



**League of Women Voters  
of Charlotte-Mecklenburg**

# **2008 Primary Election Voter Guide**

**Mecklenburg County Commission Races**

**Primary Election: May 6, 2008**

# Candidate Listing

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## Mecklenburg County Commissioner At-Large

You may vote for three (3) in the party of your registration (If you are Unaffiliated, you may choose the party ballot you wish to vote in)

### Democrat

<b>HAROLD COGDELL, JR.</b>	<b>PAGE 4</b>
<b>KEN DAVIES</b>	<b>PAGE 6</b>
<b>DAN MURREY</b>	<b>PAGE 8</b>
<b>JENNIFER ROBERTS</b>	<b>PAGE 10</b>
<b>NICHOLAS TRIPLETT</b>	<b>PAGE 12</b>

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## Mecklenburg County Commission Districts

You may vote for one in the party of your registration (If you are Unaffiliated, you may choose the party ballot you wish to vote in)

### County District 2

You may vote for one.

#### Democrat

**VILMA D. LEAKE** **PAGE 14**

**NORMAN A. MITCHELL, SR.** **PAGE 16**

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### County District 5

You may vote for one.

#### Republican

**NEIL COOKSEY** **PAGE 18**

**ADA NICOLAY** **PAGE 20**

**JAYE RAO** **PAGE 22**

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# Candidate Information

**Each candidate for a contested race was asked for a photo (if possible), biographical questions and answers to the following four questions:**

- 1) What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?
- 2) What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?
- 3) What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?
- 4) What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

Each candidate was instructed to stay within the box space allowed to answer the four questions.

Information was not requested from candidates without a contested race in either the primary or the general election.

All information received from candidates has been posted.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
Primary election May 6 – General election Nov. 4, 2008**

Candidate Name: Harold Cogdell, Jr.  
Phone Number: 704-968-0585  
Email Address: Harold@attorneycogdell.com  
Current Occupation: Attorney  
Education–Highest Degree: Juris Doctor

Candidate’s web site URL: [www.cogdellforcountycommission.com](http://www.cogdellforcountycommission.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church  
Stratford-Richardson YMCA / Kappa Alpha Psi  
Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

Playing a meaningful role in supporting two senior parents;  
Graduating from law school and passing the N.C. State Bar Examination;  
Being given the privilege to serve the people of Charlotte on the City Council

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

To remain focused on meaningful and civil political discourse designed at developing of long-term solutions for regional environmental, transportation, managed growth and educational needs.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Harold Cogdell, Jr.

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

- 1) Better communication, collaboration and planning between the school board, city, county and state government;
- 2) Identification of long-term community priorities, followed by public dialogue and staff research of fair and innovative funding options necessary to meet these needs while also ensuring a continued competitive and affordable tax structure;
- 3) Identify opportunities where county services can improve support of CMS and CPCC in workforce development thereby enhancing this regions competitive edge in the global marketplace.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

Three experiences have best prepared me for public service:

- 1) being raised in a very moderate income household by a career teacher and law enforcement officer that were both committed to their respective professions;
- 2) owning and operating a small law practice for the last ten years; and
- 3) serving on the Charlotte City Council..

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

I would support the Clean Air Works program. This program can be utilized to enhance collaboration between the public/private sectors and neighborhood leaders to develop air improvement policy and practices. Establish quantifiable emission reduction goals and consider public/private incentive efforts and shared responsibility public education campaigns. Promote public awareness of the impact to this region on public health of our failure to reduce particulate matter in our atmosphere and the regional impact if federal highway funding is forfeited or federal air quality mandates are imposed. Additionally, weighing heavily input from water quality experts on environmentally conscious planning and stricter enforcement of existing ordinances designed to improve water quality is essential to protecting our most important finite natural resources.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
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Candidate Name: Ken Davies

Phone Number: 704-731-0600

Email Address: Kendavies@Kdavies.com

Current Occupation: Lawyer

Education–Highest Degree: Juris Doctor

Candidate's web site URL:

pending

Three (3) most important organizations  
you belong to:

N.C. State Bar  
Myers Park Baptist Church  
Charlotte Area Green Party

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

A 25-year legal career representing neighborhoods and  
everyday people  
Raised a wonderful 22-year old daughter  
Helped bring WNCW to Charlotte

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Our biggest challenge will be to convert Government policy and practices subservient to corporate interests to Government which serves all the citizens. This means a new approach to growth-induced problems of dirty air and lack of water, congested roads, and overstretched schools. We must begin the conversion to a earth-friendly, sustainable economy and community.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Ken Davies

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

- 1) Increase funding for schools and teacher benefits;
- 2) Funding for additional felony prosecutors for our District Attorney;
- 3) Institute a living wage of \$12.00 per hour for any Mecklenburg County employee and all employees of companies contracting with Mecklenburg County.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

I have lived and worked in Charlotte for 40 years. I have handled many cases as a lawyer which involve County and City land use policies and personnel. As a result, I have become familiar with County land use and environmental agencies and policies.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

- 1) Support additional CAT transit lines;
- 2) Tax high-polluting vehicles and heavy equipment;
- 3) Reform land use policies and ordinances to require automobile independent development;
- 4) Ban well drilling for lawn irrigation;
- 5) Ban drive thru windows;
- 6) Ban plastic bags;
- 7) Require a deposit for all bottles and cans holding liquids;
- 8) Institute a Catawba Compact to provide for a fair distribution of water and water quality controls;
- 9) A green job core for unemployed youths and young adults to "Green" Mecklenburg County.

**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County**  
**Primary election May 6 – General election Nov. 4, 2008**

Candidate Name: Dan Murrey

Phone Number: 704-372-1222

Email Address: daniel.murrey@orthocarolina.com

Current Occupation: Orthopedic Spine Surgeon

Education–Highest Degree: Doctor of Medicine (MD), Masters in Public Policy (MPP)

Candidate's web site URL:

[www.danmurrey.com](http://www.danmurrey.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Park Road Baptist Church  
OrthoCarolina  
American Leadership Forum

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

--Growing in a 20+ year marriage to Katie Oates and helping her raise two remarkable children.  
--Learning to eliminate pain and improve function in people's lives, either through surgery or by helping them to make good decisions about their health and lives.  
--Bringing together and leading 70 orthopedic surgeons onto one team creating OrthoCarolina.

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Our biggest challenge facing the county is providing infrastructure to support our rapid growth. That means providing quality schools, adequate healthcare facilities, roads and other means of transit without damaging our air and water quality or eliminating green spaces.



Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Dan Murrey

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

- 1) I want to see a more comprehensive focus on the well-being of children recognizing that a child saved represents a lifetime of progress for the community. This includes making sure that we have adequate resources available to educate all of the children of Mecklenburg County, making sure that we see positive results from money spent, and enlisting the broader community to help. For example, programs focused on reducing repeat teen pregnancies have been shown to save money and stop a cycle of poverty for affected children.
- 2) I want to focus attention of the Health Department on getting more out of the private and public agencies that provide healthcare for the uninsured and underinsured. Although these organizations are doing great work, they could do more if their efforts were better coordinated. Getting routine care rather than ER care for these people saves money and improves outcomes.
- 3) We should not build another county building that is not eco-friendly and energy-efficient.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

The commission oversees the school budget, healthcare and human services. Serving on the School Building Solutions Committee, I had to balance growth demands with the needs of established neighborhoods. As a district chair of the Bonds campaign, I helped secure more resources to make sure our children have adequate facilities. As a physician working in both healthcare systems, I have experience that will benefit the Commission in its role as the Board of Public Health. With degrees in religion, public policy, and medicine and the experience of running a business, I've had the chance to learn about people from a lot of different perspectives. With a growing population, expanding infrastructure needs scarce resources, the challenges we face as a community will be complex. Complex problems require breadth and depth of experience to solve. them.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

Since motor vehicle emissions are the largest contributor to the air quality problem, we need to encourage all reasonable measures to reduce traffic. This includes supporting public transit and transit-friendly development, encouraging carpooling, fuel-efficient cars, and walk-able or bike-able neighborhoods.

Much of our water is used in the production of electricity. Ultimately our water use may be reduced when alternative energy sources become more widely available and cost-effective. Water use restrictions are a start, but will only be a short-term solution. Building initiatives that include graywater collection and usage can be simple and cheap ways to improve water use efficiency.

Finally all new government building should be done with the most energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly methods that are reasonably available.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
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Candidate Name: Jennifer Roberts

Phone Number: 704 336 2574

Email Address: Jennifer@jenniferwroberts.net

Current Occupation: Chairman, County Commission / Adjunct Professor at UNCC

Education–Highest Degree: M.A. in International Affairs from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; M.A. in European History from University of Toronto; B.A. from UNC Chapel Hill in English and Math

Candidate's web site URL:

[www.jenniferroberts.net](http://www.jenniferroberts.net) or [www.jenniferwroberts.net](http://www.jenniferwroberts.net)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Metropolitan Transit Commission (current Chairman)  
Women's Summit, Steering Committee  
Centralina Council of Governments (COG) Board

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

Morehead Scholarship to UNC Chapel Hill in 1978  
  
Being accepted into the Foreign Service and representing the US as a diplomat for two tours  
  
Achieving a 9-0 County Commission vote in support of the largest CMS school bond package ever, \$516m, and having it pass with 68% of voters' support in Nov. 2007

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Growth, even in an economic slowdown, continues to be the greatest challenge for Mecklenburg County. This growth may slow but it will continue, and it impacts our ability to provide quality service for all our residents in issues ranging from education to healthcare to recreation. There were over 70,000 people who moved into the Charlotte region over the past year. With this growth comes increased need for infrastructure, ranging from new schools (we will open 7 new schools this fall) to roads and public transportation, and we will continue to be challenged to find ways to pay for this without jeopardizing affordable housing in our area. Growth has also damaged our natural resources, as we remain in non-attainment under EPA air quality standards, and we have spent millions of dollars to protect our water quality from deteriorating. Rapid urbanization has also challenged our criminal justice system, and we are in the midst of reviewing its operations to have it function more effectively so we can keep our neighborhoods safe.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Jennifer Roberts

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

I am working to bring the County and the City together around housing issues, so that we can expand affordable housing, give neighborhoods better tools to maintain public safety, assist homeowners in mortgage trouble, and prevent neighborhoods from declining.

I plan to put another land bond on the ballot this fall, to preserve park land and open space, and continue to pursue ways to improve air and water quality/quantity as well in our region.

I have just announced that I plan to create a Blue Ribbon Commission on Criminal Justice. I would like to see it review our justice system so that we improve the operation of our courts and therefore improve public safety. This will include efforts to rehabilitate offenders, reduce recidivism, treat more people with substance abuse issues, treat mental illness better, and reduce crime.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

I am serving my second term as an at-large commissioner, and my first term as Chairman, and my experience continues to broaden and improve my effectiveness as a leader. I have served on several of the board's committees, including Natural Resources, Effective and Efficient Government, Economic Development, and Community Building. Prior to my work on the commission, I served as a US diplomat overseas, and learned to negotiate multi-lateral treaties and to collaborate across languages and cultures. In that position, I was also trained in immigration issues. My banking experience at First Union helped me sharpen my accounting and budgeting skills. Teaching at a high school early in my career and now at UNCC has given me insights into education and what it takes to train young people for the future.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

There are many initiatives I have supported as a commissioner to improve our environment. We passed a land bond in 2007, much of which will go toward purchasing land in the Mt. Island Lake watershed, providing better buffers to our streams and tributaries and offering best practices for filtering polluted storm water runoff. We continue to require that new county buildings obtain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification and are pursuing options for incentives (reduced permit fees) to builders who also use LEED certification. These practices reduce energy requirements and thus help reduce emissions from electric power plants. I will support our program to continue to retro-fit diesel engines for buses and heavy equipment to reduce their emissions. I am part of a regional effort to coordinate our best practices around water resources for both quality and quantity through the COG and through the Regional Partnership. I am also supportive of expanding our transit system as rapidly as possible.

**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
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Candidate Name: Niccholas P Triplett  
Phone Number: 704.609.0690  
Email Address: ntriplett@carolina.rr.com  
Current Occupation: Teacher / Stay-at-home Dad  
Education–Highest Degree: BA – History, MA – Teaching

Candidate’s web site URL:

[www.nicholastriplett.com](http://www.nicholastriplett.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Charlotte Area Green Party  
NC Green Party  
National Board of Professional Teaching Standards

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

1. I have been a teacher in our public schools for the last 6 years. I am a National Board Certified Teachers.  
2. I am a plaintiff in a lawsuit to open NC’s ballot access laws to independents, “unaffiliated voters”, and third parties.  
3. I have worked as a local activist in the areas of grassroots democracy, social justice, and the environment.

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Mecklenburg County must put aside fear and the staus quo in order and begin making a comprehensive investment in the future. The specific reforms we need, such as investments in renewable energy, a living wage, cleaning up our air, improving our schools and providing health care and social support for our most vulnerable citizens all will require forethought and sacrifice. We must have the courage to begin working TODAY to create a better Mecklenburg for our children and grandchildren. Small investments in important reforms now will lead to great benefits in the future.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Nicholas P. Triplett

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

1. Improve education by increasing teacher compensation, expanding educational choice (magnet schools, KIPP schools, afterschool programs, ect.) and returning LOCAL control to the teachers, parents and administrators who work with our children everyday. We must have the courage to opt out of No Child Left Behind, which harms our schools and children through unfunded high stakes testing mandates. Tests are primarily a tool of bureaucrats, not educators.
2. Provide health care and social support for the most vulnerable members of our community. We need free, universal pre and neo natal care for mothers and children, affordable housing, a living wage and increased funding for parent and child services at DSS.
3. We must ensure the integrity of our environment by investing in renewable energy and green jobs programs, cleaning up our toxic air, and restoring citizen control of our public utilities. Conservation and smart growth will improve our land, air and water resources.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

Sometimes it is what we do not do that makes us most qualified to be a public servant. I am not a politician or a party insider. I do not accept no money from PACs, corporations or interest groups. I am a parent, a teacher, a citizen and a local grassroots activist and these are the experiences that will serve me best in office.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

1. Mecklenburg County government must do everything in its power to stop Duke Energy's proposed Cliffside coal plant and return oversight of public utilities to the citizens.
2. All efforts must be made to improve our county's dismal air quality (how? see below).
3. Sustainable growth ensures the long term viability of neighborhoods / businesses.
4. Citizen oversight of public resources (land/air/water) must be restored.
5. Fiscal policy can give businesses/citizens incentives for green building and conservation practices.
6. Investments in renewable energy ensures clean power for the future and saves money over the long term.
7. Expanding public transportation (bus, light rail, HOV lanes, etc.) will help cut ozone and particulate matter.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County**  
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Candidate Name: Vilma D. Leake

Phone Number: 704/534-8034

Email Address: [votevilmaleake@bellsouth.net](mailto:votevilmaleake@bellsouth.net)

Current Occupation: Retired Schoolteacher/Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education Member

Education–Highest Degree: Master’s of Education

Candidate’s web site URL: [www.votevilmaleake.com](http://www.votevilmaleake.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

1. President of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Association of Education.
2. National Board Member of the Council of Urban Boards of Education (C.U.B.E.)
3. Little Rock A.M.E. Zion Church
4. Delta Sigma Theta

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

1. With the support of parents and members of both the business and faith communities, I led 10,000 teachers to Raleigh for a pay raise, which resulted in a 15% pay increase for teachers. The movement was entitled, “Have a Heart for a Teacher.”
2. I successfully advocated for the opening of a site for children who were suspended that successfully removed them from a “storefront facility,” and into a site that provided them with a gym, hot lunches, library services, science laboratories, and adequate classroom space.
3. I created and distributed an informational newsletter for the citizens of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education District 2, which provided and continues to provide an effective forum for citizens and parents.

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Over the next two years I believe adequate funding for education and the continuity of services for the elderly and alternative means for youth support are the two biggest challengers for Mecklenburg County. In addition, Mecklenburg County faces increasing issues as it relates to water conservation and air quality. Finally, Mecklenburg County may also face economic struggles based upon the decreasing real estate boom; as a result, tax revenues may decrease, resulting in a prevention from maintain the tax base at its current levels to support critical agencies that fall under the County Commission’s jurisdiction. Thus, the Commissioners will have to be creative with regard to fiscal measures to assure that priority funding is directed to public agencies most in need, i.e., education, in order that they continue to thrive in a changing economy.



Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Vilma D. Leake

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

1. Provide adequate funding for education
2. Provide adequate funding to support services for Senior Citizens
3. Provide support to enable partnerships with vital community resources i.e., park & recreation facilities, education, human and health services, and enhanced library services.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

I have a varied background that has fully prepared me for the position of County Commission. Primarily, I have served for the past ten (10) years as an elected member of the Board of Education for Mecklenburg County. In that capacity, I have provided effective and proficient leadership to the citizens of District 2. In addition, I have been an active and consistent leader in the community, organizing and spearheading community meetings. Further, I have attended numerous leadership trainings and have gained invaluable skills as a community activist, leader and organizer.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

To ensure that Mecklenburg County citizens are experiencing optimal health as it relates to breathing, measures to improve air quality must be aggressively pursued. If elected to the County Commission, I would strongly support the following air quality measures: equipping Mecklenburg County with electrical buses, increasing the use of the light rail system, promoting public transportation that is equipped with mechanisms resulting in the reduction of air pollution from exhausts, and supporting the creation of HOV (High Occupancy Vehicles) lanes on well-traveled highways to reduce the amount of transit traffic.

**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
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Candidate Name: Norman A. Mitchell, Sr.

Phone Number: 704-399-3061

Email Address: normanam@aol.com

Current Occupation: Mecklenburg County Commissioner

Education–Highest Degree: 3 yrs. Johnson C. Smith University

Candidate's web site URL:

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Board Member Mecklenburg County Commissioner  
Board Member North Carolina Association of County Commissioners  
Trustee North Carolina Retirement System (\$88 Billion Pension Fund)  
Board Member National Organization of Counties

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

Initiated the Statue of Seniors Report  
Initiated the Statue of Veterans Report  
Initiated the new Tax Office at the Wilkinson Blvd. Service Center  
Worked for the new expansion of the Beatties Ford Library  
Worked for the new recreation center at Revolution Park

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

The biggest challenge I see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years is, how can we sustain a fast growing community with the services that we provide (Health and Human Services, Schools, Park and Recreation, etc.) and still have a stable tax rate.  
The answer is “Alternative Revenue” such as Impact Fees, Land Transfer Fees, etc. I would hope that the League of Women Voters would play a major role, when the discussion begins.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Norman A. Mitchell, Sr.

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

I will work to see that the recommendations of the Statue of Seniors are carried out.  
I will work to see that the recommendations of the Statue of Veterans are carried out.  
I will work to see that the expansion of the Beatties Ford Rd. Library is completed.  
I will work to see that the Revolution Recreation Center is built.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

I served on the Citizen Capital Budget Advisory Committee, where I chaired the WTVI subcommittee for the \$10 million HDTV system, which is up and running and I also chaired the Government Facilities Subcommittee for the state of the arts Mecklenburg County Sheriff Firing Range.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

I wouldn't initiate any new initiatives, but I would continue to follow the recommendation of the Air, Land and Water 2006 State of the Environment Report.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
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Candidate Name: Neil Cooksey  
Phone Number: 704-365-4448  
Email Address: neil@neilcooksey.com  
Current Occupation: Attorney  
Education–Highest Degree: J.D., University of Michigan Law School



Candidate's web site URL:

[www.neilcooksey.com](http://www.neilcooksey.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Carmel Presbyterian Church  
United Way Public Policy Committee  
Associated Builders & Contractors

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

- Convincing my wife to marry me and staying married for 20 years
- Raising three children
- Starting a small law firm from scratch

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

***Balancing growing demands on community services with limited revenue sources.*** Mecklenburg County already has the highest individual tax burden in North Carolina so the answer is not necessarily more tax revenue. Rather, we need to be smarter about the way we spend the people's money by continuing to seek ways to be more efficient in the delivery of services, identifying programs that can and should be funded by the private sector and allocating scarce dollars to our highest priorities. To do these things, we need someone who will challenge the status quo, ask tough questions, set performance goals and demand results from County agencies.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Neil Cooksey

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

1. **Bring common sense to County government.** This means using a cost/benefit analysis to evaluate existing programs and new initiatives to ensure that taxpayer's dollars are spent wisely. This also means not taking positions solely for personal political gain.
2. **Fostering an atmosphere of constructive dialogue on County Commission.** We need to move beyond personal attacks and personal agendas and get on with the people's business. Public servants need to listen to the people they serve and be open to new ideas.
3. **Restoring trust to County government.** We need to demonstrate to the voters that we can govern effectively without rancor and that we can be good stewards of the people's money. Government spending should not grow faster than the rate of inflation plus population growth.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

As a lawyer, I know how to analyze and prioritize issues. I also have experience in business in both the management of a large business and as the leader of a successful entrepreneurial start-up. I know what it takes to develop long term goals and to develop strategies to reach those goals. I know how to hold people accountable to performance targets. My volunteer experience at the United Way, Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative and Carmel Presbyterian Church has exposed me to many of the critical needs of this community. Often these needs can be addressed by private, charitable and religious groups. Other times government needs to intervene. My experience will help me know the difference. Finally, I am a certified mediator and I hope to use those skills to find and nurture common ground among Commissioners.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

**Water:** Although the delivery of water to the end user is not a County function, the County can act to protect our water supply through conservation efforts both at the source by protecting watersheds within the County's jurisdiction and by encouraging users to use less water. I would encourage the use of voluntary conservation easements to protect streams and shoreline.

**Air:** We need to investigate the costs and benefits of gradually replacing the County's vehicle fleet with clean burning vehicles.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County**  
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Candidate Name: Ada Nicolay

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Current Occupation:

Education–Highest Degree: B.A. in Political Science, Marymount University; UNCC Urban League Leadership Program, Charlotte Chamber Leadership

Candidate’s web site URL:

[www.Voteadanicolay.com](http://www.Voteadanicolay.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

- 1)YWCA: Volunteer for Capital Campaign Steering Committee raising \$8 million for Homeless Families and Women in Transition Program:
- 2) Charlotte Mecklenburg Council on Aging: Former Board Chair and Current Board Member
- 3) Requested on monthly basis to host and support organization that includes agencies that improve the lives of children and women, along with education and political entities listed on my website: [voteadanicolay.com](http://voteadanicolay.com)

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

- 1) Placing a high priority that values my relationship to my husband, family, friends and community.
- 2) Working on fundraising campaigns ranging from \$25,000 projects to a \$400 million bond campaigns.
- 3) Working as a staff member at the Charlotte Chamber to promote the first 13- county regional legislative agenda for State and Federal initiatives.

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

Balancing our population growth with our community’s needs --reviewing our budget line item by line item due to our **Economic** constraints beginning to take a toll on our revenue, giving our children a quality **Education** while working toward closing the achievement gap and administering our natural resources with the drought conditions in regards to our **Environment**, along with taking back our community from the rise in crime striking every corner of our county.



Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Ada Nicolay

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

1) Private Sector Solutions: Charlotte is home to some of the best and brightest talent in our country's business and industry sectors. With our current budget restraints and due to the current economy, we need to look at consolidation, outsourcing and more efficient management systems ; 2) Cooperation and Collaboration: Leaders at the local, state and national levels are dealing with a number of our community's greatest challenges – i.e. education and crime – within their own realm. Let's work together to create more cohesive solutions by working with elected officials in the respective bodies of government. ) Focus on better management of resources. Charlotte is at a defining moment with regard to our quality of life. Our go-go local economy has sputtered a bit and we must be prepared to adapt to the normal ebbs and flows of the business cycles. We must balance the increased demands placed upon our services while being fiscally responsible to the residents who provide the funding for the services.

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

Both education and career - My work in a bank management program gave me a financial foundation and then my work on Capitol Hill as a legislative aide included working with constituent services, researching various issues ranging from education, human services and judicial issues on a national level. When I moved to Charlotte, the parallel continues working at the Charlotte Chamber as a Leadership Director and Government Relations Director. My position as the Government Relations Director at a national architecture firm designing courthouses, hospitals and jails also included building and maintaining elected officials' relationships. My vast range of relationships in the business, civic and political communities will serve as an essential base to work with a variety of constituencies to make a difference and move our community forward in budget, crime and education issues as we face major decisions regarding our quality of life.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

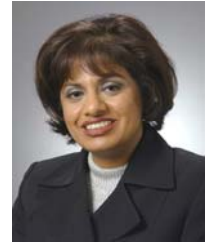
1) Coordinating private and public initiatives, i.e. supporting working from home when possible which conserves energy and gas and decreases air pollution. Encourage both business and government to encourage their employees to take public transportation, recycle and promote employee's ideas for conservation.

2) Working with CMS to coordinate their school schedule with the business national holidays to decrease the bus and car trips for the parents, students and teachers.

3) Securing green space through the nonprofit conservation organizations to create new bike paths, parks and green space for our future generation.



**League of Women Voters ON-LINE VOTER GUIDE for Mecklenburg County  
Primary election May 6 – General election Nov. 4, 2008**



Candidate Name: Jaye Rao

Phone Number: 704-367-4232

Email Address: jayerao32@aol.com

Current Occupation: Corporate Development/Fundraising Professional

Education–Highest Degree: UNC-Chapel Hill, B.A. Political Science and International Relations

Candidate’s web site URL:

[www.JayeRao.com](http://www.JayeRao.com)

Three (3) most important organizations you belong to:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Republican Women’s Night and Day Club  
Reader for the Blind, Charlotte Reader’s Information Service  
Forest Hills Church

Three (3) most important accomplishments:

1. Republican Nominee for Secretary of State, 2004. Received over 1.4 million votes from concerned citizens all across NC.
2. “Awarded the Largest Fundraiser in NC History”
3. Mentoring kids and raising corporate dollars for underprivileged youth.

1. What is the biggest challenge you see for Mecklenburg County in the next two years?

We must preserve our great quality of life. We must keep our economy viable and growing. Our healthy economy provides the necessary resources for our growing infrastructure needs. We compete in a global marketplace for every job, every opportunity with all the worlds’ people. As a result, our public schools must be competitive in preparing our children for the workforce or higher education.

Furthermore, to attract jobs and individuals, we must keep our county affordable. Currently, Mecklenburg County residents are saddled with the highest property taxes in NC. Our corporate taxes are the highest of any state in the Southeast. Mecklenburg County must not lose opportunities and individuals because of unaffordable taxes.

Candidate Name:  
(continued)

Jaye Rao

2. What are the top three things you wish to achieve if elected to serve?

Keeping Our Economy Viable and our Community Affordable

Keeping Our Schools Competitive

Keeping Our Families and Neighborhoods Safe

3. What past experience do you have that best prepares you for this office?

**Businesswoman** — Experience in business management, fundraising, marketing.

**Republican Nominee for NC Secretary of State, 2004**, U.S. Senator (then Congressman) Richard Burr served as her Campaign Chairman.

**Public Policy Experience** – Fundraiser - Political Campaigns – Richard Burr for U.S. Congress, Relect Mayor Pat McCrory, etc. Washington Think Tanks--Competitive Enterprise Institute, the Bill of Rights Institute. American Heart Association. Executive Assistant, James C. Miller, III, Reagan's Budget Director at Citizens for a Sound Economy

**Grew up in Charlotte, Resident for over 30 years.** Attended CMS – Collinswood Elementary, Carmel Middle School, South Mecklenburg High. B.A. UNC-Chapel Hill. Attends Forest Hills.

4. What initiative(s) would you support to improve our region's air and/or water quality?

Air Quality is a regional problem that the citizens of North Carolina and South Carolina must address together. Road congestion problem is contributes bad air quality. By addressing our traffic needs more efficiently, we can promote better air quality. As a Member of the County Commission, I will advocate for the purchase of county vehicles that are environmentally friendly, such as hybrid and lower carbon emitting vehicles. Furthermore, I will encourage companies to support telecommuting by their employees, carpooling, and use of mass transit.

It is important to our health and the preservation of nature that we protect our water sources. As a community we must work together for water conservation by curtailing wasteful water usage. We must be careful about debris dumping and toxic pollutants in our water supply. I would encourage newer technology for water purification.

