

Mayor's Message
Rowlesburg: June 2026

Last Message: Greetings Rowlesburg citizens and friends, this will be my last message of my term as Mayor of Rowlesburg. Beginning July 1, 2026, you will have a new leadership team in Mayor Kimberly Felton, and Council persons Robert Grimm, T.J. Hawkins, and Thomas Shay. Two Council positions are yet to be filled. The new Council will decide how those positions will be filled. Please give them your support.

As citizens, you have the ability, in an ongoing and positive way, to help keep Rowlesburg as a beautiful and peaceful place to live. Periodically, remind yourself and your neighbors not to take for granted what nature and the work of many has created. For those less inclined to help keep Rowlesburg a serene and attractive environment in which to live, may your conscience find the necessary fortitude to contribute to the work, recognize that what we have is special, and comply with our ordinances and traffic laws. Living in a floodplain does have some advantages. My travels around the county disclose that many fellow Preston County citizens admire our park and the fact that most of our Town is very walkable.

Impetus to Run: Never, ever, did I think about running for public office. It was a little over two years ago that some friends started suggesting to me that I had skills that would be useful and helpful as Mayor of Rowlesburg. At first, I shrugged off the suggestion but after further encouragement, I concluded that I could contribute to the Town in a positive manner and I decided to run.

Also, a feeling of responsibility and connectivity to the Town colored my decision to run. Facts coloring this responsibility were that I am a graduate of Rowlesburg High School, all 12 grades at the time. Now, I like to point out that I was a starting member of one of only six of Rowlesburg's basketball teams that won 20 games in a season. Although I grew up on a farm in Etam, ever since I was a kid growing up there and later when attending college, I always responded to: "Where are you from?" As, "I am from Rowlesburg."

The connectivity to Rowlesburg has recent and historical aspects too. First, my mother Mary Elizabeth Shahan Dean was a teacher at Rowlesburg High School for approximately 23 years. My wife Gloria has had a store front business —The Curiosity Shoppe— in Rowlesburg since 1985. My paternal grandparents, Randolph and Florence Dean lived on Maple Avenue. Grandfather Dean worked at the B & O shops located across the way from Maple Avenue.

Grandmother Florence Dean's maiden name is Wotring. Her grandfather was J.P. Wotring. That makes me the great-great grandson of J.P. Wotring. Of course, J.P. Wotring is famous for transporting a cannon to the top of Cannon Hill during the Civil War. I think that it is fair to say that J.P. was a supporter of the Union as well as Rowlesburg in his day.

So, why did I run for Mayor of Rowlesburg. The answer is somewhat complicated, and a lot was based on my family's, both past and present, nexus to Rowlesburg. From the heart I had an internal signal that I too had a responsibility to contribute to the well-being of Rowlesburg as my family had done. It was a matter of wanting to give back and to contribute any skills I might possess, to the benefit of the Town. Also, the encouragement from friends played a significant part as I made the decision to serve.

Thank you: Rowlesburg, thank you for the honor and privilege of serving as your Mayor for the last two years. If it were not for time and circumstances, I would request your support to serve again. I enjoyed the time I spent helping citizens with their complaints, solving some problems, and learning from failures in other instances. I particularly enjoyed chatting with citizens when they came to the office to pay their water bills.

Over the years, I have served in leadership positions for several service and professional organizations with titles such as chairman, president, and professor. The one title I will cherish and the one for which I hope to be remembered is "Mayor of Rowlesburg."

With Warm Regards,
Darrell,
Mayor of Rowlesburg
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