in the upper left. The word "VOTE" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters above the word "LIZ", which is in a large, bold, orange font. Below "LIZ" is the name "Martin" in a very large, white, bold, sans-serif font. To the right of "LIZ" and above "Martin" is the date "Nov. 5th" in a bold, orange font. Below "Martin" is the text "Dallas Township Supervisor" in a white, sans-serif font, with "Supervisor" in a bold, orange font.

**VOTE**  
**LIZ** **Nov. 5th**  
**Martin**  
Dallas Township **Supervisor**

**...Because 2 Road Dept.  
Employees on a 3-person  
Board is Just WRONG!**

Paid for by Friends of Liz Martin

# People Above Politics

Patrick M.  
**Bilbow**  
*Luzerne County Council*

## He will work to:

- Create family sustaining jobs
- Improve our roads and bridges
- Ensure safety and security of all our citizens



**Vote Election Day**  
**Tuesday, November 5th**



*Paid for by Friends of Patrick M. Bilbow*

# 11 vie for six county council seats

Race includes mix of incumbents, newcomers

By Jennifer Learn-Andes  
jandes@timesleader.com

Every two years, Luzerne County voters select either five or six members to serve on the 11-member county council set up under home rule.

This year, six seats are open and 11 are running in the Nov. 5 general.

The contenders in alphabetical order: Patrick Bilbow, Walter Griffith, LeeAnn McDermott, Tim McGinley, Anup Patel, Kendra Radle, Robert Schnee, Joe Sebastianelli, Stephen J. Urban, Jane Walsh Waitkus and Gregory Wolovich.

Victors will take office Jan. 6 and serve with Harry Haas, Linda McClosky Houck, Chris Perry, Sheila Saidman and Matthew Vough.

Council members Stephen A. Urban and Rick Morelli will be leaving council on that date. Urban, who has been serving as an elected county official since he took office as a commissioner in 2000, did not seek another term. Morelli is filling a seat vacated by Eugene Kelleher that expires Jan. 6.

Under the home rule, which took effect in Janu-

ary 2012, council duties include approving the budget and larger contracts, appointing members to outside county boards, enacting codes and ordinances, confirming nominations to eight division head positions and hiring and evaluating the manager.

The four-year council post pays \$8,000 annually.

Voters are free to pick six candidates from any political party.

McGinley, Schnee and Walsh Waitkus are incumbents. Bilbow also has been serving on council since February in a seat vacated by Edward Brominski.



Bill Tarutis | For Times Leader

**Luzerne County Council candidates Jane Walsh-Waitkus, left, Lee Ann McDermott, Gregory Wolovich, Timothy McGinley, Walter Griffith, Anup Patel, Kendra Radle, Patrick Bilbow, Robert Schnee, Joe Sebastianelli, and Stephen J. Urban sit on the stage during a forum discussion sponsored by the League of Women Voters at the First Presbyterian Church in Wilkes-Barre on Thursday evening. Bill Tarutis | For Times Leader**

This would be the last term for McGinley if he is re-elected because council members are limited to three consecutive terms under the home rule charter.

## Democrats

Some background on the Democrats seeking the seat, based on their submissions and statements made in a recent Wilkes-Barre Area League of Women Voters forum:

- Bilbow, 50, of Dur-yea, has been the principal at Pittston Area's Martin L. Mattei Middle School since 2005.

A Pittston Area High School graduate, Bilbow received a bachelor's degree in political science and secondary education from King's College in Wilkes-Barre, a master's degree in educational leadership from Wilkes University and a superintendent letter of eligibility from the University of Scranton.

He has worked as an educator for 25 years, including prior positions at the Delaware Valley School District in Milford and Tunkhannock Area School District. As an educator, he also has worked as a football, basketball and track and field coach.

Bilbow said he decided to seek the seat vacated by Brominski and then run for the post because he wanted to get involved instead of sitting back and complaining about the decisions of elected officials.



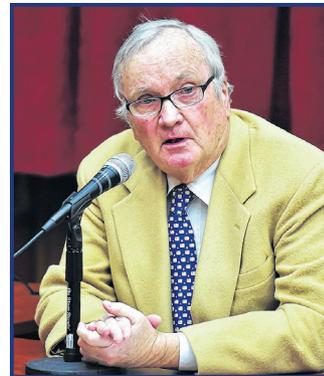
His main driver is making the county a "great place to live and raise a family" for the next generation, including his three young sons.

Bilbow said he is responsible for 1,100 students daily and must make decisions on their behalf and is applying that same leadership to council.

"I would always put people before any type of politics and make decisions that are sound and right and in the best interest of citizens," Bilbow said, citing his top goals as job creation, continued improvement of county roads and bridges and public safety and security.

- McGinley, 72, of Kingston, is a retired educator and administration director and serves as council chairman.

McGinley has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Wilkes University, a master's degree in secondary education from the University of Scranton and has com-



pleted continuing graduate studies in chemistry and educational leadership at both of those universities in addition to Lehigh University, Penn State University and Temple University.

He was employed for more than 30 years in the public school system and most recently served as administration director for the Commission on Economic Opportunity in Wilkes-Barre.

McGinley said council has substantially paid down inherited debt, is now current on a pension obligation that had been put off before home rule and obtained an A- credit rating, which is the highest the county has ever earned.

"We've done a great job to change the direction of the county. We got our financial house in order," McGinley said.

While stressing adjustments to the home rule charter must continue, McGinley said the structure is only nearing its eighth anniversary and "still in the infancy stage" compared to the prior government in place more than 150 years. Choosing open-minded, fair and honest council members who can work together to improve the county economy and services is important, he said, adding that it is "easy to complain but hard to go out and support the right thing."



Judge Daniel 

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**28 years of *proven experience protecting victims* as a top prosecutor, trial lawyer, and judge.**

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Use of division insignia does not imply endorsement by the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.

• Patel, 47, of Rice Township, had worked as an industrial engineer and now owns and operates several businesses throughout the county, including the Carriage Stop Plaza-Sunoco on Route 115 in Plains Township.

In addition to applying his expertise as a “successful businessman” to county government, Patel said he would tap his engineering experience to review county road and bridge projects seeking ways to reduce costs. He also wants to accompany Vough on tours of facilities and programs targeting opioid substance use disorder and work with state and federal legislators.

He also said he would bring needed diversity to the county as the first council member of Indian descent.

His platform includes investing in “very outdated infrastructure” and making the county more appealing to businesses that want to locate here. Patel said he believes the sitting council is doing a good job, but he would bring a new perspective and fresh ideas.

“I believe we need to be as transparent as possible. I will serve you with integrity and honesty,” Patel said at the league forum.

• Schnee, 60, of Sugarloaf Township, is a meter reader for the Hazleton City Authority.

A Hazleton High School graduate, Schnee said he has experience working with budgets as both a past Hazleton Area School Board member and county councilman since 2016.

Schnee describes the home rule structure as the “purest form of government that there is” and said he and his 10 council colleagues have worked together to improve both finances and the appearance of county government.

He pointed to the county’s new credit rating and the attraction of major companies to the area as examples. While council members may disagree on issues, their votes “come from the heart,” he said.

“It’s been a team effort. From the county manager down, the perspective has changed 360 degrees,” Schnee said. “I think we’re 100 percent better.”

Still-ongoing restoration of the historic courthouse in Wilkes-Barre during his term has allowed removal of rotunda netting to capture falling plaster and preserved this “jewel of the county” for the public, Schnee said.



If elected to another term, Schnee said he wants to push for more higher-paying jobs.

• Sebastianelli, 28, of Pittston Township, is a teacher at ESS in the county.

Sebastianelli has a bachelor’s degree in history from King’s College and also has worked for the Luzerne Intermediate Unit teaching special needs children.

He said he has met with thousands of residents of all party registrations since he announced his candidacy, and many “feel like they are being left behind.”

Citing lowering real estate taxes as a top goal that he insists is doable, Sebastianelli said he would scrutinize the budget to eliminate wasteful spending to help property owners on fixed incomes who feel like they are “being bombarded.”

He said too many college and university graduates leave the area and believes more focus on supporting small businesses will strengthen the local economy.

“I don’t answer to special interest groups. I only answer to you and work for you, the residents of Luzerne County,” Sebastianelli told the audience at last week’s forum.

• Walsh Waitkus, 71, of Dorrance Township, is retired and previously worked as a professor and director of the Teaching and Learning Resource Center at Penn State Hazleton.

Walsh Waitkus, who currently serves as council vice chair, said she spearheaded an ongoing initiative to identify and sell unused, county-owned property after taking office in 2016 and heads the real estate committee that was formed as a result.

She also pushed for infrastructure improvements, saying rehabilitation of three county-owned bridges wrapped up in recent months, while three more bridge projects are in the works for next year. Describing herself as a “hard worker,” Walsh Waitkus also volunteered to serve on a committee that helps decide how the county’s natural-gas Act 13 funding is spent.

Like other incumbents, she pointed to the county’s new credit rating, debt repayments and job creation.

“I love serving on county council and think I’m making a difference,” Walsh Waitkus said, noting that she also once owned a small real estate business. “I’m



really involved.”

## Republicans

On the Republican side, there are five contenders because the sixth party nomination went to Schnee through write-in votes.

A synopsis of the Republican candidates:

• Griffith, 65, of Kingston Township, is a prior county controller and now semi-retired after 30 years in the auto repair business.

Griffith said he helped to draft the home rule charter but believes revisions are warranted.

He asserted council — the legislative branch — is allowing the manager to have “too much control” and that there are not enough checks and balances.

A regular county meeting attendee, Griffith said debt repayments can’t be claimed as an accomplishment because the county is required to make them.

He criticized a \$5 vehicle registration fee and said he has proven he will publicly question and challenge expenditures he does not believe are in the public interest.

“I demonstrated time and time again I speak for the people,” Griffith said. “People voted for better government in 2012, and yet we’ve become stagnant.”

• McDermott, 50, of Kingston Township, has owned McDermott Real Estate Appraisals with her husband for 25 years.

She also is active with the Junior League of Wilkes-Barre, including serving as past president, and is secretary of the Republican Women of Luzerne County.

McDermott described herself as a “fiscal conservative” and said she would scrutinize county finances using the management skills she has developed as a business owner.

“I can reveal inefficiency and maintain accountability. We need to make sure every penny is spent wisely,” McDermott said.

Stressing she never ran for office before and is “not a politician,” McDermott said she would provide a “voice of reason” and “new vision” and remain accessible to the public.

The county has a rich history and is a “wonderful place to live,” she said.



# Lee Ann McDermott



for Luzerne County Council  
on Tuesday, November 5th, 2019

## Lee Ann's goals as a member of County Council:

- To work for sound fiscal management, deficit reduction and a balanced budget.
- To provide the best services for Luzerne County Taxpayers at the lowest cost.
- To focus on the future by seeking economic and manufacturing opportunities.
- To ensure Council is an accessible and responsive governing body.

### **About Lee Ann:**

Successful Shavertown business owner for 24 years.  
Understands the need for prudent fiscal planning.

Active community volunteer in leadership positions.  
Lifelong resident of Luzerne County, lives in the Back Mountain.

Married with four children and one grandchild.



Paid for by the Friends of the Committee.

• Radle, 25, of Exeter, is a graduate financial services counselor at Wilkes University and assistant cheerleading coach at Wyoming Area.

A Wyoming Area High School graduate, she has a bachelor's degree in political science from Wilkes University and is vice chair of the Luzerne County Young Republicans.

Radle said she decided to run for council because she was tired of job seekers being told they'd have to leave the county to succeed.

"What sets me apart is that I'm young and energized about making this county somewhere you want to stay," Radle said.

Maintaining she would bring a "fresh set of eyes" to council deliberations, Radle said would use her background in the financial services industry to help the county "stop the cycle of taxing and spending."

She also wants to help the continued battle against opioids and vowed to strengthen the county's relationship with elected officials at both the municipal and state and federal levels.



• Urban, 45, of Wilkes-Barre, is an IT support coordinator for a major food distributor and served on council from 2012 through 2015.

The son of outgoing Councilman Urban, he said was an asset on council because he scrutinized details in documents and budgets, pushed for answers and attempted to apply efficiencies he's picked up in the corporate sector to county finances. Those efforts would continue if he is elected again, he said.

Diverse backgrounds are beneficial to council, he said. Urban said he traveled throughout the country when his father was in the military and obtained insight on improvements needed here, including aesthetic.

He said the county must "do more with less" and believes there is a "lot of lip service" in county government.

"I won't raise taxes. I will hold the manager's feet to the fire," Urban said.



• Wolovich, 27, of Hanover township, holds a management position at Wegmans Food Markets.

A graduate of GAR Memorial High School in Wilkes-Barre, Wolovich obtained a bachelor's degree in accounting from King's College.

He said his accounting degree would benefit the county because he has expertise to analyze finances.

More foresight is needed in county government to better prepare for big-ticket needs, Wolovich said, describing the county practice of scrambling for grants and loans "at the last hour" as "unacceptable."

"I believe in a more proactive government instead of reactive one," Wolovich said. "I think it's crucial that we look ahead and plan for the future."

If elected, Wolovich said he would consider all viewpoints — including those from citizens — with an open mind and work in a "civil manner" to reach decisions. He said he is sympathetic to the challenges of taxpayers because he has been living paycheck to paycheck.



## Gap shrinks between county Democrats, Republicans

By Jennifer Learn-Andes  
jandes@timesleader.com

While Luzerne County Democrats maintain their longtime voter registration lead, Republicans continue to pick up steam, the latest state statistics show.

Since the May 21 primary, the county added 714 more Republicans, bringing the total count to 77,577.

In comparison, the county's Democratic registration decreased by 139 since May, to a new total 105,548.

The current registration difference between the two parties, which has been shrinking over recent elections: 27,971.

Looking back, the gap between the two parties was 44,655 in the November 2015 election. Four years prior, in 2011, the divide was 47,669.

David Sosar, a political science professor at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, said Thursday he is not surprised by the continued rise in Republicans and believes it largely stems from an aging county population. People often become more conservative as they grow older, he said.

But Sosar does not see the Republican registration will reach a tipping point, in part because the grow-

ing Latino population in the county's southern half has a "very strong" Democratic affiliation.

"I think you will always see Democrats hold a slight edge in the county," Sosar asserted.

He also argues registration isn't the only factor in voting selection, believing voters are increasingly willing to cross party lines to pick the candidate they like best. While Pennsylvania primaries force voters to nominate only candidates in their registered party, voters are free to select contenders from any party in general elections.

Retired Wilkes University political science professor Tom Baldino has said the rising Republican registration here mirrors what has been happening in southwestern Pennsylvania, excluding Pittsburgh, since at least the early 2000s.

Generally speaking, both that region and Northeastern Pennsylvania are largely working class and have declining or flat populations that are "aging, mostly white and growing more conservative," Baldino has said, cautioning against stereotyping Democrats and Republicans into philosophical categories because social and economic views range from conservative to liberal within both parties.

The number of voters who are not registered as Democrats or Republicans also is increasing in the county, the state statistics show.

Since May, this group has grown by 476, for a new total of 25,841. In the 2011 general, there were 17,304 voters in this category.

Overall, the county now has 208,966 registered voters, or an increase of 1,051 since the May primary.

Upcoming vote

The county election office has posted a list of all Nov. 5 general election candidates and races under the "on election day" section of its page at [www.luzernecounty.org](http://www.luzernecounty.org).

Also under this link is a listing of all polling places, with changes highlighted. Some locations have moved due to a reconfiguration to address population and registration growth or decline and for other reasons, officials said.

Voters with concerns or questions, including the correct location of their polling place, should call the county election office at 570-825-1715.

# VOTERS OF LUZERNE COUNTY

Elect a  
*"Voice For The People"*

**Walter L. Griffith, Jr.**



My fellow citizens, we have come a long way together...I have always tried to represent the taxpayer, and have fought over a decade for what was right for the people of Luzerne County.

I am asking you to keep that fight going by electing me, Walter L. Griffith Jr, to Luzerne County Council on Nov.5 th.

The challenges that confront the Luzerne County citizens are formidable.

The raging opioid epidemic, Stormwater Fee, Vehicle Registration Fee, blighted properties, constant increasing property taxes that are crippling our senior citizens at a time of their lives where society should be saying to them "Thank You" for your lifetime of toil instead of "Pay up or you will lose your house"!

If you elect me, Walter L Griffith Jr, to Luzerne County Council, I pledge to serve you and only you the Taxpayer.

The proposed closing of White Haven and SCI Retreat is an example of a lack of respect for our present County Government and the poor response by our present County Council members shows that a change is needed.

We must remove the negative and destructive tactics that have been present in Luzerne County Government for too long and work together to find and push through the solutions that are desperately needed for our next generation who are trusting in us to all work together and to show them the way.

**VOTE**  
**Walter L. Griffith, Jr.**

*"Voice For The People"*



# VOTE

## Jane Walsh Waitkus

### ★★ *Luzerne County Council* ★★

**Has Been Working for the  
People of Luzerne County**

- ✓ Improving county roads and bridges
- ✓ Balancing the budget and eliminating unnecessary spending
- ✓ Restoring Luzerne County's Good Name:
  - We pay our bills
  - We went from no credit rating to an excellent credit rating
  - We have reduced our debt by half



"This ad was paid for by the candidate"

