

Neighbors



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Our Friends

— Faces in the Crowd —

Caligiuri likes odds in fifth district race



Tammi Knapik

Anthony Totire

Always wear sunscreen

Each week we interview a 'regular person' like you for our Faces in the Crowd. This week we meet Anthony Totire.

How long have you been connected to Southington?

Twenty years.

What do you like about the town?

I like the sense of community. It's close knit, yet big town.

What is your favorite movie?

"Back to the Future." It's a classic 80's nostalgia

film.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received.

Always wear sunscreen.

If you could meet anyone in the world, who would you like to meet?

Abraham Lincoln. He was a great historic figure who contributed a lot to our country.

By PAUL HUGHES
Special to The Observer

State Sen. Sam S.F.

Caligiuri says he packs more political muscle than any of his Republican rivals in the 5th Congressional District. His rivals are conceding nothing.

Caligiuri, R-16th District, claims he is the strongest candidate that Republicans can field against Democratic incumbent Christopher S. Murphy.

Last week, Caligiuri traveled through whipping wind and rain to New Britain to pick up Mayor Timothy Stewart's endorsement and bolster his bonafides.

"We are in the best position to defeat Chris Murphy," Caligiuri proclaimed.

Three other Republicans are actively campaigning for the party's nomination - Justin Bernier, Mark Greenberg and Kie Westby. Two others have registered as candidates.

"It is a crowded field," Caligiuri said.

No one is conceding front-runner status or anything else to any of the other candidates five months before Republicans choose a nominee in the 5th. "Our grassroots campaign is phenomenal. We have a huge delegate lead right now," Bernier declared Monday.

His campaign released an internal poll last week that showed him not only leading Caligiuri among likely Republican voters, but also



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State Sen. Sam Caligiuri recently received the endorsement of New Britain Mayor Timothy Stewart.

among all voters in the 5th District.

"The trend line is pretty clear," Bernier said.

The Greenberg campaign claims the fundraising lead.

Greenberg, Bernier and Caligiuri are all bragging about how much money they raised in the last quarter of 2009 and how much it demonstrates the depth of their support.

"I raised \$152,000 in six weeks," Greenberg said.

It is the same with endorsements.

"When I get a major boost like Nancy Johnson's endorsement a few weeks ago or Tim Stewart's endorsement today, that is

all part of the story we are telling to delegates about why I ought to be the nominee," Caligiuri said.

Johnson is the veteran Republican that Murphy upset four years ago. Now, Republicans see an opportunity to knock off Murphy and finally soothe the sting of Johnson's defeat.

The surprising U.S. Senate win of Republican Scott Brown in Massachusetts last week has encouraged Republicans in Connecticut.

Bernier has been campaigning the longest. He started in March, five months before the death of U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy opened up the

Senate seat in Massachusetts.

Bernier said the field got a little more crowded as other Republicans became convinced that Murphy is not only vulnerable, but beatable in 2010.

Caligiuri dropped out of the U.S. Senate campaign in November. Greenberg declared his candidacy about the same time. Westby formally entered the race in early October.

The candidates are now making the rounds in the 41-town district that reaches from the New York border as far east as Meriden, New Britain and Simsbury.

All of the candidates are trying to distinguish themselves from one another while also all running as Washington outsiders and fiscal conservatives.

Westby is a lawyer with a practice in Thomaston. Bernier had been executive director of the state Office of Military Affairs and an aide to former U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-4th District. Greenberg has worked 35 years in the real estate business.

Caligiuri, a lawyer, is the only Republican candidate who has ever held public office. He has been a Waterbury alderman, the city's acting mayor and a state senator for the last three years. "I am the only Republican in the race who has actually run in a race, let alone won one," Caligiuri said.

VIP: adult themed store opens despite protests against

From page 1

because its adult stock is five percent or less of its total stock. Much of the items in the store are oils, lingerie, shoes and gag gifts.

The adult dvds, toys and magazines are in the back of the store and are not readily visible upon entering the establishment. The first items on display near the entrance are lingerie and shoes, which resembles the set up at

most department stores or Victoria's Secret.

"Perception is sometimes worse than reality," said VIP General Manager John Perrone.

Perrone invited those who spoke out against the store to come through and see what it really is.

"We're a boutique," he said.

Others may disagree. Concerned Citizens for a Pornography Free Southington is an unincorporated association made up of citi-

zens with a direct interest in Southington to legally limit and regulate pornography and/or obscenity in town.

The group officially formed last November, in opposition to VIP. They have a small main core of members, including pastors and other citizens, who say they represent numerous other parties.

The group is represented by attorney, Vincent P. McCarthy, of the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ).

Earlier this week, McCarthy said the group would follow through on its decision to check the stock themselves to ensure the store was following the guidelines under the COO.

In an email sent out last week to group members and the media, CCPFS said it is committed to its principles to Intercede, Inform and Intervene when necessary.

"We are planning a significant educational event to make people aware of the

destruction that pornography has on individuals, children, families and communities," the email stated.

Dominick DeMartino, owner of VIP, declined to comment on the process of moving into Southington and about those who have actively campaigned

against him doing so.

Rather, he said he hoped his store would not create any unnecessary problems for neighboring businesses or the town.

"We hope to blend in as a regular retailer on Queen Street," he said.

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