

Compuware hasn't packed its bags yet

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Moving vans aren't rolling eastbound on Northwestern just yet.

One of Farmington Hills' largest corporations has not decided whether it's going too relocate in Detroit or any other place for that matter.

A published report indicates the computer software giant is considering a move to Detroit. To say the \$6 billion company is definitely leaving Farmington Hills is "vastly premature," a company spokesman said.

The company continues to grow and will likely need an additional or new facility in the next couple of years. Compuware has been on Northwestern since 1987.

"The question was raised, 'Would you consider moving to Detroit?' The response was, 'Of course we'd consider moving to Detroit,'" said Chris Norris, Compuware communication's director. "That's one of the many options we're considering at the present time."

"You could probably plug in any direction into that question. North, east, west or south. Yes, those are all options we'd look into."

A decision on where the company will seek an additional or new facility could come in the next six months to a year, Norris said. More than likely, Compuware will stay in the Detroit metropolitan area.

"It makes more sense for us to stay in this area because we were founded in this area and we like this area," Norris said.

The company's present facility is 220,000-square feet and houses up to 3,000 employees who either work or report there from client sites around the area.

Compuware's last expansion at its present site came only 16 months ago when building space was added to include a day-care center, fitness center and cafeteria.

News of Compuware's possible move was a shock to city and business officials.

Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce would work with the city's Economic Development Corporation to help keep the computer company in the city, said Maria Esposito, chamber president.

"I nearly died when I read that," Esposito said. "I don't think it's true. We haven't heard about Compuware searching anywhere else."

'The question was raised, 'Would you consider moving to Detroit?' The response was, 'Of course we'd consider moving to Detroit.'

Chris Norris
—spokesman, Compuware

added.

"Beyond that I'm not certain what kind of inducements they might be looking for," Brock said. "If their site is just bulging at the seams, like they kind of sounded like it was in the article, they may very well need to expand elsewhere or stay where they are in our town and expand into Detroit or another location. I think they're about mixed out at that site."

"We could possibly look for other sites in our community."

Compuware owner Pete Karmanos also owns the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes, which recently relocated from Hartford, Conn. His Ontario Hockey League franchise, Detroit Whalers, moved into a new facility on Beck Road in Plymouth Township last year.

Ten years ago, another NHL owner moved the headquarters of his primary business from Farmington Hills to Detroit. Detroit Red Wings and Little Caesars owner Michael Ilitch relocated his corporate pizza operation in the Fox Theater, despite buying land on 12 Mile and Drake for the site of a proposed Little Caesar's world headquarters.

Soccer fields sit at that corner presently. If Compuware does move, a high-profile tenant would move into their Northwestern headquarters, Brock said.

"It would be a loss, no question about it," Brock said. "He's a good man. He's very active in the community."

"He has set up a foundation (Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute) in honor of his wife. Those are the kinds of values people of Farmington Hills have as well."

Employee reaction to a possible move to Detroit has been minimal, Norris said.

"I think most people realize that anything like this is looking at a future plan," Norris said. "Until a decision is made, there is nothing to react to."

"I know they have quite a large operation and do need more space, but we hope that we could persuade them to stay in Farmington Hills."

City administrators are not quite sure what they could do to accommodate Compuware, said Steve Brock, Hills assistant city manager.

The city did work with Compuware on previous expansion in terms of informing nearby residents, Brock

Good no stranger to publicity

Janet Good was no stranger to controversy or publicity.

Earlier this month, for example, she was mentioned in a note left by a New York woman who died in a Farmington Hills motel after consulting Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

Good, 73, was also charged criminally with Kevorkian by the Ionia County Prosecutor in the case of Loretta Poabody, who died last year in a Bloomfield Hills motel. Those charges were subsequently dismissed.

The experience failed to deter Good's support for Kevorkian or, ironically, her confidence in the system. "I have a deep respect for the legal system," she said. "Even though some of the things I've seen are dumb."

After Good's arraignment, she characteristically talked about "all the nice people in Ionia,"

including a senior citizen swimming team she encountered during a chance meeting in a fast-food restaurant.

But Good had other major accomplishments. Foremost, perhaps, was her induction into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 1991. Here are some of the other accomplishments and milestones in her life:

■ Worked for the Michigan Employment Security Commission as an equal employment officer investigating, among other things, sexual harassment in the work place.

■ Founded Hemlock of Michigan, the state chapter of the national organization, in 1980, something that put her in touch with hundreds of suffering people.

"Some people misunderstood Janet Good's role," said her

attorney. "She counseled those people, but they always knew she would be there for them."

■ Founded the Older Women's League.

■ Appointed by Gov. William Milliken to chair a task force on sexual harassment in the work place.

■ Co-chaired the Michigan Commission on Death and Dying, an ad hoc committee to review assisted suicide.

■ In 1941, married Ray Good, who retired from the Detroit Police Department as a commander. The couple had three children.

■ Active in the Republican Party.

Funeral arrangements were pending.

—Pat Murphy, staff writer

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Asked if Kevorkian was involved in Good's death, Fieger said, "If you're suggesting that somehow she voluntarily (took her life) as opposed to the disease wrenching the final breath out of her, the family has asked me to indicate that I have no comment."

But if Good needed — or requested any help — she got it, Fieger said. "Any help she would need from Dr. Kevorkian, he made sure she got," he continued. "Any help she needed from her family, they made sure she got."

Quoting from a statement from Kevorkian, Fieger said, "Janet's courage and strength of character far exceeded in quality and quantity that represented by the collective courts and legislatures of this morally benighted country. Janet exemplified the best in women: She fought for freedom, liberty, justice and compassion. I loved her. We will all miss her."

Fieger said Kevorkian was deeply moved by Good's death. "She was as close to Dr. Kevorkian as any woman in his

life. "She was his right hand, and she was his left hand. She was his conscience. I don't know if he can continue without her."

A founder of Hemlock of Michigan, Good was the "conduit" between people in pain and Kevorkian, Fieger said. It was Good, for example, who was first in contact with Janet Atkins, the Portland, Oregon.

Atkins in 1990 became the first person known to die after consulting Kevorkian about assisted suicide.

"As early as yesterday (the day before Good died) she was counseling patients," Fieger said.

"Every time Janet Good consulted with patients, protecting their right to choose, she struck a blow for freedom," he said. Throughout her illness, Good

never wavered in her continued desire to live, Fieger said. "She never lost her perspective on life, her kindness, her humanity, or her sense of humor."

Fieger called on the Oakland County Medical Examiner's office to forego any autopsy and to refrain from calling Good's death "homicide," as it had in other deaths linked to Kevorkian.

"To term her passing a 'homicide' is to do an injustice for what she stood for," said Fieger. "There is about as much of a chance of criminal conduct in this case as there is that a man is living on the moon."

The medical examiner's office conducted an autopsy Wednesday, but the results were not immediately available.

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