

Housing helper to leave her post

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Cheryl Carter's phone was ringing non-stop. Word had gotten out that the woman who has been both friend and helper to scores of Farmington Hills residents is leaving.

Carter has resigned her position as housing rehabilitation specialist, effective March 18, just a few days before the annual and often controversial public hearing on the federal Community Block Grant program. The city's housing program is financed with block grant money.

"It's time to move on," Carter said, sitting in her cubbyhole office behind the city council chambers. "It's a chance for independence."

CARTER'S QUEST for independence comes in the form of starting her own consulting business. On her own, Carter will be doing a lot of what she has been doing for the past 4 1/2 years for Farmington Hills.

Her company will set up development programs, including housing rehabilitation. It eventually will branch out into market analysis studies, traffic engineering studies and working with developers as a liaison with communities.

"I have knowledge of city government and the CDBG program. There's a lot of communities out there that can use help," said Carter, who was Ohio's first female building inspector.

NO BUREAUCRAT, Carter often spent her days climbing in attics, checking out roofs, plumbing or whatever needed repairing in the homes of her clients.

"I'm going to miss the people, my clients. This

job has turned into people care. I help them with not only housing needs, but their social needs. I get calls for the homeless and those with no food or clothing."

George Roberts, a long-time member of the housing rehabilitation loan board, which reviews requests for loans and grants that come through the housing program, is sad to see Carter leave.

"She knew what she was doing. She had a real concern for her clients. And when she presented a client's case to the rehab board, she usually had all the answers necessary to make an intelligent decision."

"It is my hope her successor is as well-qualified and takes as large an interest in the success of the program as Cheryl did," Roberts said.

When Carter arrived in Farmington Hills, following a stint with Oakland County Community Development, only nine homes on the average were being repaired each year with federal money.

Today, the housing rehabilitation program helps rehabilitate an average of 30-40 homes a year. The housing program targets homes in the low- and moderate-income areas of the city that need repairs.

CITY OFFICIALS said they are now faced with the challenge of finding a replacement for Carter. Carter's position has been advertised, though city officials are uncertain how to fill the post.

"We will truly miss her. She's been a benefit to the program, to the staff here and to the clients," said Richard Lampi, Hills community development manager.

"I don't know what we're going to do with it.



Cheryl Carter
a friend to many

We're going to test the waters. There's a lot of ways we can go with this."

City manager William Costick, who credits Carter with putting together the housing rehabilitation program, said he hopes Carter will agree to continue working as a consultant for the city until a full-time replacement is found.

"We've had many compliments from people who Cheryl has helped. She has brought a personal sensitivity and compassion to the people who have needed help," Costick said.

Through Carter's work, which involves providing low-interest and deferred loans to rehabilitation houses for low- to moderate-income families, "many neighborhoods have shown a turnaround. It's been a successful program," Costick said.

C'ville students write to save teachers' jobs

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

Because some of their favorite teachers will be laid off, some Clarencville Junior High School students are trying to do something about it.

Heather Neely, 12, said she and three friends are organizing a letter-writing campaign to Clarencville Superintendent Michael Shilber, Gov. James Blanchard, state Sen. Robert Geake, state Rep. Lyn Bankes, and President Ronald Reagan. The school district includes southeast Farmington Hills.

By writing officials, the students say they hope to raise enough money to keep their teachers from being laid off.

"We're asking some of the parents to write separately," Neely said.

Kim MacIver, 12, Katy Grant, 12, and Amy Patterson, 13, also are heading the letter-writing effort. All four are seventh graders.

"No action has been taken yet" on layoffs, Shilber said. But it's possible the board of education could lay off 10 teachers at the end of the school year, he added.

"THE GOVERNOR is not going to increase the state aid formula significantly, by zero to 2 percent," Shilber said. And the district's costs are going up 7-8 percent, he said.

While elementary enrollment is expected to remain stable, junior high and high school enrollment is projected to dip, cutting the district's state aid.

"Something has to give," Shilber said. The board will examine possible layoffs in late March or early April.

MacIver said she heard of the layoffs from her choir teacher, Dawn Roberts.

"She's a good teacher. She's real patient with us and does a good job," MacIver said, explaining why the students wanted to do something.

The students said they've heard that about 10 teachers were being laid off due to budget cuts. When they told other students, "A lot of them wanted to help out," Neely said.

So far, 30 students have agreed to write letters, they said.

By writing officials, the students say they hope to raise enough money to keep their teachers from being laid off.

"We said we'd mail them," Neely said.

A LETTER written by the students for government officials reads, "I am writing to you as a student from the Clarencville School District. Our school is financially going broke."

"A lot of our teachers are getting laid off. We want to save our school, and with your help we think we can do it."

The students said they talked with some teachers about what to do. "They say it (letter writing) is a good idea to get involved and to keep at it," Neely said.

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Store owner arraigned on drug charge

By Marie Cheslnoy
staff writer

The owner of a Livonia party store has been arraigned in 16th District Court on two drug charges, possession of cocaine and possession of marijuana.

Livonia Police arrested the owner, Tony Shamoun, in December after a four-month investigation of the store, the In & Out Party Store, 9479 Newburgh.

Police arrested three others — two men and a woman — at the same time. The three were arraigned in 16th District Court in December and are now free on bond awaiting court dates in Wayne Circuit Court.

LIVONIA POLICE Sgt. Doug Smith said Shamoun's arraignment

was delayed until Monday because police were waiting for a laboratory analysis of a small amount of substance found in his possession.

Shamoun, 32, of Farmington Hills stood mute Monday before Judge James McCann. He posted a \$5,000 personal bond and faces a March 24 examination in district court. The penalty for conviction of a narcotics crime involving less than 50 grams is imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than 20 years.

The store, which has a license to sell beer and wine and is within a half-mile of four schools (Churchill High School, Livonia Career Center, Washington and Johnson elementary), has been open since the four arrests.

Livonia Police Lt. William Corcoran said police have cited the

store for seven violations of regulations set by the state's Liquor Control Commission.

The commission bans the selling, possession or consumption of a controlled substance and narcotics paraphernalia on the premises of a business having a liquor license.

Corcoran said the commission will hold a hearing on the charges. If found guilty, the store's beer and wine license could be taken away, he said.

POLICE SAID they purchased cocaine at the store over a four-month period.

In addition to Shamoun, police in December arrested another employee of the store, Nail Al-Kas-Shamoun-Sala, 28, of Farmington Hills.

He is charged with two counts of delivery of cocaine, a charge that carries a maximum of 20 years in prison. He posted a \$50,000 bond and is awaiting trial in Wayne Circuit Court.

Police in December also arrested Westland residents Jovica Paulovic, 26, and Catherine Telly, 30. Both have been charged with possession with intent to deliver more than 245 grams of cocaine, a charge that carries a maximum of 30 years in prison.

Paulovic posted a \$200,000 bond; Telly posted a \$100,000 bond. Both are awaiting trial in Wayne Circuit Court.

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