



Marda Robillard wants her daughter Lara, 10, to know that she has options in her life.

Gamble with Levin pays off

By SHARON HAHN

Marda Robillard has been breathing easier since last January when she received a much-sought-after position of Assistant Michigan Representative for democratic Sen. Carl Levin.

Her duties include acting as liaison between the Washington senatorial office and the Michigan press and scheduling press conferences and interviews for Levin when he is in Michigan. She also helped set up constituent service offices in Alpena, Escanaba, Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Detroit and Macomb County.

Although it doesn't sound like a job that allows her time to catch her breath, the Avon Township resident is content in having a job that offers a challenge and allows her to grow.

"This is like the job I've always wanted, and never knew there was," said the 35-year-old mother of two. "You don't apply for a job like this. It just happens."

But it's happening to Ms. Robillard was the result of her taking chances—she admits, she really couldn't afford to take.

With the end of her marriage six years ago, Ms. Robillard's life took a new direction with new goals. Remaining in her Avon Township home, she returned to school full-time. She also pursued her interest in politics at the volunteer level.

HER GOAL of raising two well-adjusted, open-minded children was adjusted to include wanting her daughters, Lisa, 13, and Lara, 10, to know they had options in their lives.

It's no longer a choice between marriage or career for women, she said. Career choices today include more than teaching and being a nurse.

In June 1978, with her recently earned B.A. in Communication Arts from Oakland University in land, Ms. Robillard interviewed for jobs with political campaigns. She was offered a position as assistant scheduler in the senatorial primary campaign for Carl Levin.

The job paid \$75 a week. She took it, she said, knowing she couldn't afford to

work for that amount, and knowing that if Levin's bid for nomination was unsuccessful, she would be jobless.

"But by the time the primary election came along, I was hooked," she said. "I believed in the man I was working for, and the people I was working with were great."

When Levin won the primary in August, she got a raise and job security until the November election. There were no promises beyond that.

It was a scary time for the Avon resident. She was doing the kind of work she loved, but she had a family to think of. Even a successful election guaranteed her nothing.

THE NOVEMBER election proved successful for Carl Levin, and Ms. Robillard watched 5,000 resumes come in from applicants interested in the 52 staff positions that would be created in January when he took office.

Resumes from Harvard graduates and people with Capitol Hill experience set her to wondering how her Christmas charges were going to be paid. But the gamble paid off. Before the end of the year Marda learned she had been chosen for the number two position on the senatorial staff for Michigan, working with Richard Wiener, Michigan representative for Carl Levin.

It was more than just luck that landed Ms. Robillard the job of her dreams. "She's unflappable and the ultimate in efficiency," said Jim Crutchfield, Levin's press secretary. "She knows what she's doing and she does it well."

Crutchfield first met Ms. Robillard when he was with the Detroit Free Press covering the senatorial campaign. "She held that campaign together," he said.

Her responsibilities were to handle Levin's schedule. Not only did she make the appointments, but at times she did the chauffeuring from one destination to another. Crutchfield's admiration for the assistant Michigan representative extends to her ability to maneuver a car in and out of traffic under tight deadline situations.

TODAY THINGS look a little more

secure for Ms. Robillard if not any less hectic. There are periodic trips around the state and to Washington, sprinkled in between duties kin to that of personal director in her Detroit office.

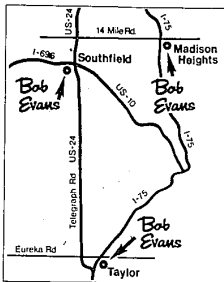
With a strong support system made up of family, friends and neighbors, she is enjoying her new life style. An admitted "closet jock" who enjoys slipping into a pair of jeans and shooting baskets with friends, Ms. Robillard has expanded her casual wardrobe to include the more feminine yet professional look.

Dressed in a soft blue blouse and a blue paisley print skirt with a velvet jacket within reach, she looks like a woman who is not only comfortable in any situation, but enjoys the challenge it may present.

But the security of her present situation is nice too. "As long as I do a good job," she said, "my job is secure until 1984. And if Carl Levin does a good job and is re-elected, its secure until . . . whenever."

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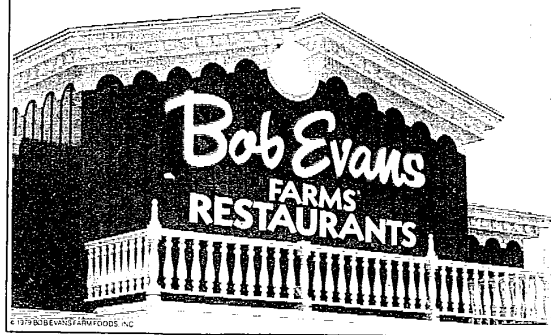
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Library planning annual doll party

Baldwin Library is holding a Winter Carnival Bookmark Contest, sponsored by the Birmingham Schools and Baldwin. Children, grades one through six, are eligible. The contest is a chance for two young artists to have their bookmarks used by the library through 1980.

Instructions must be carefully followed. The proposed bookmark must be 8 1/2 by 2 1/4 inches in size, and must use libraries or books as a main idea. One color paper and one color ink only. The design must be on one side. Library information will be printed on the reverse side.

Designs may be submitted beginning Jan. 1. The deadline for entries is Feb. 2. Two winners, one from grades one through three, one from grades four through six, will be announced on Saturday, Feb. 9, at the 2 p.m. storytime. Finished designs should be brought to the youth room. A judge will choose the winners.

"Something For Kids On Saturday" for kids 4 and up will run from Jan. 5 through March 29, from 2:30 p.m. every Saturday. There will be stories, films, fingerplays, dramatics and puppets. (There will also be a Dec. 15 Saturday program for youngsters.) No reg-

istration necessary.

Registration for preschool storytime is necessary. Registration begins on Jan. 2. A choice of Wednesday, Jan. 15 to March 5 "Storytime for Kids aged three-five" is offered. "Storytime for Parents," informal talks on books of interest to adults, will be offered at the same time in the Harry Allen room. Register in the youth room.

An annual doll party will be held on at 2 p.m. Dec. 27 in the Jeanne Lloyd room. Though Florence Gale says the beginnings of this pleasant tradition "are shrouded in mystery," the doll party has evolved over the years into a special afternoon for children of both sexes. Teddy bears, stuffed animals, (including toolies ones), superheroes, dolls with haircuts are all welcome. Dorothy Hardenburg of the library staff said, "This is an opportunity for children to share old and new doll experiences."

Please label dolls so that they are safe while older and cake are served. Baldwin library is at the corner of Martin and Bates. For information call 847-1700.