

# JoAnn Soronen — she's on the fast track

Continued from Page 1

for their dog. They have asked where they could give away kittens or fish. They have asked her to recommend a caterer for a wedding.

Why did that cute little shop move? What is the name of the wine store on such and such corner? Where can I find a reasonably priced apartment in this town? My son has been away at college for three years now so what is his permanent address?

"There are always a lot of sad calls, people wanting to know if the Goodfellows can give some help, whether or not it's Christmas time," said Soronen, known to friends as Jody.

"So we're a referral agency, whether we like it or not. A lot of questions come having to do with Social Security, licenses and fees. A lot of legal questions come, which we treat very, very carefully."

"We answer these questions as well as we can," she said. "I don't and Judy Gural, who make up the two-woman office. "Complaints about merchants, that's another matter. That is our function, and

fortunately for all of us, there are very few."

SORONEN'S MAIN function is to beat the drums for Farmington and Farmington Hills.

"My job is to promote the community and, right now, fill up all those vacant offices along Northwestern Highway," said Soronen, who moved to Farmington Hills during its township days 23 years ago.

"Land is another matter. It's all either gone or spoken for but the turnover is always there. Our job is to spread the word on the advantages of moving your business here."

Soronen is backed up in this behalf by files and files of demographics on both communities. She sends out 20 packets a week to the out-of-towners, who call or write wanting to know about everything from the economy to pollution, from housing and schools to the job market.

"We have the standard packets, but if it's a specific question having to do with real estate or a given job, I often tear out the Want Ad section from the Observer and send it along. I use whatever is handy," she said.

SORONEN is backed up by the number of meetings she attends, some by virtue of her chamber position, some by virtue of her city council position — both of which make her a liaison to other groups.

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With whatever hat she's wearing at the time, Soronen says, "I'm still working for the community, one way or another."

In her job for the chamber, Soronen is hostess for "Business After Hours," a get-together for chamber members that mixes business with pleasure. She puts out "Intercom," the chamber's newsletter.

Soronen plans educational workshops for the chamber members and keeps abreast of legislative action that relates to local business people. She also arranges the chamber membership's monthly meetings.

SORONEN is a member of the

All Oakland County Executives, the West Suburban Council of Chambers and the county's Community Growth Alliance — "all to help the left hand know what the right hand is doing," she said.

"We belong to the county alliance to prevent turf battles," she said. "If I can't get a new business to move to Farmington, maybe Troy will get the new business. But we've still benefited the county as a whole."

The most recent committee she joined is the Downtown Farmington Task Force, one she suspects will bring more night meetings and one she calls "important and impressive with the way we've started to bring about a healthy downtown."

Soronen says she's "sometimes lucky to get the laundry done and the beds changed, but I enjoy every minute of it."

When asked why she assumes so much responsibility — not to mention the interim campaigns that have never failed to keep her on the city council — she says, "I somehow got on a very fast train and I've never been able to figure out how to get off."

# Alleged spa activity sparks plans to picket

Continued from Page 1

from residents' complaints of prostitution and other sex-related offenses at the storefront spas, police said.

Although the spas reopened following the raids, business is reported to be down by about 80 percent. Owners of buildings housing the spas have been notified to stop the alleged illegal activity on their property, Dwyer said.

TWO OWNERS have responded to police notification. "Both have responded in a positive manner to rid the

locations of the tenants," Dwyer said.

One of two owners who responded this week "was very concerned and willing to assist the city and the (police) department in any way he can. He has already put the person (spa operator) on notice. But there doesn't seem to be any progress."

Two of the building owners are from Southfield, one from Livonia, another from West Bloomfield Township and one from Redford Township. The building owners do not operate the spas. The 17 suspects were charged with

misdeemeanor ordinance violations.

The maximum penalty upon conviction of aiding and abetting prostitution, as well as accosting and soliciting — the charges brought against the suspects — is 90 days in jail and a \$500 fine.

DISTRICT JUDGE Margaret Schaefer of Farmington said jury trial dates are expected to be scheduled by Jan. 8. Some of the suspects' trials might be consolidated, Schaefer said. Of the 17 arrested in the raids, 14 are

Korean citizens, one is a Japanese citizen and the other two are U.S. citizens. The U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Internal Revenue Service are investigating, Dwyer said.

Police believe the alleged prostitution in Farmington Hills may be connected to an international organization, thought to be controlled by Koreans, that recruits U.S. servicemen to marry Korean women and bring them into the country.

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