

Jordan, Russell, face off in GOP primary race for House 134

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By Tammy Wells

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Elizabeth Jordan and Ronald Russell square off in a Republican primary June 14 in Maine House District 134. The winner will face incumbent Democrat Traci Gere in the November contest.

The district includes all of Kennebunkport and parts of Biddeford and Kennebunk.

- Jordan, 62, returned to her home state after her husband of 30 years passed away six years ago. A mother and



Elizabeth Jordan Courtesy Photo

grandmother of three, the Kennebunkport resident works part-time at a natural foods store. Jordan said she lost her full-time job at a nursing care facility due to COVID mask mandates two years ago. “I have a medical exemption,” she said in an email.

Jordan said she stepped up to run because there was no Republican candidate in the race. “This was unacceptable to me,” she said, later learning there

was another candidate in the running.

“I am not a politician, but I am your neighbor who loves my home state and who is struggling in these challenging times of runaway inflation and government overreach into our personal lives,” she said.

“As I knock on doors, I find that many are concerned about: the rampant inflation, which is unsustainable as people go into debt or deplete their life savings; about the government overreach into their personal lives and medical decisions; about the lack of transparency about the school curriculum; and about mandates and regulations which cause a hardship to their small businesses and their personal lives,” she said.

“I also see the concern of our lobstermen who are being choked out by unnecessary mandates and regulations that are not based in reality,” she said.

Jordan operated a natural foods co-op from her home in Virginia, had a home-based daycare for teachers’ children, was in leadership of a community Bible study for more than 12 years, and in her children’s schools as a volunteer. “My husband traveled frequently in his busy career, and I happily took on the role of full-time mom; supporting him as he supported us,” she said.

Jordan said she was active in conservative political campaigns, often writing letters to the editor supporting candidates.

“I will fight for a smaller government, less regulation, fewer, not more dictates out of DC and Augusta, and lower taxes here in Maine,” said Jordan. “We are the third highest taxed people in the nation, only behind New York and Hawaii. This is unacceptable and needs to change! I am the candidate who will fight for the Maine people!”

- Russell, 67, served 30 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel in 2006, and worked initially for a defense



Ronald Russell *Courtesy Photo*

contractor before starting his own company with friends in 2007. He recently sold the business but said he intends to stay involved in training.

“I moved back home to Maine in June of 2021,” he said. “I came back to get involved in politics. I was frustrated by the state of the nation, and I felt helpless in North Carolina, unable to make any significant contributions to change the situation, as I knew that I would be coming home to Maine at some point. My time at West Point and in the Army taught me a lot about accepting responsibility and working with others to come up with a good solution to problems. I don’t see much of that in the current political environment so I’m looking to help change that.”

Russell said he has no political experience. “As a commander at every level up to, and including colonel, responsible for soldiers and their families, I was in a community environment. It was the same as a business owner. Done correctly, the environment is one of community, working to provide solutions to challenging problems. Complaining about the state of events doesn’t suit me well. I have always been taught that you shouldn’t voice a complaint if you don’t have a solution to fix the issue that is irritating you.”

Russell hails from Fort Fairfield, the son of a teacher and a potato farmer and World War II veteran. He graduated from West Point in 1976, with a degree in chemical engineering. He said he intended to serve five years, but as it turned out, the Army suited him. He served as a Green Beret in Germany, as a Ranger in Georgia, and in Special Operations at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Russell said he is single, but has been married, divorced, and widowed. He said his children are grown and live away except for his youngest son, a senior at the University of Maine and commander of the ROTC unit there.

Election integrity is an issue for all communities in Maine, he said, “not just Kennebunkport and parts of Biddeford and Kennebunk.”

Maintaining the sovereignty of local government for issues like zoning is important, as is ensuring that parents maintain responsibility for decisions involving their children, he said.

“Partisanship is a problem plaguing our nation, state, and local governments,” said Russell. “We must work together to solve problems that affect us all. In my

opinion, no issue should be decided strictly along party lines.”

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