

**Keys to the Candidates**  
**Compiled by the League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County**  
**for the**  
**2016 General Election**

**Monroe County Coroner**

Eric S. Powell (R)  
Joani Shields (D)

***1. What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?***

**POWELL:** My qualifications for coroner are that I have served Monroe County for the past two years as a deputy coroner and have been a licensed Funeral Director for 25 years, including the last seven years as co-owner of The Funeral Chapel of Powell and Deckard. I feel that the combination of these two jobs is ideal to serve Monroe County as Coroner.

**SHIELDS:** I have been a Deputy/Chief Deputy Coroner since 2003. I was Chief Deputy in Owen County from 2003-2010. I was hired as a Deputy Coroner in Monroe County in 2009 and promoted to Chief Deputy in 2011. I am still currently the Chief Deputy Coroner for Monroe County. I hold a current Medicolegal Death Investigator certification through the Indiana State Coroners Association and was first certified in 2005.

***2. What are your top three priorities for your office and, if elected, how will you address them?***

**POWELL:** 1. Better communication between our office and local law enforcement and the families we serve. I will make my cell phone number and email available to everyone we work with to improve communication.

2. Make sure there is always someone available to answer the call to serve when needed. Currently, there are times that no one is on call or available. I will utilize all available personnel to fix this problem.

3. Having a morgue in Monroe County to prevent us from having to transport people to Terre Haute. While several years away, I would like to see our county have its own facility for autopsies and other coroner needs. Morgan and Lawrence Counties have done this and it has been very beneficial to them.

**SHIELDS:** My goals for the Coroner Office are (1) to ensure that there is seamless communication with law enforcement which is a key component to a precise and thorough death investigation, (2) ensure the office is adequately staffed and (3) looking forward, addressing the need for making the Coroner a full time position. Over the past few years the case load has,

unfortunately, been on an upward trend. To ensure that the office is adequately staffed to compensate the increase in cases, it is important to not just consider but move forward with making the position full time. This will also, in turn, make for more seamless communication with law enforcement.