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Wanted: novice entrepreneurs

By MARY GNIEWEK

Farmington Hills businessman Timothy Cleary thinks people starting their own business could benefit from an association dedicated to helping small-time entrepreneurs.

The 25-year-old University of Michigan graduate (78-marketing) who runs

rum for speakers successful in all types of businesses."

CLEARY HIT UPON the idea through his own experiences.

"I saw a niche to begin business six months ago with Lions magazine," he said. "Eleven other cities with national football teams had these types of magazines."

"With the Detroit sports scene, I thought it would be worthwhile to give it a try."

"It was well received, but I learned many lessons about starting business the hard way."

"For instance, I didn't know you could expect to lose money the first year. Also, selling an unproven idea, no matter how good it is, is usually received by the status quo with skepticism."

"The status quo controls banking institutions and distributing. That makes it inherently difficult to get started."

Despite a first-year loss of \$6,000 on a \$30,000 investment, Lions magazine is going strong with distribution in 28 states. The second year of the magazine is already in the planning stages.

"One thing I want to stress to people is to approach venture capitalists with the type of plan they're looking for."

Cleary hopes to have special subcommittees in MEA for minority entrepreneurs and women.

"These groups have distinct advantages and drawbacks."

Annual membership fee is \$18. Cleary is convinced the idea will catch on. After a radio talk show host mentioned the new organization during an afternoon program last week, he received 156 phone calls from interested participants.

"METRO DETROIT IS fertile now because many people are laid off. They have time to think about business alternatives."

"I think that's the bright side of the economy," he says. "People unfulfilled by the corporate grind have an opportunity for something else."

He identifies two periods in life when people are most apt to think about starting their own business.

"MEAs will be able to help by providing information on how to obtain venture capital from public and private sources," he said.

"It will provide a network of ideas in meetings. Maybe a guy in the same business as yourself knows a few shortcuts and is willing to share ideas."

"Also, the meetings will provide a fo-

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Let the sun shine

The sun cast a long shadow on the newly fallen snow on Christmas Eve, making serene scenes like this one. To see how the snow affected other parts of the city, turn to Page 3A. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Faithful watcher eyed for council

By MARY GNIEWEK

A one-man campaign is under way to replace a resigning Farmington city councilman with a woman who has missed attendance at just one city council meeting in the past six years.

When Councilman Warren Buckler resigns to take a U.S. Army post on Jan. 8, Farmington resident Bob Cook will be campaigning to get Nancy Leonard to finish Buckler's two year term.

Throughout Buckler's first term and for three years prior to his taking office, Mrs. Leonard was a permanent fixture in the often sparse Monday night audience at city hall.

Working on various needlepoint projects in the back row of seats, Mrs. Leonard often scolds and jokes with council members. They often comment on her remarks and the repartee gives the meetings an informal atmosphere.

Though she is an appointed member of the city's historical commission, Mrs. Leonard has never campaigned for public office.

City officials have remarked in the past that she would probably be a shoo-in candidate.

Shortly after Buckler announced his resignation on Dec. 15, Cook, a long-time resident and member of the city's historical society, distributed to members of council and City Manager Robert Deadman an open letter to Mrs. Leonard asking her to fill Buckler's seat if she's asked.

Traditionally, the council draws replacements from its ranks of appointed commission members.

COOK'S LETTER READ: "Our citizens should be made aware of your faithful attendance at every council meeting, your contributions to the interests of our city."

"You have indicated to me that you occasionally make offbeat remarks at council meetings and you would prefer they be charged against you as an individual than against an official representative of the city."

"Please be informed that you are not the only one with a mouth problem. Most of our good councilmen have taken turns making dumb statements. However, their concern for the good of

the city, like yours, is what counts."

Though the letter is written in a light vein, Cook claims he's dead serious.

"I think Nancy would be a good council person," he said. "I wanted to needle her a little bit. She's a good citizen. I thought a little nudge might convince her she ought to serve if they (council members) wanted to appoint her to serve out Buckler's term."



NANCY LEONARD

Mrs. Leonard found the letter amusing but remained unmoved by it.

"He said my feelings exactly," she said. "If I open my mouth and put my foot in it, I'm only hurting myself."

She prefers to remain an unofficial spokeswoman and would decline an offer to serve, she said.

COUNCILMAN DICK TUPPER said Mrs. Leonard will be considered as a potential replacement since she is a city commission member.

But, he added, "I see many qualified names on the list."

"We have 60 days after Buckler's resignation to name a replacement."

"I guess two or three weeks after he resigns, we will probably make our decision."

He wouldn't say if Mrs. Leonard has the favored edge.

"It depends on what name the majority of council can agree upon."



TIMOTHY CLEARY

his own public relations firm and publishes a football magazine called Lions has now formed the Michigan Entrepreneurs Association (MEA).

Cleary hopes to attract 2,000 members to MEA. The first quarterly meeting is planned for March 1981.

In interviewing dozens of persons in business for themselves, Cleary has found a common denominator.

"A common psychological factor is lack of security," he said. "It's that realization that you're on your own with no regular paycheck."

He hopes to attract both new entrepreneurs and those contemplating starting a business.

"MEAs will be able to help by providing information on how to obtain venture capital from public and private sources," he said.

"It will provide a network of ideas in meetings. Maybe a guy in the same business as yourself knows a few shortcuts and is willing to share ideas."

"Also, the meetings will provide a fo-

Business world attracts youth

Armed with 3,000 coupon booklets, determination and an idea, 17-year-old Dennis O'Neill is making his first tentative steps into the business world.

O'Neill and his partner, Eric Stenson, have compiled a selection from 46 area stores into a book they call "Farmington's Finest."

The booklet, much like the passbooks sold in the metropolitan area but with a local emphasis, was originally suggested by O'Neill for a fund-raising project during his junior year at Harrison High School.

When the junior board turned down the suggestion, he decided to give it a try on his own.

Not only did he raise his own saving account to bankroll the project, but he managed to convince his father and Stenson of the validity of his idea. Stenson is the fourth partner O'Neill has had in the project.

"He's the only one who could see it through economically," O'Neill says of his partner, a Michigan State University student.

It took them five months to compile the booklet.

"It was supposed to be a summer job. But it lasted through the fall and winter," O'Neill said.

AT FIRST he called businesses in the area to ask when the manager would be available. He soon discovered that very few could pinpoint the business owner's hours, so O'Neill

began visiting businesses and discussing his idea in person.

He learned to draw up a simple business contract from his high school accounting teacher but soon encountered a stumbling block common to new businesses — it needed clients to attract clients. Finally, O'Neill broke through that barrier with his first client, Primo Pizza.

After that, O'Neill's idea attracted the owners of local restaurants, dry cleaners, racquetball courts and clothing stores.

All of the businesses are local because O'Neill wanted his coupon book to appeal to persons who were interested in a bargain but who were inclined to pursue them out of town.

Now a high school senior, O'Neill is already looking forward to next year's edition of his passbook. He wants to make them available as a fund-raising tool to high schools and special interest groups in the area.

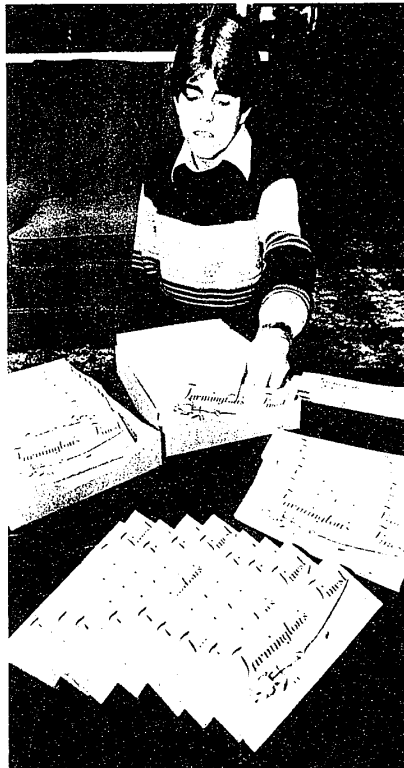
BY THIS TIME he even has an incentive plan for persons selling the books. The group or person who sells more than 1,000 of the books will receive a portable stereo, O'Neill envisions.

The president of the National Honor Society at Harrison, O'Neill plans to attend Michigan State University after he graduates from high school in 1981. Eventually, he plans to attend law school at the University of Michigan.

private college and public university, will discuss college costs, the various kinds and sources of financial aid available, and application procedures.

The program is designed primarily for parents of high school seniors who plan to attend any institution of higher education in or out of Michigan.

Spencer Johnson, a financial aid officer at OCC who has had previous experience in the same capacity at both a



Dennis O'Neill displays the coupon books he hopes to sell to bargain-conscious area residents. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Distinguished resident dies

Max Hulett, who served the city of Farmington in various official capacities for decades, died Dec. 21.

Hulett, who was a resident of Farmington since 1934, was 95 years old.

He served as an associate municipal judge in Farmington from 1951 to 1963. Prior to becoming the first associate city judge, he served for many years as one of the city's justices of the peace.

He also served as a member of City Council. During his tenure, the police department was organized under his supervision and Joseph DeVriendt was appointed the first chief of police.

Also while a member of council, Hulett had charge of the fire department and drafted the traffic ordinance. He served as chairman of the Board of Appeals on zoning.

Born in Detroit on July 9, 1885, he attended local grade schools and graduated from the old Central High at the corner of Cass and Warren, now known

as Wayne State University's Old Main.

He obtained his law degree from the University of Michigan.

Hulett moved from Detroit to Farmington in 1934. After practicing law in Detroit for 30 years, he moved his office to the basement of the Farmington State Bank building in Farmington.

He purchased the old American Legion building on Grand River across the street from the Methodist Church in 1946. At that time he was joined in law practice by Sylvester J. Phoney.

At the time he moved to Farmington, he said it felt like he was returning home. Both his parents were born in Oakland County — his father in Milford and his mother in Novi Township.

Funeral services were held Dec. 24, from Thayer Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. J. Kenneth Hoffmaster officiating.

Burial was at Oakland Hills Memorial Gardens.

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June Rubenstein is a very smart lady. June makes pillows and advertises in her hometown Observer & Eccentric Newspaper to market them.

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