

Motsinger: Fifth District voters want change

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

Over the last eight years, U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx has slaughtered a slew of Democrats who have challenged her for her Fifth District seat.

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board Member Elisabeth Motsinger is the latest Democrat standing between Foxx and re-election, and she has a sense that many in the largely Republican Fifth District want a change.

"I think things are going really well," Motsinger said of her campaign. "I think there's a lot of excitement throughout the district about the campaign. Everywhere we go, people are enthusiastic."

Although she admits she's not a "natural politician," Motsinger says the time she has spent on the Board of Education has taught her many valuable lessons that would help her in Congress.

"By being on the school board for six years, I have certainly learned to work with people," she stated. "...I've learned that there are unintended consequences to decisions, so you have to be thoughtful about how the choices you make will affect everyone."

Motsinger said children, marginalized children in particular, are one of the main reasons why she's running for Congress.

"The issues facing poor children cannot be solved in public schools alone," she remarked. "If I thought I could solve it all (locally), I'd have no reason to run for Congress. If I thought I could handle it at the local level, I would."

Many in the community, however, have criticized the School Board for allowing poor children, particularly minority ones, to fall through the cracks. Motsinger and her fellow School Board members have also been accused of pushing bond referendums that have largely ignored existing inner-city schools in favor of new ones in the suburbs.

If elected, Motsinger said she will also make environmental conservation a priority.

"Protecting our environment, it's really funny that that's considered a progressive issue, because we all have to live on this beautiful planet," she commented. "There's nothing more conservative than conserving the planet."

Motsinger's stance on environmental issues recently became a target for the Foxx campaign, which sent out a



Photo courtesy of Motsinger for Congress
Above: Elisabeth Motsinger announces her candidacy earlier this year.

Left: Motsinger speaks and U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx at a recent debate.



mailer slamming Motsinger for her arrest during a protest opposing the controversial Keystone oil pipeline. The Foxx flier labeled Motsinger "out of touch" for opposing the pipeline at a time when gas prices are at a near-record high.

Motsinger believes the mailers are a good sign for her campaign.

"(Foxx) is responding like she is in campaign mode," she said. "She did not send out a mailer for any other campaign, so this is a first."

Regardless of what comes next, Motsinger says she will not resort to insulting her opponent.

"I believe that it is reasonable and responsible for us to directly quote Mrs. Foxx ... and say how she has voted on something," she remarked. "It is not our job to interpret what that means. We assume voters are capable of doing that themselves."

Despite a redistricting plan that has moved some of Democrat Rep. Mel Watt's former 12th District constituents into the Fifth District, the district, which includes most of Forsyth and all or parts of 11 surrounding counties, remains largely Republican. Motsinger, a mother of three, believes she can win over Republicans. She says many have already voiced their support for her.

Among them is Landon Baucom, a 21-year-old political science major at Wake Forest University. The registered Republican said he was disenchanted with Rep. Foxx's highly publicized remarks about college loans. Foxx, chair of the House

Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, was quoted as saying she had "no tolerance" for people who graduate from college with debt, because "there's no need for that."

Baucom said Motsinger's strong support for education made him take a closer look, and he liked what he saw, so much so that he signed up to be a Motsinger campaign volunteer.

"When you have someone who's committed to the future through empowering young people to compete in an incredibly complex global economy, that just speaks to me," commented Baucom, the oldest of four children.

This will be the first time that Baucom is old enough to vote in a presidential election, and he said the elevated stakes make working with the Motsinger campaign even more engaging.

"It gives me a little bit more incentive to not only vote, but get involved because I hear so many people complain about politics," he said. "If you're going to complain about the situation, you have to be the change you want to see. You have to go and make your voice heard."

If elected, Motsinger said she will speak for all people in the district, regardless of their political affiliation.

"My goal is to represent the people of the Fifth District, all of them, those who vote for me, and those who vote for my opponent," she said. "When I'm elected, I won't be making distinctions between my supporters and other voters. I'll be representing everyone and most importantly, the children because it's their future."

The office of Rep. Foxx was contacted for this story, but an interview with Foxx was not forthcoming by press time on Tuesday.

For more information about Motsinger, visit www.nc5th.us.

THE GREATEST FALL REVIVAL
AT
GOLER MEMORIAL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
630 North Patterson Avenue
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27101

OCTOBER 15-17, 2012
ALL SERVICES BEGIN AT 7:00 P.M.
The Reverend Dennis Bishop, Speaker

Do Not Miss The
SPECIAL FALL TEACHING
WITH
BISHOP SETH O. LARTEY

Subjects: Building a God Size Ministry On
A Vision, A Dream, and A Word
Teaching Time: 6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

**COME AND RECEIVE A
TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

THE CHRONICLE

Like us on facebook

Go to www.facebook.com/wschronicle

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

Baker

From page A2

where she was named Teacher of the Year in 1995. She was assistant principal at Jefferson from 1997 to 2001.

Baker has also worked as an adjunct instructor at Salem College and Forsyth Technical Community College.

Baker has held several leadership positions, includ-

ing president and secretary of the Forsyth Principals Association. She earned a bachelor's degree in science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Baker will now compete to be named regional principal of the year. Seven regional principals of the year will then compete to be named N.C. Principal of the Year.

Riffo

From page A2

kindergarten assistant who had come in for the surprise, said, "She is the hardest-working teacher I have ever met."

Riffo is the only winner in Forsyth County. After things settled down a bit, the people from OfficeMax read the letter that Robert Ash, the principal at Ashley, sent when he nominated her: "Ms. Riffo is an excellent first-grade teacher. She not only teaches her students all subjects for first grade, but she does it in English and Spanish. She is part of our school's Dual Immersion program that

helps students become bilingual in English and Spanish by the end of fifth grade. Her class of 24 students consists of native English and Spanish students. She does all of this while maintaining a wonderful sense of responsibility, humility and compassion. She strives for all of her students to reach far beyond their own abilities and sees her students excel. She is a remarkable teacher who well-

deserves to be recognized for her efforts."

"Thank you so much. I just love what I do here," Riffo said. "I love being with the kids. And I love teaching, and I love being in this school."



Ash

Fourth Annual

WALK A MILE in her SHOES

Saturday, October 13, 2012

WS Dash Stadium - BB&T Ballpark

Registration begins at 8:30 am | Walk begins at 10:00 am | Family Fun Festival after the walk

sign up today:
fsi.kintera.org/walk

Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® is an international men's march to raise awareness about rape, sexual assault and gender violence, as well as highlight the role that men play in creating a solution.

Join Family Services in the movement to end violence against women.
For more information, call 336-722-8173.