



Questions & Answers

Michael Angley

Candidate for Sheriff of El Paso County, Colorado

Q: Why are you running for Sheriff of El Paso County?

A: I love this community very much, and I want to give back. As a career law enforcement executive, I am sickened by the scandals that ravaged the sheriff's office. I value integrity very highly, and I decided I want to make a difference here by becoming the Sheriff.

Q: Isn't Sheriff Elder doing enough to correct the mistakes of the Maketa administration?

A: It is nearly impossible for the sheriff's office to move forward and regain the public's trust while the sitting sheriff comes from the same era that spawned the corruption. In most cases, having experience in a particular organization is an ideal qualification for running it. But not in this case.

Q: Why you? How will you be any different?

A: The public's perception is damaged and it will remain broken if clouds of the past continue to linger over the office. It's time to cut the losses and bring in an outsider, someone like me who has NO connection to the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. None whatsoever. I am a political novice, not beholden to any special interests except those of the citizens of this county.

Q: Tell me about your law enforcement background?

A: I'm a retired Air Force Colonel (O-6) and a 35-year Executive in Federal Law Enforcement and U.S. Intelligence. I served over 25 years as a Senior Supervisory Special Agent with the Air

Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) (sister agency to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)), following which I spent 10 years in academia catering to law enforcement.

Q: But what makes you uniquely-qualified to lead a sheriff's office?

A: Simple: executive experience in law enforcement. In my career, I was a Special Agent in Charge (SAC/Commander) five different assignments in the U.S. and overseas. At my career pinnacle, I led 150 federal agents conducting law enforcement and counterintelligence operations at 13 geographically-separated units throughout the U.S. I oversaw a \$5M annual operations budget, to include \$40K in confidential funds.

Q: From your biography, it sounds like you enjoyed many successes. Can you summarize some of those highlights?

A: I appreciate that, but I am simply humbled to have been blessed with the chance to serve. I never thought I'd do what I did, nor stay for a full career, but time flew by fast for me. When I look back, I am still in awe at some of the things this poor boy, originally from Newark, NJ, got to experience.

I worked to neutralize terrorist cells; caught a Soviet spy; eradicated millions in drugs, recovered millions lost through fraud schemes; and, was recognized by the White House for running a successful and specialized counterintelligence unit. Those were exciting times for sure, but most times my line of work was routine and paperwork intensive.

Q: Tell me more about that White House recognition?

A: Every year the White House recognizes one Intelligence Community component, agency, unit, or shop, any size, large and small, as the most outstanding element in the entire community. It's called the Killian Award and it's under the auspices of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

Between 1998 – 2001, I was the Chief of the Counterintelligence Staff Office at United States Strategic Command, in Omaha, NE. This is the unified command that would conduct nuclear warfare, should it ever be necessary. Our Admiral submitted my unit – six of us in all – for this award. We came in second place. I was delighted to have been nominated for the award, and thrilled to have made it that far. The team that won was a small element at CIA headquarters. I was familiar with its work, and I know how richly that group of men and women earned it.

Q: Leadership is important, especially when taking over a broken unit. What are your experiences there?

A: I've led and mentored hundreds of young men and women airmen, Special Agents, and civilian professionals during my tenure. Most have gone on to become leaders themselves to include rising to high echelons in law enforcement. I want to implement a mentorship program in the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, one that will institutionalize integrity so that the future leaders we grow there will have strong values to better serve the community.

Q: What will you do to professionalize the sheriff's office?

A: I am a strong proponent of professional development. I lived it in my USAF career and I intend to bring that culture to the sheriff's office. There are three components to it in my book: education, empowerment, and mentorship. Education has three elements: continuing education for degree advancement, professional leadership education, and specialized law enforcement education. Empowerment means each member of the EPSO is charged with making prudent decisions and exercising authority that is appropriate for their level. It requires trust up and down the chain of command. Leadership must trust deputies to make smart decisions and deputies must trust that leadership will back them up when they do. Mentorship requires good leaders to serve as role models and career coaches. We'll have a formal program.

Q: Will you do anything to change the way promotions are handled?

A: Yes. Seniority is important, but it should not be the exclusive basis for promotion. The military uses a combination of subjective and objective criteria in assessing people for advancement. It's a merit-based concept that I will implement at EPSO. Every member of the force will receive honest and fair evaluations, and the very best, most qualified, and readiest among them will get promoted first. It's simple, really. When people know that by being their best they have a better chance for promotion, then they will do their best all the time. That makes for a better force and a better relationship with the community.

Q: What about rewards like decorations and other forms of recognition?

A: Rewards and recognition are important. I'll take the same approach to these as I will with promotions. They will be merit-based and the most deserving will get the chance to shine and take pride in themselves as I will take tremendous pride in them.

Q: You've used the term the People's Sheriff? What do you mean by that?

A: As the People's Sheriff, I serve the citizens of this county. That means I want to hear from them, all the time. I want to be a visible presence in the community by getting out there among the citizens. I get restless behind a desk, so I tend to roll up my sleeves and work with the troops. I believe in walking about the workplace to see how everyone is doing. By workplace, I mean the Sheriff's Office AND the public, among the people I serve.

Q: Besides walking around, what else do you have in mind for community outreach?

A: I want to look at forums like Town Halls and speaking engagements where we can interact with each other, respect one another, and most importantly...LISTEN to each other.

During my five times serving as a Special Agent in Charge, I had an open-door policy. I'll do the same as Sheriff. I'll set aside time each week for anyone to come see me to discuss any topic at all. They will always get a follow-up to any issue they want followed up. I cannot guarantee outcomes, but I can promise a response.

Q: I'm not sure we've ever had a sheriff with as strong a military background as yours. How will you use that to your advantage as sheriff?

A: You can't get much more military than me. And in a military community like ours, that experience and know-how is important. I want to reach out to the various installations in the area and seek to partner with the military in new and innovative ways. I want to look at leadership training at a minimum, but there may be other opportunities as well. The military has experts in a variety of functional fields that could benefit the sheriff's office, so we'll explore that more.

Q: Will you come in and clean house, so to speak? Fire everyone and start over?

A: No. In the five times I was the Chief, I always went into each new job seeking to learn first before making drastic changes. I'm a firm believer in the adage, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' I'll assess the full functioning of EPSO across all arenas: administrative support, law enforcement, and detention. If something needs correction, I will get it done. I will rely on my experts and the rank and file to inform and guide me and make recommendations on improvement.

Q: Describe yourself politically.

A: I am a passionate Reagan Conservative. I believe in smaller government, rugged individualism, entrepreneurship, self-reliance, the Right to Life, preservation of God-given rights, individual liberties, religious freedoms, free markets, a strong national defense (and a

strong law enforcement presence), gun rights, legal immigration, the Rule of Law, and the primacy of the Constitution as written, among other principals.

Q: El Paso County is a red county, where do you stand on the Second Amendment?

A: Our Founding Fathers were genius and recognized that an armed citizenry is essential as a final check and balance on tyranny. I believe the right to keep and bear arms is sacred and must be protected from infringement of any kind. To that end, I will join the vast majority of other sheriffs in Colorado and refuse to enforce the gun control legislation the state implemented in the last few years. If I had my way, Constitutional Carry would be the standard, but that will take legislative action to get there.

Q: Isn't Sheriff Elder of the same mindset with respect to gun rights?

A: Nope. As a long-time member of the National Rifle Association (NRA), I must address one concern I have with the current sheriff. Despite what he may say about the issue, it's his actions that demonstrate where he really stands on gun rights, and it's not with the Constitution.

He has placed an artificial, arbitrary and unnecessary restriction on CCW permits for retired law enforcement officers who fall under the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA). Under LEOSA, there is no requirement for periodic background investigations, yet the sheriff has mandated they be done annually.

In contrast, civilian CCWs are issued for five years without the need for annual background checks. Arguably, retired LEOs should be considered fairly trustworthy, yet they are subjected to additional scrutiny that is neither required by law nor necessary. The effect is to drive down the number of LEOSA CCWs the sheriff's office issues, which is likely the desired outcome.

It's a slippery slope. If the sheriff is willing to disenfranchise the gun rights of retired law enforcement officers, then he's one step away from restricting everyone's gun rights. I won't let that happen.

Q: What will you do differently then, with respect to CCW permits?

A: I will remove the annual background check requirements for LEOSA credentials and make the procedure right with the law. I will look for ways of easing the process for civilian CCWs as well.

Q: What about the open carry of firearms in the county?

A: I support open carry and want to encourage citizens to do so if they desire. One of the problems with open carry is hypersensitivity in the public to the presence of firearms. It's a cultural and social issue that I'd like one day to see reversed. To the extent I can, I will encourage businesses to welcome the open carry of firearms in an effort to more normalize something that in our not-too-distant past was common and without stigma.

Q: What about immigration? It's certainly a hot topic these days and our community has its own issues.

A: I believe in legal immigration. Illegal immigration is a concern because of its impact in two areas: economic security and public safety. When people come to the United States illegally, they are unvetted. We simply have no idea who may be here for criminal, terror, or other nefarious reason. As long as I'm Sheriff, El Paso County will not be a Sanctuary County.

The current El Paso County Sheriff's Office policy with respect to illegal immigration seems to straddle the fence. It rightly prohibits profiling based on race and other factors. But it minimizes the time an individual can be held who is found to have violated federal immigration laws. In short, it's a 'Catch – Hold Briefly – Release' policy. Individuals can only be held if there is an arrest warrant for a criminal violation. If the person's only violation is a 'civil' infraction of immigration law, then he is to be released.

Q: What will you do differently with illegals or undocumented persons you come across?

A: I don't think the Sheriff's Office Catch and Release policy solves the problem. Consistent with, and in compliance with, state and federal law, I intend to maximize discretion and detain for as long as is permissible and work in conjunction with federal immigration authorities on disposition. I will be compassionate. I will be fair. But I WILL enforce the law.

Q: Will you be tough on crime in general? Moderate?

A: One of the most fundamental responsibilities of government is the safety and security of her citizens. The sheriff is Constitutionally mandated to enforce the law. I intend to do so with vigor.

Law-abiding citizens need not fear the Sheriff's Office, and quite the contrary, should take solace in the fact that they are safe and that their Constitutional rights will always be respected.

Law breakers, on the other hand, will have legitimate reason to worry. We will bring the weight of the force down upon those who would harm the people I am elected to protect.

Q: What will you do specifically?

A: I want to focus on crime where it is at its worst, while at the same time never neglecting the rest of the county. Many of our citizens live in rural and unincorporated areas. I want to be as visible there as in the densest parts of Colorado Springs. A visible sheriff's presence will signal to everyone – law abiders and law breakers – that the sheriff's office is always there providing vigilance and protection.

Q: Where are you from originally?

A: I was born in Newark, NJ and lived – literally – in the projects. My beginnings are humble but compelling. We were dirt poor, but rich in love and strong family values. Everything I am today I made myself, pulling myself up from poverty and working hard to achieve success. Newark taught me humility and understanding, living among those less fortunate in life, learning their concerns, sharing in them as well. When I was a teenager we moved to northeastern Pennsylvania where I finished school and college.

Q: How long have you been living in El Paso County?

A: My family and I moved to El Paso County in 2005 and we've made it our permanent home. After 12 Air Force assignments in 25 years, we were ready to settle down. Once we arrived, we knew this was it. We were finally home. I love this community very much, and I want to give back. That's why I seek this opportunity to serve.

Q: Your wife is a veteran as well? Tell me about the family.

A: Yes, and thank you. Evelyn is from Mayaguez, PR and still has family there. We were married there, in fact, in 1985, so we're going on 33 years now. Like me, she went into the Air Force through the ROTC program and we ended up meeting each other at my first assignment at Travis AFB, CA. We've been together since, well except for a couple of assignments where I couldn't take her. She spent about ten years in the USAF before separating to raise our first son. Evelyn teaches high school Spanish at The Classical Academy, north campus.

We've got three kids, all in their 20s. Our two oldest boys finished up college, one at Colorado State University, the other at University of Northern Colorado. Our youngest, our daughter, is at Denver University studying journalism and she's actively supporting my campaign as my Media Committee Chairwoman. All our children live and work in Colorado.

Q: Where can people go to learn more about you and your campaign?

A: I encourage people to visit my official website: www.angley4sheriff.org. They may also contact me directly at: angley4sheriff@gmail.com. I answer every email personally.

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