

Man denied marriage license by Kim Davis loses primary bid, will not face her in fall | Lexington Herald Leader

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Elwood Caudill talked to well-wishers Tuesday evening at a Democratic gathering in Morehead to thank them for their support after winning the Democratic primary election for Rowan County clerk. Caudill will face Kim Davis in the November general election. John Flavell

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Elections

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By Will Wright

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May 22, 2018 07:35 PM

Despite raising more than \$200,000 for his Rowan County Clerk campaign, David Ermold, the man who was denied a marriage license by current county clerk Kim Davis, lost the Democratic primary by more than 1,000 votes Tuesday evening.

The victor, Elwood Caudill, Jr., a 20-year employee of the county's Property Valuation Administrator office and fourth generation Rowan County resident, got 54 percent of the vote to Ermold's 25 percent.

Some Rowan County residents, including Caudill, had predicted a much tighter race.

"I didn't know which way it was going to go," Caudill said Tuesday evening. "I just ran the best race I could."

Davis, the current county clerk and sole Republican candidate, shot into the national spotlight in 2015 and was jailed for five days when she refused to issue marriage licenses to gay couples, including Ermold and his partner.

She will face Caudill in November's general election.



Rowan County clerk Kim Davis worked Tuesday with the county election board during the primary election in Morehead. Davis will face Democrat Elwood Caudill in the November general election.

John Flavell

Ermold did not respond to multiple requests for comment. When reporters visited his campaign headquarters Tuesday evening, his partner and campaign manager, David Moore, simply said "No," and shut the door.

The \$200,000 of campaign donations for Ermold far surpassed any other clerk candidate. He received donations from supporters around the country, including from comedian Amy Schumer and actress Susan Sarandon, after his campaign gained national attention.

"What happened in 2015 affected (these donors) personally. They could relate directly to the situation that was going on in this county," Ermold said to the Herald-Leader last week. "They have sent their support in to show the people of our county that they care, too. They care about what happens in Rowan County."

In 2014, Davis raised \$16,000 for the primary and general election combined.

At a Democratic election watch-party in Morehead, some Rowan County residents said they were concerned that Davis stands a good chance of beating Caudill in the general election.

"I'm disappointed," said Sheryl Ortega, one of the Rowan County residents at the party. "I felt (Ermold) had a lot of support."

Caudill ran against Davis in 2014 and said he lost by just 23 votes. Davis, at that time, was a registered Democrat. She switched her political affiliation in 2015.

Another Democrat and Rowan County resident, Tonya Lemaster, said the party would make a big push for Caudill's bid against Davis, but also predicted a tough race.

"I think it's going to be an important race for the Democrats in general," Lemaster said. "We're expecting it to be a pretty big race, she stands a pretty good chance."

Caudill asked some of the local Democrats for help in his upcoming race against Davis, saying he distributed more than 4,000 handouts during the primary campaign.

"With a lot more help, we can do this," he said. "I ensure you I will serve every citizen of Rowan County with dignity and respect."

David Ermold and his partner were denied a marriage license by Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis in 2015. Now he's seeking the Democratic nomination for county clerk so he can challenge Davis in Kentucky's November general election. **Will Wright**

Results

David Ermold	873
Elwood Caudill Jr.	1923
Nashia L. Fife	77

