

Hills firm to lead marketing push

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A Farmington Hills firm owned by a local resident will lead a new marketing strategy designed to put downtown Farmington on the map.

Farmington Hills resident Sandra Hermanoff, president of Hermanoff & Associates, will work with the Farmington Downtown Development Authority's marketing committee to launch the next step in the rejuvenation of the city's central business district. The DDA is currently in the midst of a million dollar streetscape improvement project.

"I guess we're trying to create a personality for downtown Farmington," DDA member Frank Clappison said. "They don't create new downtowns anymore. The downtown that

exists today... will exist 50 years from now."

"We want it to be everybody's downtown," DDA president Harry Wingerter said.

With the help of Hermanoff and her people, the DDA will work on a one- to two-year promotion plan for downtown designed to draw more people into the area to shop and do business.

The DDA's marketing committee will review the plan this spring and plan its launch strategy soon after. DDA executive director Wendy Strip Sittamer stressed that the DDA would like to start the marketing program, but make it an ongoing concern long after the DDA streetscape improvements are completed.

"We need to put some programs into place that will carry on," she said.

Although the DDA is coordinating the marketing effort, they will encourage not only retailers and businesses, but downtown landlords to get behind the project, which will be designed to bring a cohesiveness to the business community.

DDA members have said they cannot shoulder the entire cost of such a program, but want to help get it launched.

In a proposal made to the DDA board this month, Hermanoff suggested a few starting points to launch the marketing effort:

- a downtown newsletter — a one-page informational sheet to give to shoppers and visitors, offering specials and promoting special events.
- "It tells people what is going on... all the time," Hermanoff said.

"It's one way of getting the word around."

- a downtown "club" — members of all ages, would be issued a card offering special discounts or other items at downtown stores. The card would also allow merchants to gain name recognition with customers.

- an ambassador's program — where specified people would be named to spread the word about downtown Farmington, drawing customers and new businesses to the area.
- a walking trail — would draw people downtown.

"If people knew there was a place to walk, they would come here," Hermanoff said.

These would be just a start to the all-encompassing program.

"I see these things as being put in place right away," Hermanoff said. "Everything ties in. It's cumulative."

HERMANOFF WAS selected to coordinate the effort over four public relations specialists considered by the DDA board. She will present her promotional plan, with cost analysis, to the DDA marketing committee at a meeting at 9 a.m. April 11.

"I think we're trying to rekindle a little commitment to this area again," Clappison said. "I'm old-fashioned enough to believe you've got to put something back into your community. That philosophy still exists."

Hospital affiliate names acting CEO

Greg Beauchemin was named acting president and chief executive officer of Community Emergency Medical Services (CEMS), a medical transportation service and affiliate of Botsford General Hospital.

The announcement was made by Gerson Cooper, president of the Ziegler Health Care Corp. and Botsford General Hospital.

"This interim appointment recog-

nizes the outstanding contribution Greg has made to CEMS," said Cooper. Confirmation of his appointment is expected at the next meeting of the CEMS board.

Beauchemin joined CEMS in August 1982 and, most recently, served as vice president and chief operating officer. Before joining CEMS, he served as general manager of Am-

In 1979, Beauchemin received his bachelor's degree from Madonna College, Livonia. He is pursuing a master's degree in business administration at Madonna.

Community Emergency Medical Services serves Wayne and Oakland counties with emergency and non-emergency services. CEMS is an affiliate of the Ziegler Health Care Corp. and Botsford General Hospital.

Schools sponsored Reader's Month

During the month of March, Farmington Community School will be celebrating Reader's Month. This activity is dedicated to the importance of reading.

Plans for Reader's Month include many special events, readings done by a variety of local celebrities and creative classroom reading-related opportunities.

The Farmington Community School houses preschool and adult classes all of which have been invited to participate in the scheduled event. Preschool classes will be hearing stories read by police and fire fighters, nurses, doctors, dental hygienists and Ronald

McDonald. In addition, each preschool classroom teacher has requested children's parents and/or grandparents to visit and share a book.

Kaye Paxton and Terry Leland, adult literacy specialist, have also become involved in Reader's Month. These teachers have been instrumental in including adult education students in Reading Month. Their students will be providing more individual reading experiences.

Farmington Community School is at 30415 Shawassee, Farmington Hills. For more information call the school at 477-1776.

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