

Myhra goes from home to House

Dedicated door-knocking key to election success

By Kris Berggren

"High-octane" is how Rep. Pam Myhra (R-Burnsville) describes herself. She's a certified public accountant, Republican



Rep. Pam Myhra

Party activist since 1994 and a mother of three whom she home-schooled from preschool through 12th grade.

During her campaign for the House, she personally knocked on about 12,000 doors, taking three or four shifts a day. Her children offered social media advice, door-knocking company and help with household chores. Her husband also lent his full support.

"I have always been a person who has given 110 percent," Myhra said. She believes that level of dedication was a reason she was elected.

"People realized I wanted the job and

once I had it, I would work really hard for them," she said, adding that one voter told her he didn't want to know what party she represented, but that he'd vote for her because she came to his home.

Ironically, door-knocking was the one aspect of grassroots politics she'd previously avoided.

"I thought it was a little intimidating," Myhra said. "It turned out I really loved it."

She also learned from it.

"I was stunned how many homes were vacant in a whole variety of neighborhoods," Myhra said, evidence of the foreclosure crisis.

That drove home what she heard from voters who, she said, are hurting from wage freezes or job losses. Her own family experienced a downturn in income in 2009. "We had to go through our budget and reset priorities, and I feel state government should do the same," she said.

Besides education, which is her passion,

DISTRICT 40A

Population (2009 est.): 37,729

Largest City: Burnsville

Counties: Dakota, Scott

Top Concerns: Education, responsible government, protecting family income

her priorities include economic development, reducing taxes and paring government spending within its means. She said there is a difference between what's essential or important, and what's nice. Protecting nursing homes and care of vulnerable adults is an example of what's essential. A new stadium? Merely nice.

"I just love the Vikings," she said, "but building a stadium now would be like laying linoleum in the kitchen while the bedroom is on fire."