

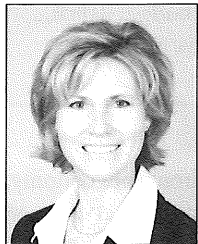
Charting her own course

Kieffer focuses on better schools and business climate

By **PATTY OSTBERG**

Rep. Andrea Kieffer (R-Woodbury) can be described as her own legislative navigator.

She admits to being inexperienced about the political process, and when she initiated her run for office, she didn't know the role of a convention delegate.



Rep. Andrea Kieffer

While some legislators have held local government positions before state election, she said that being a representative doesn't mean you first have to have a resumé of government jobs. "I think it needs to be a resumé of showing that you are willing to take leadership roles, follow through, do the work and get it done," she said.

Kieffer, her husband John, and their two children have moved in and out of Minnesota over the years, including a stint working overseas in Singapore and Budapest. In Budapest, she helped charter a new educational direction on issues facing the American International School, such as academic standards and proper supervision in the school. She's always gotten involved in whatever community she is living, and said it has given her a broad view of handling different situations and problem solving.

Kieffer saw a need for someone to challenge the DFL incumbent in her district because that party seemed to be saying, "The only solution was to increase taxes or borrow more money. ... Nobody was stepping up the plate, so I said, 'I'll do it.'"

Education reform and helping small

DISTRICT 56B

Population (2009 est.): 47,493

Largest City: Woodbury

County: Washington

Top Concerns: Education reform and commerce reform

businesses grow are issues that are most important to her district. "I think it's going to be private sector business development and growth that's going to take us out of this recession," she said.

She supports alternative teacher licensure. "I don't believe throwing more money into a bad system is the answer."

She also supports changes to teacher tenure. "There's no other job that I can think of that there's an absolute guarantee that you're gonna keep your job."

Kieffer's overarching motivation is her children's future. "When they have a good future, everyone else does too. I want to raise the level for everybody."