

**I BIKE, I WALK, I  
VOTE!  
Centerville &  
Washington  
Township  
Election 2015  
Bicyclists Guide to Voting**

**VOTER INFORMATION**

**November 3, 2015 General Election polls are open from 6:30AM until 7:30pm.**

How Bicyclists Guide to Voting is compiled: The Bike Centerville group, with support from Bike Miami Valley Regional Advocacy Committee, has published the first Voters Guide this year to provide a forum for candidates to discuss issues of walking, bicycling, and street or trail use. Bicycling is a legal form of transportation in Ohio and has the same rules and rights to the roads. This Guide also highlights information that can help an everyday recreational bicyclists, a dedicated multi-modal user or a daily cycling commuter get insight to candidates' political viewpoints, opinions, and personal experiences with bicycling/ walking. Letters with seven questions were mailed to candidates in races within the Centerville/ Washington Township area. Candidate responses have been printed to fit formatting. If a candidate did not respond, NO REPLY indicates the candidate either did not respond or did not meet the stated deadline. Asterisks (\*) notes the incumbent candidates only in the first question, underneath how many candidates a voter can select at the polls. Bike Centerville does not assume responsibility for the content of any candidate's reply.

**Bike Centerville is a grassroots group of citizens dedicated to improving bicycling conditions within the Centerville and Washington Township for all residents and visitors. This group converged following the 2015 Miami Valley Cycling Summit.**

**Centerville Mayor**  
**Vote for 1**

\*Indicates incumbent

**This is not a contested race. No other candidate was certified for this race.**

**QUESTION 1: What is your favorite personal experience riding a bicycle?**

**Brooks Compton\*** – The almost nightly bicycle rides throughout our neighborhood with our two boys. Dinner and a ride is what we had for years. Fond memories.

**QUESTION 2: If you are elected, what will you do to ensure that your city streets are safe and accommodating so they serve ALL users (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, drivers, etc.)?**

**Brooks Compton** – Council will continue to support those bicycle and pedestrian path options that are financially realistic and consistent with the plan currently being revised by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. Centerville Council has reviewed and suggested a couple options consistent with the plan addressing the southern extension of the bicycle path south of Iron Horse Park.

With respect to public transportation, Centerville will continue to erect and maintain gazebos at heavily used public transit stops as evidenced by the new public transportation gazebo in front of the Cornerstone of Centerville development on Feedwire Road.

**QUESTION 3: Do you feel comfortable bicycling on your city streets? If not, why not? What specific actions would you support to improve your comfort level for riding a bicycle on your city streets?**

**Brooks Compton** – Neither my wife nor I are regular bicycle riders because we are both very active in other exercise activities and sports, which provide us the level of activity we think is healthy and enjoyable. In addition we are regular walkers in our neighborhood. However, as council members we have a responsibility to make sure that those who ride on the streets and pathways in Centerville are comfortable and safe doing so. There are obviously varying levels of comfort based on the skill of the rider and the City needs to accommodate those different skill levels to the extent it can. As mentioned above Council is reviewing the options presented by this organization, the Centerville Washington Park Board and the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.

**QUESTION 4: The region has the Nation's Largest Paved Trail Network<sup>SM</sup> – which has already demonstrated strong economic impact in many communities. How can Centerville use the Miami Valley trails as an economic driver?**

**Brooks Compton** – The trails would provide economic benefit to the City and its businesses if properly located, maintained and publicized. I don't see publication or notice of the trails as a problem! Working with the above organizations, including "Bike Miami Valley" we will be able to analyze what has worked in other communities and what is financially feasible for Centerville. However, I am not prepared to say what would work and what would not at this time, as it requires study and review on our part with help from the organizations identified above who have successfully participated in those efforts.

**QUESTION 5: The Surgeon General has posted a call to action to get more American's active and moving. What can you do as an elected official to ensure future generations have opportunities for a healthy and active lifestyle? For example, what would you do to support the local Safe Routes to School initiative?**

**Brooks Compton** – Centerville has participated and supported the Safe Routes to School Initiative. SRTS will be an item during our annual review of programs at

which time Council will review and decide to what extent the City would or could participate. I am confident Council would be supportive of doing so in the future if it was determined, after a review, that the SRTS program and monies expended would benefit the schoolchildren (and in turn the general public) from the City's additional participation. It is my understanding that each SRTS participation requires a separate review based upon community needs and if felt appropriate to do so, the City would.

**QUESTION 6: Do you support expanding the Iron Horse trail south of I-675? Briefly explain why or why not and what a councilperson's role is in this respect?**

**Brooks Compton** – Yes, but at this time finances are not available to extend the bikeway over or under I-675. However, as you are aware, other routes are being considered, one of which is heading out of Iron Horse Park east on Hewitt south on Bigger.

**QUESTION 7: In conclusion, why do you think people who care about bicycling and walking issues should vote for you?**

**Brooks Compton** – I have lived in Centerville for over 36 years and have seen from various perspectives, ie. participant, husband, father, grandfather and council member that for our city to continue to succeed, bicycling and walking issues are important aspects for many of our residents and for many more that may choose to live in Centerville. Providing healthy and safe amenities in Centerville is extremely important as most people desire to live in a healthy city, because a healthy city is a thriving vibrant city, making it a great place to live, have your kids in school and work. As Mayor setting the agenda for this sort of success, is and will continue to be a top priority.

## Centerville Council Candidates

### Vote for 3

\*Indicates incumbent

#### **QUESTION 1: What is your favorite personal experience riding a bicycle?**

**John Beals\*** – Two situations: First in slowly riding through our neighborhoods greeting neighbors along the way to a restaurant or ice cream shop destination and the return ride on a warm and pleasant summer evening. And secondly, riding the Little Miami Trail, perhaps to Oregonia for a break at The Little River Café and return to the auto, especially if the trail had received a recent broom truck cleaning of tree droppage.

**Jim Briggs** – My bicycling memories are limited to those of my pre- automobile years, when “biking” involved free travel through my small- town neighborhood in the company of other adolescents.

**Mark Engert** – Going on a 50 mile ride with two buddies when we were 12 years old.

**Steve Feverston** – I ride my bicycle for recreation. My favorite experiences riding a bike were the trips to Kelly’s Island on Lake Erie where my son’s Boy Scout Troop went to ride their bicycles.

**Belinda Kenley\*** – I had not ridden a bike since junior high school. Last year I purchased a bike and spent months riding several times a week around the Kentshire neighborhood looking for a house to purchase. We ended up buying a house on Luntshire Court in my favorite neighborhood and moved in in July 2015.

#### **QUESTION 2: If you are elected, what will you do to ensure that your city streets are safe and accommodating so they serve ALL users (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, drivers, etc.)?**

**John Beals** – A council member can promote, explain and pursue improvements for bicyclists, but the results hinge on getting enough votes and a sufficient City Budget to accomplish the goals. Through-riding bicyclists prefer to use “stand alone” bikeways or shared facilities, while neighborhood bicyclists tend to use widened sidewalks and neighborhood streets, and thus are more able to “get along” with lesser facilities. Bicyclists sharing a roadway on a longer

ride are best served by widened roads, with at least paint marked bikeway lanes, sufficiently wide to provide adequate clearance from vehicular traffic. An elected Council Member can promote “Complete Streets” theory when votes and funds are available to accomplish pavement widenings, paint markings or have the luxury of Warren Street in Dayton, to reduce the vehicular lanes in order to provide the bus and bike lanes thru the campus area.

**Jim Briggs** – The streets of Centerville clearly accommodate mostly auto traffic. New developments, however, require as a public policy placement of dedicated “hiker-biker” routes. That is a sound policy and I would constantly support the continuation of it.

**Mark Engert** – I will follow the lead of other cities that have a large biking and running population and see if they are doing something different than what we are currently doing and see if would make sense for Centerville to try and implement it here.

**Steve Feverston** – Implement the transportation recommendations of Create the Vision, the City’s Comprehensive Development Plan, a plan that I had a major role in developing. Implement the recommendations of the City’s Safe Routes to School Travel Plan. Implement the livable streets concepts established in the City’s Unified Development Ordinance, a plan that I had a major role in developing.

**Belinda Kenley** – City council members and staff face the challenge of decreased funding from the State and future loss of funding created by House Bill 5 tax uniformity. We have got to figure out a way to repair older roads and maintain our streets and sidewalks. The constant challenge for Ohio’s cities is going to be finding sources for funding major projects, and it will require top-notch staff and dedicated elected officials who can meet that challenge. I am up to that challenge.

#### **QUESTION 3: Do you feel comfortable bicycling on your city streets? If not, why not? What specific actions would you support to improve your comfort level for riding a bicycle on your city streets?**

**John Beals** – Yes, I feel safe riding on the neighborhood streets especially during casual riding, when not in a hurry. The nervous times are when you must ride

along a rural county type road being narrow in width and having little if any shoulder alongside. That situation requires you to trust the vehicular traffic operators to honor your right to the lane. Those type of rural highways must be managed with a comprehensive plan to widen them, in order to provide safe bikeway sharing. The engineer in charge must develop a Master Plan to accomplish this widening’s goal, over a several year time frame with annual steady progress toward that goal.

**Jim Briggs** – I am not a biker, thus unable to answer.

**Mark Engert** – While I currently do not bike as much as I would like, I would ask you and see what your members recommend. If you want to improve things I have been taught to always ask he experts.

**Steve Feverston** – I am comfortable riding on residential streets and on those thoroughfare streets where a bikeway is established. Two things stand out as opportunities to improve the comfort level for bicyclists. First, provide for bicycle lanes on thoroughfare streets that currently lack such lanes and second, provide for public and private bicycle racks in business districts as well as places such as parks that currently lack them.

**Belinda Kenley** – I am a novice bike rider and am not very confident about riding on busy streets. I wear a helmet and do all I can to stay safe. I just need more practice! The neighborhood I ride in has wide streets in very good condition.

#### **QUESTION 4: The region has the Nation’s Largest Paved Trail Network<sup>SM</sup> – which has already demonstrated strong economic impact in many communities. How can Centerville use the Miami Valley trails as an economic driver?**

**John Beals** – I question the strength of the term “Economic Driver” and would need to consult City of Xenia officials as to their opinion of financial impact of their extensive bike route crossing situation. I understand the modest impact that a city’s businesses would experience relative to easier access via cyclists, but feel that dollar impact would be modest and not deserve the term “economic driver” in our community. But I do not question that bicyclists would provide a positive assist and shared positive experience to all

consumers at that business. "Good business draws more business."

**Jim Briggs** – See response 2 (above). Evidence supporting this allegation would be helpful.

**Mark Engert** – I would love to see more running and biking biathlons in the city. These types of events help promote the city and promote a healthy life style. Win Win.

**Steve Feverston** – As you and your colleagues already know, being home to the nation's largest paved trail network is no small feat and wasn't by accident. It took a collaboration of many entities, public and private over the course of decades to implement this vision. The City of Centerville has been and will continue to be a contributor to the paved trail network. Having a strong, interconnected system provides commuter routes for our residents. It allows for improved bicycle and pedestrian access to our businesses districts, particularly the downtown area.

**Belinda Kenley** – A strong network of bike trails can encourage tourism, increasing revenue for restaurants, shops and hotels. The increase in lodging tax would certainly be a benefit to the city. Evidence has shown that healthy, fit people typically have significantly reduced healthcare expenses, freeing up dollars to spend for recreation and entertainment, which are economic drivers for cities. Easy access to the Miami Valley Trails can be pitched to homebuyers which may ultimately result in higher property values, which equals more tax dollars to all recipients (City, library, parks district, school district).

**QUESTION 5: The Surgeon General has posted a call to action to get more American's active and moving. What can you do as an elected official to ensure future generations have opportunities for a healthy and active lifestyle? For example, what would you do to support the local Safe Routes to School initiative?**

**John Beals** – Our City has already accessed some of the federal funds set aside for Safe Routes to Schools, primarily in making safer crossings for schools having walking students with the need for crossing our major Arterial streets. I attempted to work with staff to gain a bikeway/path along the east side of Normandy Lane so to access Magsig, Cline

and athletic fields, and secondly to access downtown business. I was pounded with lots of negative reasons: two governments in control of the poor existing road profile with one of the two "not interested," the large number of individual properties to be approached for land purchases or easements to provide R/W for such a trail, over and above the cost of R/W and construction, even if kept separate of the lousy Normandy Road profile. So one can be very much FOR Safe Routes to Schools, yet the difficulties to overcome infrastructure problems make a major impact. And always the concern: Will the Gains, for how many users, justify the Costs?

**Jim Briggs** – The Safe Routes initiative is already being addressed by the city. As a Council member, I would continue to support it. The question involves physical activity as a good thing; C-W Park District in its fifty sites, provides opportunities for physical activities to all age and interest groups. The council's role is of a supporter of that work.

**Mark Engert** – As an elected official, all I can do is help provide the tools for people use in our community, no different than providing a world class library, but I can not make people go read. I would help provide those tools needed to entice those who are thinking about participating. I would help provide the tools and atmosphere that would make this type of activity more enjoyable for those who currently take advantage what is currently in place. If elected, I would fight for the expansions and up keep of activities that help make Centerville a great place to live. I know that in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood the safe routes to school is in the planning stages, I would work the School District and the Families to ensure a beneficial outcome for all.

**Steve Feverston** – The City of Centerville in conjunction with Centerville City Schools, MVRPC and the Ohio Department of Transportation developed a safe routes travel plan in February, 2014. The overall plan is a good one that I support. It surveys parents of school-age children, evaluates infrastructure within the walking/biking areas around each school and provides recommendations to promote walking and biking to school. Such recommendations include educational, non-infrastructure actions, enforcement and infrastructure improvements.

**Belinda Kenley** – Several months ago, the City applied for and received a grant to establish a Disc Golf Course at Stubbs Park. This is an increasingly popular sport in our region, and we hope that our residents will use it for fitness and fun.

The City should continue collaborating with the Park District and neighboring communities to attract funding for specific projects – to maintain the quality of our parks and bike paths.

We can look to other cities around the state and the US who have "best practices" for promoting healthy and active lifestyles. We can take the most suitable ideas for our community and implement them, based on funding opportunities.

About 4-5 years ago, Centerville was a key player in the Montgomery County Health Department's initiative "521 almost none" to promote healthy eating habits, exercise, and controlled time spent on electronic devices. We promoted the program through our website, social media and cable council TV programming. I'd encourage the City to promote this – or a similar program- once again.

Safe Routes to Schools:

I will support the funding of programs run by Centerville Police Department to promote the Safe Routes to School initiative, including Bike Rodeo, Safetyville Square, and the annual Bike Helmet giveaway.

The City could increase police presence around each of the schools during arrival and departure times. However, funding continues to be a very scary issue. As an alternative, the Centerville Police Department could recruit, train and support volunteers to be on site and assist with traffic during arrival and departure times.

**QUESTION 6: Do you support expanding the Iron Horse trail south of I-675? Briefly explain why or why not and what a councilperson's role is in this respect?**

**John Beals** – Yes, but on a different alignment. Assuming the very expensive bridge or tunnel project were complete, is the cyclist riding southward through residential plats toward Franklin Street, CHS and downtown merchants much better off than a cyclist on Franklin Street at the Cloy intersection? I promote finishing the existing bikeway by either connecting its south end to Village South School and Park,

or to connect it to Loop Road via an under the bridge and a loop connection to the north Loop Road bridge approach. Then I suggest that we continue the main bikeway southward over the existing Bigger Road bridge by using Hewitt Rd as a connector. Then southward to Cloy and along Cloy to Franklin Street and the probable continuation along Cloy southward to Social Row Road and the bike route planning for interconnectivity to regional bikeways.

**Jim Briggs** – The general concept of route connectivity, motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian is well-recognized and supported by the Council. Any expansion will require additional access to funds which are presently very scarce. For example, the City is invading its reserve funds annually to cover operating costs. A Council member's first requirement, it seems to me, is to address this issue, which is becoming more important with the passage of time. Extending the Iron Horse Trail beyond the I-675 will be a very costly endeavor that will, in addition, require access to dedicated routes south of the highway. Placement of those routes is a difficult question requiring thorough detailed study. The Planning Commission, of which I have been a member for 17 years, is presently reviewing development plans for property in the area. Those plans have already stirred opposition from a majority of property owners. Without a resolution of their complaints, approval of the development and actual construction there, any further progress will be difficult. Can it be resolved to accommodate the Iron Horse matter? Until it can be, hopes for the Trail extension must remain only hopes.

**Mark Engert** – I'm all for expanding Iron horse trail, "Building work/life infrastructures that enthusiastically support this trend allows cities to remain economically competitive and appeal to a vibrant young adult workforce that seeks a satisfying balance of work and active lifestyle". Bike trails have a proven track record of attracting younger population which is important to any community.

**Steve Feverston** – I support connecting Iron Horse Trail south of I-675. Finding the appropriate route where this connection occurs will be the challenge. Funding sources, city tax dollars, property acquisition, engineering/construction obstacles and timing (when could such project be placed on ODOT's construction schedule) are considerations the City

Council must evaluate to determine the appropriate route.

**Belinda Kenley** – Yes, I support it in a limited way. In light of recent dramatic cuts to city funding by the legislature, we simply do not have the funds to contribute to a multi-million dollar tunnel under 675, which is one idea that has been proposed. I like the idea of utilizing the Bigger/Hewitt/Whipp Road route to connect the bike trail. We should try to figure out a way to have a bike path on Bigger on the west side (just like it is on the right side). That would result in one less crossing of the busy Bigger Road to Hewitt. Councilmembers will have the opportunity to include funding for this and other reasonable, inexpensive ideas in the City's budget. We can also lobby our legislators to provide some funding through the state budget process and work with neighboring communities to pursue grants. I also encourage Bike Miami Valley to work with landowners who have their land for sale to ensure inclusion of plenty of green space for a bike trail through the property, no matter who develops the project. City Council members can also ask that any preliminary development plan include connection to the bike trails where appropriate.

### **QUESTION 7: In conclusion, why do you think people who care about bicycling and walking issues should vote for you?**

**John Beals** – They should vote for me since I'm a biker, familiar with the needs and desires of bicyclists, and I also bring my years of Civil Engineering design background to the City, which included bikeway design. I was key in the design of the Stillwater Cable Stayed bridge and its connecting bikeways, for instance.

**Jim Briggs** – I intend to be a Councilman who supports the entire city without playing any favorites among interest or affinity groups. I'm the only candidate who will make my first priority addressing three immediate problems:

ONE the previously-mentioned budget issue which, without a positive resolution will keep Centerville's "status quo" and maintain what is now a tax haven for nearly 50% of the population while funds shrink;

TWO: the situation facing the Cornerstone development's reliance on another government entity for EMS-fire

service should be positively resolved by the City which can initially work with local sources to provide EMS services there. Doing so will generate data that would support establishment of a city emergency service. Centerville's a city of over 19,000 residents, who deserve this level of service, and

THREE: improving deteriorating streets and some neighborhoods to keep the Centerville "LifeStyle" so attractive that future potential residents will be lured here in growing numbers.

My campaign is focused on four years of dedicated service. I have no plans for a political career and no desire to be re-elected to any subsequent term.

**Mark Engert** – I will listen, and work with bikers in the area to see if we can make biking safer, and more enjoyable for all.

**Steve Feverston** – I am the best candidate for City Council for those who care about bicycling and walking. Through my formal education in urban planning and practical experience during my career as City Planner for the City of Centerville, I understand transportation issues and the necessary interconnections of the various transportation modes, including the role biking and walking plays in this system. I enjoy hiking and use many of the City's sidewalks and pedestrian pathways for recreation, shopping and business purposes.

**Belinda Kenley** – I care deeply about the residents of our community, whether they are active bikers and walkers or not. I have worked very hard over the past 8 years with city staff and my colleagues on council to make sure we support the businesses in our community and attract new businesses to the City to ensure that we have the income to care for the City's infrastructure, including the roads and sidewalks.

I also support environmentally friendly practices. My full-time career, as Vice President of Energy Optimizers, USA, is to promote environmentally sound practices, including energy efficiency measures, to schools and local government. I want to make sure that we take care of our earth and environment to ensure that this generation and future generations can walk, bike, and enjoy our beautiful earth.

## **Washington Twp. Trustee**

### **Candidates**

#### **Vote for 1**

\*Indicates incumbent

#### **QUESTION 1: What is your favorite personal experience riding a bicycle?**

**Dale Berry** – As a child, I lived out in the country and had to ride a school bus to school each day. When I was in the 7th grade, they built a school about 2 miles from my house, so for the first time it was possible & I was allowed to ride my bike to school. I was always jealous of those who lived close enough to ride their bike to school.

**Matt Lynch** – Riding with my kids when they were younger, now it is difficult to keep up with them. We rent bikes on vacation, riding on the beach is one of our favorite family activities.

#### **QUESTION 2: If you are elected, what will you do to ensure that your city streets are safe and accommodating so they serve ALL users (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, drivers, etc.)?**

**Dale Berry** – I have been a board member of MVRPC for several years and I am sure that you are aware of the bike programs including Bike Share that are supported by the MVRPC. I am in favor of extending bike trails wherever possible because they are much safer than riding on the streets.

**Matt Lynch** – One of the reasons I'm running is to reverse the recent trend of zoning variances, which have allowed increased density in areas where the existing roads are not adequate. Increased traffic without appropriate spacing for bicyclist, pedestrians, etc., is a major concern. My opponent is ignoring zoning regulations, the long-term result is more dangerous traffic situations for all concerned.

#### **QUESTION 3: Do you feel comfortable bicycling on your city streets? If not, why not? What specific actions would you support to improve your comfort level for riding a bicycle on your city streets?**

**Dale Berry** – I really do not feel safe riding my bike on the streets unless it

would be just on the streets that do not have through traffic. Part of this fear is my age. I felt much safer riding on the busy streets when I was younger. I would like to see more use of sidewalks and trails for bike riding.

**Matt Lynch** – I feel comfortable riding in most areas, however increased development in our area will be a concern soon. As traffic increases, I would be less comfortable.

#### **QUESTION 4: The region has the Nation's Largest Paved Trail Network<sup>SM</sup> – which has already demonstrated strong economic impact in many communities. How can Centerville use the Miami Valley trails as an economic driver?**

**Dale Berry** – For bike trails to have an economic impact, there needs to be a bike friendly destination business near the bike trails. I don't think that our area has such destinations at this point.

**Matt Lynch** – 4/5 (*sic*) The Miami Valley Bike Trails paved trail network is an important community asset, but underutilized in terms of potential economic impact. Local communities should partner with bicycling organizations to promote and expand awareness. One way to accomplish this would be to work with local school systems to introduce field trips, provide bikes for the kids who don't have them, etc.

#### **QUESTION 5: The Surgeon General has posted a call to action to get more American's active and moving. What can you do as an elected official to ensure future generations have opportunities for a healthy and active lifestyle? For example, what would you do to support the local Safe Routes to School initiative?**

**Dale Berry** – I think that the Safe Routes to school initiative could be very successful if a group of parents along the route to school would take turns supervising the route in their area until the students were within sight of the crossing guards each day.

**Matt Lynch** – 4/5 (*sic*) The Miami Valley Bike Trails paved trail network is an important community asset, but underutilized in terms of potential

economic impact. Local communities should partner with bicycling organizations to promote and expand awareness. One way to accomplish this would be to work with local school systems to introduce field trips, provide bikes for the kids who don't have them, etc.

#### **QUESTION 6: Do you support expanding the Iron Horse trail south of I-675? Briefly explain why or why not and what a councilperson's role is in this respect?**

**Dale Berry** – I was really excited to see the walkway across 675 from Wright State to Fairfield Commons area completed. I would love to see such a crossing at 675 at the end of Iron Horse Trail, but I do not know where the funding for such a project would come from. Local governments are being hit hard by decreases in funding from the state. Perhaps funding from private citizens could be collected to finance the project.

**Matt Lynch** – I support it, I believe the recent decision on the part of Centerville City to reject the Ryan homes development was appropriate. I'm not sure where the funding will come from to expand the trail south, but it is an important connector.

#### **QUESTION 7: In conclusion, why do you think people who care about bicycling and walking issues should vote for you?**

**Dale Berry** – I am very much in favor of walking and bicycling. People in my area question why I walk with my "Ski Poles" most mornings. And am sure that you know the answer to that. So, therefore I would like to have your support.

**Matt Lynch** – I'm running to preserve the open space community we've come to expect within Washington Township and Centerville. Please see my website for more details [LynchForTrustee.com](http://LynchForTrustee.com)