

James Richard (Ricky) Shourd was born and raised in Searcy, the son of Vernon and Pat Shourd . His father served as a Justice of the Peace in White County for ten years and along with his mother, owned a local business for many years in Searcy.

Ricky graduated from Searcy High School in 1976 and only one year later began his law enforcement career. In 1977 he was hired as a deputy by then White County Sheriff Adan Woodruff. In 1978, Ricky began serving his hometown with the Searcy Police Department. He remained there until 2006 when he retired as a Lieutenant.

At Searcy PD, Ricky worked as a patrol officer, detective in the Criminal Investigation Division, an undercover narcotics investigator and he served as a supervisor in all these areas as well. He announced in late 2005 he would seek the office of Sheriff and run on the Republican ticket. On November 7, 2006 he fulfilled a lifelong dream by being overwhelmingly elected over the incumbent sheriff and an independent candidate.

He officially took office on January 1, 2007. Only two weeks into his first term, Sheriff Shourd personally oversaw the transfer of over one hundred prisoners from the old county jail to a new state of the art detention facility, completed three months before he took office. Under his administration, the Sheriff's Office began a new Domestic Violence Unit, which successfully investigates all battered woman and abused children cases. He assigned and trained detectives to investigate and arrest sexual predators who prey on children over the internet, which led to many arrests and convictions. He immediately increases the patrol coverage for the county and in less than four years had doubled it. His office also set record numbers for drug arrests, meth lab busts and large shipments of drugs seized in White County.

In 2008, and again in 2010, he was re-elected without opposition. Sheriff Shourd hopes to continue to serve the people of White County for many years to come.

He and his wife Kathy, a local nurse, have four children and a grand-daughter. Ricky has farmed all of his life, something he still enjoys. He is also a licensed pilot.