

National Association of Women Business Owners

A. Laforet takes state honors for innovation

By Carol Aazian staff writer

Adeline Laforet runs her two Southfield businesses with the confidence and expertise of one who has long been familiar with the health care needs of others.

As the owner of Pro Care One, a supplemental nursing service, and P.C.O. Associates, a certified home health agency, Laforet commands a staff of some 1,500 employees.

She sees that hospitals, nursing homes and clinics who contact her have enough nurses on the job and provides home health care services to numerous clients.

Recently Laforet was honored for her achievements by the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners.

A plaque, which Laforet received from Lt. Gov. James Ritchie, said she is "representative of the new breed of modern businesswomen who have demonstrated great resourcefulness and imagination in establishing an innovative and prosperous business enterprise."

The recognition of her "resourcefulness and imagination" comes after years of struggling to stay on the job amid family crises.

Laforet began her career as a registered nurse in 1959. She worked part time for several years at Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital while taking care of her two children.

When her third child, John, was born mentally retarded, Laforet was faced with a dilemma — whether to quit her job or find a way to continue working. She chose the latter.

"I ALWAYS had a lot of energy and desire to do things that were meaningful," she said. "I tried the tennis and bridge circuit but thought there had to be more (to life) than being a young suburban housewife."

"My career also helped me deal with raising a mentally retarded son who demanded a tremendous amount of time and energy."

During the day, Laforet took care of John and her other two children while her husband, Albert, worked. After he came home, she donned her nursing uniform, and went to work on the late-afternoon shift at Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital.

That arrangement worked for a while. The Laforets seemed to manage with that schedule even after they had their fourth child.

But several factors made the arrangement impractical a few years later. Perhaps the most significant was that the hospital could no longer schedule her for the same shift all the time.

Laforet found that she had more time on her hands during the day because her four children were attending school.

"I needed a job that allowed me to work four hours in the middle of the day — before the children went to



Adeline Laforet has been cited as representative of a new breed of modern businesswomen demonstrating resourcefulness and imagination in establishing a prosperous business enterprise. The Farmington Hills resident is owner and operator of Pro Care One and P.C.O. Associates.

school and after they came home," she said.

She discovered a supplemental nursing service in Southfield and began working there as a director of nursing in 1972.

For two years, she screened and interviewed nurses for part-time jobs at

hospitals, nursing homes and clinics.

Then, in 1974, she opened a health care division for another company. Within a year, she had expanded that company's health care division to several offices around the country.

"It's all part of the temporary job industry — the Kelly Girl concept ap-

plied to health care services," Laforet said, in describing her field.

THE FIELD was so challenging to Laforet that, in 1975, she decided to open her own business.

"My partner (who's now retired) and I started in a one-room office," she said. "We did everything — from screening and interviewing nurses to marketing and payroll functions."

Shortly after she opened her new business, tragedy struck the Laforet family.

One of their daughters, Mary, was hit by a car and suffered what's called a "closed head injury."

"She had to learn how to speak and walk again," Laforet said. "She's in college now, and she's still fighting to make a comeback."

During her daughter's rehabilitation, Laforet continued to work part time. She hired a nurse's aide to take care of her daughter five days a week. (The aide, Jean Gully, later became Laforet's secretary.)

"IT WAS A DIFFICULT time," Laforet acknowledged. "But my experiences gave me a new awareness and compassion for families in crisis."

That awareness prompted Laforet to expand her services. Last summer, she opened a second company devoted to home health care.

The agency provides nurses and therapists for persons suffering from illnesses or disabilities. Physical and

therapists, speech pathologists, social workers and skilled nurse's aides are part of the agency's rehabilitative team.

Laforet said another aspect of her business is to help senior citizens maintain their independence.

Through her supplemental nursing service, she provides "homemakers" and companions for the elderly as well as for persons suffering from debilitating or incurable diseases.

Laforet acknowledges the difficulties patients and their families face in choosing the appropriate health care service.

"After a patient recovers from surgery, the hospital's home care coordinator often gives him or her family a list of 20-30 companies or refers him to the 'Yellow Pages,'" she said.

"As the home health care agencies proliferate, it becomes a grave concern for the patient and his family."

To help persons make "informed" choices, Laforet offers a series of public service programs aimed at informing the consumer about home health care options.

She contacts representatives from various professions, businesses and organizations to speak on "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Home Health Care, But Didn't Know Who to Ask."

Series of free concerts marks 'Music Week'

Bell ringers, jazz bands, symphony bands and choruses, dancers, ensembles and singers of every description from the northwest suburbs will join to celebrate National Music Week.

Farmington Musicale is the sponsor of the week-long series of concerts, running Monday through Saturday, May 3-8 in both Southfield's Tel-Twelve Mall and Novi's Twelve Oaks Mall.

In Twelve Oaks Mall, Monday night's concert starts at 7 p.m. with a performance by Novi High School Symphony Band. At 1 p.m. Tuesday, the Northville Jazz Band performs, and at 7 p.m. that night Sweet Adelines from Farmington Hills take the stage.

Wednesday's concerts are provided by Novi High School Chorus at 11:11 a.m.; Novi Singers and Jazz Rock Ensemble at 1 p.m. and Harrison Jazz Band at 7 p.m.

The Thursday schedule lists Walled Lake Western High School Orchestra at 11 a.m. and Walled Lake Western High School Symphonic Band at 1 p.m. At 7 p.m., the performance will be given by Farmington Community Chorus.

The line-up for Friday is the North Farmington Choir and North-ern Lites, at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and The Mercyrates at 7 p.m.

Saturday shoppers at Twelve Oaks Mall will hear the Wolverine Barber Shop Chorus at 1 p.m.

AT TEL-TWELVE Mall the Bentley High School Concert Choir goes on stage Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday at 1 p.m. the performance is given by Kimball High School Symphony Orchestra, and at 7:30 p.m., the Royal Oak Musicale Chorus.

The Wednesday scheduled lists Farmington High School Falconnaires for 1 p.m. and Birmingham Community Concert Band at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday's 1 p.m. concert will be given by Clawson High School Vocal Ensemble and at 7:30 p.m. the Vandervogel Ballet.

Friday at 1 p.m. West Hills Junior High Singers from Bloomfield Hills take the stage. At 7:30 p.m. the stage is turned over to the Jazz Ensemble from Detroit Country Day School.

The Detroit Children's Choir is set to perform at 1 p.m. Saturday, and the series winds up at 3 p.m. with a performance by Shrine High School Chorus.

Farmington Musicale is a member of National Federation of Music Clubs, the initiator of National Music Week.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

National Reflections

Winners in the National Reflections contest from Kenbrook Elementary School gathered in the library this week as their winning works were dismantled after a month-long display and sent off for state competition. Standing at top are Neil McNabney, 9 and Michael Colangelo, 11. In the center row (from left) are Jessica Rolnick, 10; Tammy Johnson, 9; Amy Thurston, 9; and Nicole Harris, 9. Ken Downie, 9, standing in front of Nicole. And to his

right are Chris Winters, 9, and Todd Stoneman, 7. In the front row is Yolanda Wu, 10, Danielle Linck, 11, and Barbara Herman, 10. National Reflections is sponsored by the national organization of the PTA to encourage youngsters' interest and participation in art, literature and music. Four children were chosen in each category by the Farmington PTA Council for their interest and participation in the fine arts.

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