

Congress hopefuls stump to get out the vote

By MICHAEL PUFFER
Special to The Observer

Southington's State Sen. Sam S.F. Caligiuri traveled to Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, July 14 to meet with top Republican leaders who like his chances of toppling Democratic 5th District Congressman Christopher Murphy in November.

Caligiuri, who overwhelmingly won the party nomination in May, said he's focused on beating the two-term Democrat. But two other Republican challengers are determined to walk away with the party nomination during the Aug. 10 primary.

Litchfield millionaire Mark Greenberg, 56, has been seeking grassroots support through a tour of

small businesses around the district.

Without a nomination at the state convention, Greenberg had to collect 1,860 signatures to get his name on the primary ballot.

Justin Bernier, 34, clearly has Caligiuri in his sights, telling attendees at a gathering in Meriden recently that there are already enough lawyers and "career politicians" in Congress.

A handful of people braved recent rain to gather under a tent on the lawn of Jim Belote, a Bernier supporter.

A couple of young campaign staffers churned out hot dogs and hamburgers on a grill.

Bernier garnered 106 of 220 votes at the state party convention, more than enough to secure a primary.

He's holding a series of similar "meet-and-greets" at the homes of supporters in various towns.

There are no stark differences in the candidates' platforms, which focus first on cutting taxes and government spending, along with turning back the health care reforms

passed under President Obama.

Bernier and Greenberg find fault with several votes in Caligiuri's past. Caligiuri faults them for not having any history of political leadership.

Bernier says he disagrees with Caligiuri's votes for a minimum wage increase, continuation of the conveyance tax and earmarks for his district. Greenberg faults Caligiuri for the vote to continue the conveyance tax.

Caligiuri defends himself as an independent-minded leader who hasn't

been afraid to stand up to party leaders. Caligiuri was the only Republican in the state legislature to vote against the 2007-08 budget, on the grounds that it topped the spending cap imposed by the state constitution.

Caligiuri also stressed that Bernier is no stranger to the halls of power.

"The reality is Justin Bernier has spent most of his time in the workforce as a congressional staffer on Capitol Hill or in Hartford," Caligiuri said. "I have much more diverse experience."

Caligiuri trails in fundraising race

By PAUL HUGHES
Special to The Observer

Petitioning candidate Mark Greenberg leads the Republican primary field in fundraising in the 5th Congressional District, but only because he dipped deep into his own pocket.

The Litchfield businessman contributed and loaned his campaign \$722,695 through June 30. His personal funds represent 74 percent of the \$976,425 total that his campaign reported in its second-quarter filings.

Southington Sen. Sam S.F. Caligiuri, R-16th District, the party's endorsed candidate, reported raising \$548,538, and the campaign of Justin Bernier, the third candidate in the GOP primary, reported receipts of \$462,072.

The primary is Aug. 10, and the winner will challenge two-term Democratic Congressman Christopher Murphy in the general election. Murphy upset 12-term Republican Nancy L. Johnson in 2006. None of the possible Republican challengers has come close to matching Murphy's fundraising yet.

His campaign reported receipts approaching \$2.1 million through June 30, and his campaign had a cash balance of nearly \$1.5 million.

Of the three Republicans, Greenberg ended the fundraising quarter with the most cash on hand - \$237,856. Bernier had a balance of \$197,302, and Caligiuri had \$190,831, according to the Federal Election Commission filings.

Ready, set, stay in bed for this race!

The Kiwanis Club of Southington is once again Chairing and Organizing the Apple Harvest Festival Bed Race on Saturday Oct 2, from 2-4 p.m.

All Civic Groups, Church

Groups, Fraternal Organization, The Southington Fire Department, The Southington Police Department and any other group are invited to participate.

The beds are catego-

rized and compete by weight classifications.

First Place in the Bed Race wins a \$150 gift card, second place wins a \$75 gift card and third place wins a \$50 gift card.

Go to Southington.org and click on the Apple Harvest Festival logo and you will be taken to the main festival page. At the top click on "Bed Race" for an application to enter.

Taste of Home set to return August 11

The Ninth Annual Taste of Southington on the grounds of the Barnes Museum will provide family and friends with great food, free entertainment and museum tours.

The yearly event is sponsored by the Southington Library and Barnes Museum Board of

Directors.

It is scheduled for August 11, from 4-7:30 p.m. A rain date is scheduled for August 12.

Tables and chairs will be provided or bring your own lawn chair for the shade or sit on a patch of grass to enjoy culinary delights from some of

Southington's finest restaurants.

A variety of cuisines will be available to purchase from Anthony Jacks Wood Fired Grill, Bertucci's, Fish & Chops, Little Something Catering, Machiavelli's, Namaste India, Napoli Imports, Paul Gregory's Bistro, and Smokin' with Chris.

Free entertainment by "The Dave and Dave Show," Southington's hometown father and son team, Dave Zoni and his son Dave will entertain.

Admission is free and restaurants will be charging a fee to sample their appetizing morsels. The museum will be open for tours free of charge.

Drive-In Movies

Enjoy a fun, family evening at the Southington Drive-In, 935 Meriden Waterbury Tpke, during its premier season! This is a community-sponsored event with a portion of each movie's proceeds benefitting local civic organizations.

Saturday, August 7: Southington Rotary Club hosts "Indiana Jones."

Saturday, August 14: Southington Kiwanis Club hosts "Back to the

Future." Saturday, August 21: Southington Knights Travel Football hosts "Jurassic Park."

Saturday, August 28: Southington Valley Midget Football League hosts "Jaws."

Gates open at 6 p.m.; show time at sunset. Rain date is always Sunday. Southington residents pay \$10 a carload, \$12 for non-residents; walk-ins welcome but should bring chairs.

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