## Housewife finds business really the berries

## By MARGARET MILLER

Now that April's here, Peggy Meyers is operating somewhere between strawberry plants and her new home business planning service. But while snow covered frozen ground and dormant strawberry plants, this Northville resident and budding businesswoman found that beginning



Peggy Meyer runs the business end of a strawberry farming opera-tion and also is starting an advisory service for those who want to start home businesses. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring)

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work on the service was just the ticket to fruitful months between strawberry crops. Mrs. Meyers, whose face is familiar at the Scholeraft College Women's Re-source Center, where she has been a student intern, peer counselor and teacher of classes, has been in the strawberry business several years and thinks some of the pointers she has

ers. That was the reason for she started developing her idea for a home busi-ness service, starting with a workbook that can be used by those with similar

the resource conter and the kinds of ad-vice we give to women who come in for counseling. "It makes me more comfortable to keep my mind going when Tm less busy with necessary work. Other people are creative with their hands and I'm not, so I decided on this project." PGGY AND LARRY Meyer and' their family moved a year ago to the farm where Larry's parents had lived and where the family in recent years had been putting more and more acress into strawberries. "Our business is one geared to family outing a rather than commercial years and the the activity comes from the middle of June until the middle of July." Tarry's widowed mother now lives in the farmbouse on the property, and his brother had shared in the business until Peggy bought out his shares last year. "Now I'm a full partner instead of just a silent or whork from April to brother had shared in the business until Peggy bought out his shares last year. "Now I'm a full partner instead of just a silent one," she said.

Operating the strawberry business is largely a matter of work from April to July. New plants go in this month, Mrs.

also a list of 125 suggested enterprises. atso a list of 125 suggested enterprises. Then there is a detailed guide of the necessary steps, financial record state of the state

Meyer said, and between 30,000 and 40,000 are planted. "The first year you pick off the blos-soms so the plant gets strong and sends out runners," she said, "and then the plants are good for three years. We take them out after that because the weeds start taking over and that means smaller plants and berries." Berause the customers do the har-vesting "about our only labor is weed-ing and taking off the blossom' Mrs. Meyer added.

HANDLING the financial end of strawberry growing, this businesswom-an found out, required more knowledge than she had picked up in her courses at Schoolcraft or work at the resource

than she had picked up in her courses at Scholoraft or work at the resource center. "I asked an accountant to help me," she recalled. "He said set up the books, and showed me where to enter infor-mant the said to take a class." Bo she did. The one she picked was gain at Scholeraft, designed for small business services. "It was very helpful, a good tool for picot to use," Mirs. Meyer said. "It got light to the basis I needed." Offered, and be finds she's also done some flearning of her own while begin-ing to sort basis finds she's plant offered, and be finds she's also done some learning of her own while begin-ing to set up her home business plan-ung service.

Her workbook, which she described as 1-2-3 steps in a "folder type of thing," includes a self-test to see if the attributes necessary for running a suc-cessful home business are present and

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