

Doug Ross isn't running—he's just out walking

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THE SCENE is almost like a Norman Rockwell painting. The senator listens to the family, sitting in their stockings and bare feet in their den with a fireplace.

It's a brief visit. But one the family likely will remember, especially since it has occurred in a non-election year.
 Ernie, an engineering center chemist for American Motors, fo-

cuses on the economic boost Ross has sent information on.
 Ross assures them as he has so many people working in so many places that "you've got to produce jobs."

But even if some of his responses are semiautomatic, he plays the forum free and open with his constituents—and letting them point to problems they view as important.

Before he leaves the McGlothlins, Ross responds to Ernie's "How will Reagan's tax cut affect Michigan?" with a positive — "if it works, we need the stimulation more than anybody else."
 He learns the McGlothlin's daughter, who will be a high-school senior this fall, wants to attend Notre Dame University next year. And he exchanges pleasantries concerning camping — an interest he and the McGlothlins share.

While some of the concerns are the same, how they view that concern varies. Some are more knowledgeable than others about issues.
 But Ross listens to all of them and offers honest assistance. Even a local government dilemma that one woman informs him of is not ignored.

While this kind of door-to-door operation is not unique, a politician rarely will do this throughout his time in office as Ross does.
 Since Michigan lawmakers are paid as full-time employees, the senator maintains a good portion of his time must be spent with the people.

"This is just part of my job," Ross said. With that, he heads to the next house — and new and old concerns.

Reach out and touch someone for less

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A CALL FROM Farmington Hills to Denver, made during the evening rate period for eight minutes would cost \$2.09 using Michigan Bell, and would cost \$1.16 on Lexitel's MAX system.
 Most of the alternative companies offer less savings during the business day hours, and more savings during the night hours.
 All the alternative phone companies

are doing is buying in bulk and selling for less," says O'Riley. "It's the same principle of buying in bulk of pencils cheaper than buying each pencil separately."
 "We're obviously one of Bell's largest customers and competitors," Jones says of MCI.
 The alternative companies are able to sell their service for less since they don't have to pay for service and main-

tenance of local phones and local phone lines.
 "These companies don't have local service," says Len Singer, Michigan Bell staff manager of media relations. "The Bell system services everyone. Alternatives choose the routes they want to service."
 Bell offsets the cost of local service with the cost of the services such as long distance calling, says Singer.

"For the past 50 to 60 years the Bell system has been operating on a universal service plan. Offering phone service at a reasonable rate for everyone is our goal, and the result is that the price for additional services goes up," he says.
IF THE ALTERNATIVE companies take a substantial part of the long distance service away, Singer says the local rates have nowhere to go but up.

Disruption minimal

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 "You may have to wait (for a flight)," said Jerry Wilcox, owner of Farmington Travel Service. "The waits are no more than an hour, but Chicago might be an exception."
 "People really aren't cancelling," says Loretta Kabat, of Elliot Travel in Farmington. "People are having delays. Everything is running pretty much the same, just a change of time for departures."
ONE GREYHOUND bus traveler from Farmington on Thursday said he wasn't having any problems with the bus regardless of the strike. He did have some mixed emotions after waiting 20 minutes for the bus.
 "If I wait 20 minutes here (in Farmington), 20 minutes in Detroit and 20 minutes in Pennsylvania, that equals an hour wait for a plane," Dave Fitzpatrick said.
 "We had a number of cancellations, because people couldn't get their flights," Wilcox said. "Some other people (cancelled because they) are afraid of going out and not getting back."
 Windward Travel of Farmington Hills was the only travel agency to report business being down.

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