***1st Term Accomplishments of Pope County Judge Ben Cross:***

**Courthouse Operations –**

- Fiber Optic Service to all county facilities

- New Interactive website*:* ***popecountyar.gov***

- Obtained a Government Domain for Pope County

- New VOIP phone system (Local vendor – Service Plus)

- Creation of a dedicated I.T. Coordinator position

- Sole service provider of Internet / Phone / TV (*Ritter Communications*)= $30,682 in annual savings

- Implemented numerous security enhancements, including lockdown measures / I.D. Cards / Camera System / AED’s(*defibrillator*) / Stop the Bleed Training / RAVE Panic Button System

\*Only County Judge in history with Law Enforcement certification

**Road Department -**

- Restructured the entire organization from the ground up, eliminating five appropriated, yet unfilled, positions, spreading those appropriated salaries across existing employees to become competitive and retain employees

- Implemented an Asset Manager for the entire county to keep and track inventory at a central point of contact for auditing compliance

- Replaced numerous pieces of heavy equipment that had become too costly to repair

- Implemented a leasing program that projects all the maintenance costs back onto the provider

- Contracted with an independent firm to map out and provide a diagnostic approach to road maintenance, to be proactive rather than reactive

**\***Only candidate for Judge who is also a State Licensed Contractor / Class A CDL / Heavy Equipment Operator / Pilot

**Veteran Service Office -**

- Oversaw accreditation to perform “E-Filing” for veteran claims directly into the VA system

- Collaborated and provided assets to complete the Veterans Memorial Park

- Established coordination point for all veterans groups *(American Legion / V.F.W. / D.A.V. / Marine Corps League / AMVETS / M.O.A.A.)*

**\***OnlyCounty Judge candidate who is also a U.S. Army Combat Veteran / Member American Legion, VFW, and DAV

**Pope County E.M.S. –**

- Purchased first new purpose designed rescue unit since 1986

- Acquired grant funding to purchase first new off-road rescue UTV vehicle since 2003

- Implemented a CAD (*Computer Aided Dispatch*) upgrade to all stations in the county for faster response times

- Collaborated with ATU to locate a new Central EMS facility on campus

- Opened a fifth sub-station to handle call volume in the city of Russellville

**\***Only County Judge candidate who is a past EMT with Combat Life Saver certification

**Pope County Office of Emergency Management (O.E.M.) –**

- Restructured the department by adding an Assistant Director position to coordinate pandemic response

- Implemented Fleet rotation of all O.E.M. apparatus

- Implemented coordination of all FEMA grant initiatives and FEMA compliance reporting

\*Only County Judge in Arkansas ICS Certified (*Incident Command*) from ICS 100-900 (*Judges must at least be certified to the 300-400 level*), making Pope County “NIMS” (National Incident Management System) compliant for federal assistance.

**\***Only County Judge candidate who is also a Certified Firefighter and HAZ-MAT Operations Certified

**Pope County 911 –**

- Successfully lobbied at the state capitol for more state level funding of 911 PSAP’s (*Primary Service Answering Point, i.e. a 911 Center)*

- Implemented a CAD upgrade for Enhanced 911 capability

**\***Only County Judge in history who has also been an ACIC, (*Arkansas Crime Information Center*), certified Telecommunications Operator **and** supervised a 911 call center as a state police commander

**Election Commission / Poll Workers -**

- Increased security protocols for poll sites

- Included all election workers into critical infrastructure designation for hazard pay

**Pope County Library System –**

- Appointed new Director with a focus on re-branding PCLS

- Coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce and Russellville Regional Alliance for Economic Development to designate the Library System as a Workforce Development Center

- Recouped $170K in misguided funds back into the Library Capital Development fund

**Pope County Senior Activity Center –**

- Purchased a new walk-in freezer doubling the capacity of the old one, which was over 18 years old

- Established contract grounds maintenance to save money

- Provided support to keep meals on wheels active throughout the pandemic providing over 500 meals daily

**Miscellaneous:**

-Created $434K in new unanticipated and unappropriated revenue **first year** in office

(*Judge salary $74,119 / $434K = 5 years/10 months of funding*)

- Entered Pope County into a solar power purchasing agreement with Entergy saving over $12,000 annually in energy costs with no infrastructure investment

- Constructed a new First Responder Training Facility

- Constructed Pope County’s first ever Forensic Investigation Facility

- Constructing a new $7.5 million dollar Central E.M.S. Facility in a collaborative effort with **ATU**

- Served in a judicial capacity in multiple cases of taxation and assessment appeals pursuant to ***A.C.A. 14-14-1105***

- Signed a cooperative broadband agreement worth $30 million dollars to bring fiber optic internet service to rural Pope County

- Brought Pope County into the Top 10 in most transparent business practices by government *(****#9*** *out of 75 counties as rated by Access Arkansas)* as opposed to the mid 30 percentile of my predecessor