

# Driving changes

## Consumer friendly is key

By BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Like the Frugal Son, Patrick Anderson returned to the warm embrace of his home communities.

That is no small feat considering that the former Alexander Insurance Co. executive is now working for an institution he had plenty of occasion to criticize in the past — the government.

More specifically, Anderson, 36, is chief of staff to Secretary of State Candice Miller. He admits that's probably a government agency that often comes to mind when citizens think of bureaucracy, red tape, long lines and inefficiency.

"I've waited in those lines myself," he said last

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week on a visit to Farmington Hills.

He says he hasn't changed any of his concerns, but rather, can now do something about those problems.

"I took the job so I could make changes," said Anderson, who moved to the state department from the Department of Management and Budget.

Already, he said, the department has made moves to help lines move, cut down on paperwork and trips to Secretary of State branch offices. Those changes include:

■ An expanded title search system. Before the improvement, people needing to find a lost title to a vehicle had to go to Lansing. Now there are nine offices located around the state for the purpose.

■ Motorists can now order their license tabs by fax.

■ The department is offering five-day service once a fax, letter or phone order is placed.

■ The state has done away with the Automobile Emissions Testing (AET) program as of January of 1996.

■ "The program was 'costly and inefficient,' according to the EPA," Anderson said. "And they were the ones who ordered it."

■ Changes are proposed to allow use of the Internet to do business with the department.

■ Ease plate transfers and other paper work for automobile dealers in Michigan.

■ "The last thing we want to do is stand in the way of auto makers and dealers doing business in Michigan," he said.

■ An Olympic Education Center plate is available that helps fund the center.

■ A plate commemorating 100 years of the automobile will be on sale in January for \$5 and will first go on display at the North American Auto Show at Cobo Hall Jan. 2.

■ The Motor Voter law, of which Michigan has had its own variation, is in effect nationally and will continue to increase voter registration.

■ Election reforms will prevent candidates who have no popular support in Michigan from getting on primary ballots.

■ Speed limits on some "urban freeways," including I-696 will be increased to 65 mph in the near future.



Another busy day: Bobbie Holmes, manager of the Farmington Hills Secretary of State's office, sees that the lines keep moving.



Mother and child: Sue Price of South Lyon conducts her business with baby Jessica in her arms.



Need license, must travel: Novi resident Steve Dickson comes to the Farmington Hills Secretary of State's office. There's no office in his hometown.

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slow. It has been much quicker this year."

Steve Dickson agreed. "It's really good," he said. "I won't go back to Livonia. They're inconsiderate and slow."

Dickson, who lives in Novi where there is no branch, said he had been waiting for an hour at that office while employees stood around.

Sue Price of South Lyon said she was also impressed because she must go somewhere other than her city, which doesn't have a branch.

The Hills branch has about

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182,000 customers a year, making it one of the busiest branches in the state. Hills Branch Manager Bobbie Holmes said the difference is in staffing and new customer service shortcuts that include a

drop box.

"Customers can drop off the paperwork one day and pick it up the next," she said.

And those who wait in line only to find they left their license, checkbook or other papers behind, can take advantage of a "same day pass" that allows them to come back and go to the head of the line.

The offices also do more business by mail, and now, by touch tone phone and fax.

"About half of the customers we see don't need to come into an office," Anderson said.

## Benefit to pitch slugger's memory

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Greg Grimes connected with people like he did a softball with a swing of an aluminum bat: Consistently and often unforgettably.

He was a stalwart on the softball diamond, playing three or four nights a week and taking part in tournaments. He could hit leadoff because teammates could count on his speed and getting on base.

The Farmington resident died Nov. 29 from head injuries suffered after falling off a ladder. He was 32.

Family and friends are still numb from the accident. Yet they couldn't let his death pass without properly remembering the guy affectionately called, "Grimo."

A benefit will take place in his honor 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at the Farmington Elks Club, Orchard Lake Road, south of 10 Mile Road. A \$25 donation includes buffet dinner.

Money raised will help defray funeral costs incurred by surviving family members.

"We're hoping to generate some revenue," said Rob Krist, a childhood friend of Grimes. "That's the reason for having this."

"But I'm also glad we're having it for a night of remembrance."

Krist hopes for a turnout of 300. Some 180 people paid respects to Grimes at his wake at Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home.

Many were like Krist, who came to know Grimes when they went to 10 Mile School and later Farmington Junior High.

The Farmington High graduate was a sports enthusiast, going on to get a bachelor's degree in Sports Broadcasting from Central Michigan University. He wanted a career calling sports contests but things never worked out.

Grimes worked a series of unrelated jobs instead.

"(It was) a lot of this and that," Krist said.

Playing sports became an escape.

His exploits on the diamond were matched by an endearing quality he had off it.

He was someone who could capture someone's attention with his kindness, friends said.

"He'd always call and ask how your girlfriend was doing or how your family was doing," said Troy Horton, who went to Central Michigan University



Greg Grimes

with Grimes. "When I'd get home from work, he'd be in the driveway playing basketball with my kid."

Survivors include his mother Vivian Grimes; brothers Jon, Gary and Gordon; sister Gail Hubler. Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Sorrows Church.

Grimes also wanted to be a teacher, Krist said. He corrects himself.

"He was a teacher," Krist added. "He taught people to appreciate the finer things in life, like friendships, and enjoying life to day to day."

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS WEEK OF DECEMBER 12, 1995

'Tis the season...

### VISIT SANTA

Each week through Christmas

Thursdays

and Fridays

3 to 8 pm

Saturdays

11 am to 5 pm

Sundays

Noon to 5 pm

### HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Festive fun

through Dec. 16

at the Farmington Elks Club

10 to 11 pm

Free admission

Free food and drink

Free entertainment

Free admission

Free food and drink

Free entertainment

Free admission

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### Mark your calendar!

#### 13/WEDNESDAY

##### CARLO ANTONINI COLLECTION SHOW

An impressive array of necklaces, rings, and earrings created from precious and semi-precious gems. Meet the designer.  
Noon to 7 pm, Fine Jewelry

#### 14/THURSDAY

##### GIORGIO ARMANI SPRING/SUMMER '96 COLLECTION SHOW

The last word in elegant simplicity.  
10 am to 4 pm, International Designers

#### 16/FRIDAY

##### SWAROVSKI COLLECTION SHOW

A dazzling assortment of crystal jewelry.  
10 am to 4 pm, Fashion Jewelry

##### CHANEL BOUTIQUE SPRING/SUMMER '96 COLLECTION SHOW

10 am to 4 pm, International Designers

#### "COSMOTIQUE"

Look into the future! Just for fun, take a peek into a crystal ball, read the tarot cards or have your palm read. With any purchase of \$35 or more from our fragrance or cosmetic selections.  
5:30 to 8:30 pm, Cosmetics

# Jacobson's

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MONDAY - SATURDAY: 9:30 AM TO 9 PM  
SUNDAY: NOON TO 5 PM  
PHONE: 644-5900 • FAX: 645-8057