

# We have answers for owners of small businesses

Since this column began in January 1987, our office has consistently received telephone calls and letters from readers with questions regarding their new or existing small business.

Because it is the goal of this column to provide information that benefits the small business community, a monthly reader's forum will appear on the first Thursday of each month. The forum will address your questions or present information you would like to share with other small business owners and managers.

Please call 474-1149 with any questions or announcements. Written requests should be addressed to Focus: Small Business, Reader's Forum, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, 48024. For a personal reply, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

business, but I can't afford to quit my present job. How would you advise a person in my position?

There is no doubt that making the transition from employee to entrepreneur involves risk. Rather than leaving your position prematurely, it is crucial to determine if yours is a business that can be developed and cultivated during your spare time. If this is the case, you will be able to generate a solid base of on-going customer business before resigning from your present job.

Be sure to have set aside at least one half of your present annual salary (including health and insurance benefits) once employment has been terminated. This money will be used for personal expenses until your business begins generating a profit. Depending on your current sources of collateral, this money may take anywhere from three months to one



## focus: small business

### Mary DiPaolo

year to obtain. Although there will always be some level of risk associated with the decision to become your own boss, it can be minimized through proper planning.

What is your opinion regarding telephone directory advertising?

As with any form of paid advertising, the best media sources to consider are those that best reach the types of customers you want to attract and serve as a business. Although everyone has easy access to telephone directory advertising, the

question is whether your company's key customer market(s) will refer to this source when identifying, evaluating or selecting a company like your own to do business with. Next, it is important to know if the level of new business generated is at least equal to the amount paid for your ad on a monthly, semi-annual or annual basis. If not, you may want to choose from the more specialized telephone directories when placing future ads — or consider alternative advertising sources altogether.

Explain the importance of net-

working and how it can benefit me as a small business owner who already has a well-established image and reputation in the metropolitan area.

Networking benefits everyone regardless if you've been in business for one month or 20 years. Networking is important because it allows you to meet, make contact and develop mutually satisfying relationships with others — given your specific personal or professional goals. For established business owners, there are several opportunities you may want to pursue through networking.

Some examples include taking professional speaking opportunities directed at industry groups and associations, becoming a small business industry advocate or lobbyist at the local, state or national levels, and advising new business owners within

your industry. Through networking, you will find that accomplishing specific short- and long-term goals is not only possible but enjoyable as well.

The chambers of commerce and communities of Canton, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia, Northville, Novi and Plymouth invite their new friends from Japan to join in a "Shinnenkai Mixer" 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 17, at the Livonia Marriott Hotel on Six Mile, east of I-275.

Next week I will explain the history of Shinnenkai and provide more details about the event.

Mary DiPaolo is the owner of MarkeTrends, a Farmington Hills based business consulting firm. She is also producer and host of the cable television series, "Chamber Perspectives."

## datebook

**CAREER NIGHT**  
Thursday, Jan. 4 — Free information about legal assistant career offered 7:30-9:30 p.m. near Rochester. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**GMAT PREPARATION**  
Saturdays, Jan. 6-20 — Preparation classes for graduate management admissions test offered 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. near Rochester. Fee: \$150. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

builders and their sales people begins at 10 a.m. at the Kingsley Inn, 1475 N. Woodward, Bloomfield Hills. Non-member fee: \$8. Information: 737-4477. Sponsor: Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan

**WOMEN'S NETWORK**  
Monday, Jan. 8 — Michigan Professional Women's Network meets at 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, 26555 Telegraph in Southfield. Non-member fee: \$23. Information: Diane Wilbur, 647-4480.

assessment inventory for entry into legal assistant diploma program offered 7:30-9:30 p.m. near Rochester. Fee: \$25. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**BUILDERS ASSOCIATION**  
Tuesday, Jan. 9 — Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan meets at 10 a.m. at the Radisson Plaza Inn, Algencourt Room - D, 1500 Town Center, Southfield. Information: Nancy Rosen, 641-0400.

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS**  
Wednesday, Jan. 10 — International Association of Business Communicators meets at 11:30 a.m. at the Radisson Plaza Hotel, Northwestern Highway at 10 Mile in Southfield. Non-member fee: \$23. Information: Nancy Skidmore, 546-5490.

**CAREER NIGHT**  
Thursday, Jan. 11 — Free information about personal financial

planning career offered begins at 7:30 p.m. near Rochester. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**DIRECT MARKETING**  
Thursday, Jan. 11 — Direct Marketing Association of Detroit meets for lunch at the Radisson Plaza Hotel, Southfield. Information: 258-8903.

**WAIVER EXAMS**  
Thursday, Jan. 11 — Para-account-

tant waiver examinations by the Oakland University Division of Continuing Education will be at 6:30 p.m. at OU near Rochester. Fee is \$10 per examination. Register by calling 370-3120 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

**NON-PROFIT LEADERS**  
Tuesday, Jan. 16 — Non-profit Leadership Forum meets for breakfast in Southfield. Information: Accounting Aid Society, 561-1840.

**GRE PREPARATION**  
Saturdays, Jan. 6-27 — Preparation classes for graduate records examination begin at 9 a.m. near Rochester. Fee: \$125. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**CAREER NIGHT**  
Monday, Jan. 8 — Free information about accountant assistant career offered 6:30-7:30 p.m. near Rochester. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY**  
Tuesday, Jan. 9 — Free information about newest production and inventory control technologies offered 6:30-7:30 p.m. near Rochester. Information: Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 370-3120.

**BIRMINGHAM CHAMBER**  
Tuesday, Jan. 9 — Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce meets at 7:30 a.m. at the Baldwin Public Library, 300 W. Merrill, Birmingham. Topic: "What? Me Worry? A Tax Guide for 1990." Non-member fee: \$12. Information: 644-1700.

## SAT SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST PREPARATION WORKSHOP

Saturdays, January 13 & 20  
8:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

### DETROIT COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

22305 W. 13 Mile, Birmingham

Areas to be covered:

- Test Mechanics
- Test Strategies
- Analogy Instruction
- Sentence Completion
- Practice Tests
- Reading Comprehension
- Techniques
- Review of all Mathematical Concepts

Reservation Deadline - January 12  
Cost: \$50  
Make checks payable to Detroit Country Day School  
Call 646-7717

## FREE PISTON TICKETS

NO OBLIGATION - STOP BY AND ENTER DRAWING

### ALL FRAMES 1/2 OFF

Win two tickets to see the Pistons vs. Washington Bullets January 31st. Stop by any location to enter. Drawing held January 24, 1990.

**OPM OPTICAL PLUS OF MICHIGAN**

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| LIVONIA<br>14525 E. 57th St. E 101<br>474-7800 | TRENTON<br>23577 Telegraph Rd. S 406<br>675-5646 | SOUTHFIELD<br>29677 Telegraph Rd. S 406<br>352-2806 |
|--|--|---|

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### January Clearance

On all floor dress, samples and finished garments. See the latest models such as White, Elina, National, Stretch, Dressmakers Sewing Machines and Sewers. One example, using machine with extra perforation power. MADE OF METAL and made in all levels. Sewing Machine with step, 1020, High, with. EVERY SEWING MACHINE is factory direct. All machines with blind hem, satin stitch, applique and much more. Local service and repairs available. BEST! PRICE \$270 NOW ONLY \$87. Hurry 3 days only.

**ELNA SEWERS & COMPUTER SEWING MACHINES, CRAFTED IN SWITZERLAND**  
33118 Woodward at 14 Mile in Washington Plaza 208-8840

**ELNA SEWERS ONLY**

O & E Sports—more than just the scores

O & E Sports—more than just the scores

O & E Classifieds work!

## Super Summers for Kids

A 1990 CAMP AND ACTIVITIES FAIR

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 1990  
11:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.  
Brace/Lederle Community Education Center  
185785 West Nine Mile  
Southfield, Michigan

Academic Enrichment • Overnight Summer Camps • Day Camps • Specialty Camps  
• Activity Programs • Teen Tours • Student Employment Opportunities

MEET REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL SUMMER PROGRAMS

Free Admission—Open to the Public  
On-site Food Concessions by ORCHARD LAKE DELI AND RIB

Sponsored by

The Merrill-Palmer Institute

Wayne State University  
The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL  
(313) 577-5244 ask for Elaine

Due to the large number of exhibitors, the Merrill-Palmer Institute and The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers do not endorse or recommend any special program

## Our Winter Sale is now in progress

As the Holidays are now behind us, it is time again to offer the remainder of our winter stock at attractive reductions. You will save 20 to 50 percent on the finest mens clothing, furnishings and mens and womens footwear.

Plan to attend this post holiday tradition.

Clothing - 326 South State at the Nickels Arcade 663-7228  
Shoes - 47 Nickels Arcade 663-7210  
Clothing & Shoes - 152 N. Woodward Ave., Birmingham 647-8150  
Hours: Mon. - Sat. 10:00 pm - Open Thursday 10:00 pm