


# Going from business to business to say thank you

Photos

 Zoom




Stefanie Weiss

Senator Marty Mulcahey talks to Linda Kubli, dressed in her Halloween costume, in front of her store in downtown Freeport Friday, October 31, 2008, as part of a final effort to campaign before elections on Tuesday.

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**The Journal-Standard**

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Freeport, Ill. — It's a few minutes past noon on a warm Halloween day in downtown Freeport, and everywhere you look there are signs of the coming election: There are men in Obama masks, women in Palin costumes, and a half dozen people dressed up as Joe The Plumber.

Four days before The Day, this is the scene in which you can find Marty Mulcahey, the Democratic candidate for State Senate in the 45th district.

Mulcahey is upbeat and energetic, weaving through a crowd of costumes and talking about the issues with anyone who will stop and listen.

"It's nothing glamorous," Mulcahey says of the campaign trail. "Just a lot of hand shaking and meeting people."

Today, in particular, is all about saying thank you.

Mulcahey recently received an endorsement from the Freeport Area Chamber of Commerce — a noteworthy accomplishment for a Democrat — and he's going from business to business, thanking Chamber members for their support.

As he navigates the city's streets, the candidate is flanked by his 26-year-old campaign manager, Dean Argiris, and his 17-year-old nephew, Alex.

For the close-knit trio, the day's work started hours ago.

Mulcahey began the day with a radio interview at 9:45 a.m. Argiris was at the campaign headquarters even earlier, mapping out the day's strategy. Alex Mulcahey was on the road, making the trip south from Wisconsin to support his uncle's campaign.

But since noon, they have been campaigning in downtown Freeport, distributing flyers, shaking hands and lobbying for votes as the election

quickly approaches.

Alex and Argiris distribute campaign flyers on the streets, while Mulcahey ducks in and out of businesses, expressing his appreciation to Chamber members and speaking with local residents.

Mulcahey spends over two hours walking around downtown Freeport. But after a while, the candidate shifts his focus from the business owners to the blue-collar workers.

At 2:30 p.m., Mulcahey jumps in his campaign van and heads to Titan Tires for the afternoon shift change. He parks his van near the entrance and waves to workers as they head to or from work.

There are a wide range of responses: some wave, some stop to talk, and one woman rolls down her window to yell "not a chance."

As a whole, however, the workers' response to Mulcahey is overwhelmingly positive. It is a testament to the candidate's ability to appeal to a wide range of people.

"We saw a good response from the business people and a good response from people here," Mulcahey says. "I think it shows great balance."

At 3:30 p.m., Mulcahey, Argiris and Alex decide to split up. It is time to go door-to-door, and the campaign can cover more ground if they all go their separate ways.

Today's operation will be cut short by trick-or-treaters. But on the typical day, Mulcahey and Argiris would be knocking on doors well into the evening.

"During the summer we were putting in five or six hours, five or six days a week," Mulcahey recalls. "Now we just jump in when we can."

To say that this is a busy time for Mulcahey would be a drastic understatement.

His frantic yet focused demeanor betrays the psyche of a man who has worked towards one goal for months, and recognizes that now is not the time to let up.

Tomorrow will be another long day.

The day will start at 7 a.m. in Sterling, where Mulcahey will hand out food at a pancake breakfast. It will end late in the evening, when he plans to attend a parade in Galena.

And in the hours in between, you can be sure the candidate will be shaking hands somewhere.