

'Answer woman' merits honor

By KAREN HERMES SMITH
STAFF WRITER

When the staff of the psychological clinic at Oakland County Probate Court needed a much-deserved break from their work one June day, secretary Robin Zapinski suggested a June bug party, complete with appetizers that resembled or were named after bugs.

When the same folks have computer problems, they ask Zapinski for help. In fact, her coworkers teasingly call her the Shell Answer Woman.

And when those coworkers come looking for their paychecks on payday, they know Zapinski's creativity, teamwork and dedication have earned her the Employee of the Year Award at Oakland County Probate Court in Pontiac.

"I'm real pleased," said Zapinski, 30, an Independence Township resident. "It's nice the staff appreciate what you do. . . I feel real privileged."

Zapinski was nominated by coworkers and then selected by a committee to receive the award, which was announced during a staff meeting.

According to those who work with her, the award is well-deserved. "There's no question in my mind that her (Zapinski's) selection is

so deserving," said Oakland County Probate Judge Barry M. Grant. "Robin is so gracious. She never thinks of herself. She's the type of person you don't have to ask because she thinks of it herself."

Dr. Bernard Gaulier, Zapinski's boss in the psychological clinic, agreed: "Robin always has a pleasant demeanor, always has a smile on her face. She works very well with people inside and outside the court."

Zapinski came to work for the court as a co-op student enrolled in the secretarial program at the Oakland Technical Center-Northwest Campus in Springfield Township. Zapinski started working, filing things away and delivering mail to various offices in the court. Sometimes, she'd answer phones for secretaries. "I enjoyed the experience; I enjoyed the people I worked with," Zapinski said of her co-op days at the court.

Zapinski continued to work as a co-op student through her senior year, graduating from Holly High School in 1985. That summer, after she'd ended her co-op arrangement at the court, she left for a vacation, planning to look for full-time employment when she returned.

But when she got back home, a message was waiting for her saying that the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office was interested in hiring her for a clerical position. Zapinski was surprised. "I had put an application in,

but I had heard it wasn't easy to get into the county," she explained.

In November 1986, after a couple of months working in the prosecutor's office, Zapinski went back to work for probate court after her former supervisor called to say there was an opening back in the file room.

Zapinski has remained with probate court ever since, working in a number of clerical positions. For the past three years, she has split her time as a secretary between the psychological clinic and the casework field services division.

Zapinski, who's married to Michael, a professor for Valiant International in Troy, said she was attracted to the secretarial field because of her mother. "The secretarial field is what my mother had done and had talked to me about," she said.

However, the variety of tasks her bosses give her to work on and the autonomy they allow her in carrying out those tasks have kept her motivated, she said. Some of Zapinski's job responsibilities include arranging training sessions for court employees and devising personalized spread sheets for both departments she works in.

Zapinski also is gaining managerial experience in her job. Under her very capable tutelage she is supervising a young new employee who happens to be . . . a co-op student.



Receives award: Robin Zapinski of Clarkston receives an Employee of the Year award from Probate Court judges Barry Grant and Eugene Arthur Moore.

Balloon fest starts Friday

Springfield Oaks County Park is hosting the 12th Annual Hot Air Balloon Festival Sept. 19 - 21.

Festivities begin Friday night with the "Festival of Lights" balloon glow at dark. Balloons inflate on the field but do not take flight.

Balloon Federation of America-sanctioned competition flights are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at approximately 7:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Family activities include

champion horse contests, hayrides, demonstrations, a juried craft show, tethered rides benefiting Children's Miracle Network, a petting farm, entertainment, spectator games and contests, plus figure 8 car races on Friday and a demolition derby Saturday.

An event entry fee of \$5/vehicle and \$2/walk-in will be charged.

Springfield Oaks County Park is on Andersonville Road at Hall Road in Davisburg.

Considering Med School?

Before you can go... you have to get in!

Come to a **FREE Seminar**!

Register to WIN a \$100 gift certificate toward one of our MCAT classes!

KAPLAN 1-800-KAP-TEST

www.kaplan.com

MCAT is a registered trademark of the Association of American Medical Colleges

MCAT

Date: September
Location: Wayne State
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Call for Details:
1-800-KAP-TEST

Ask about our MCAT prep course.

expert teachers • superior materials • convenient classes • proven results



You're thinking...

- a) Which one is cloud nine?
- b) Why don't their linings come in gold?
- c) Does anybody offer health care plans in this many shapes and sizes?

At HAP, we know that different people have different health care needs. So we offer a wide variety of choices. And, no matter which plan you choose, you can count on quality care, useful information and a level of attention you've come to expect. From people who have both feet firmly planted on the ground. After all, you shouldn't have to spend a lot of time thinking about health care. That's what we do. For more information call us at 313-872-8100.

www.hapcorp.org

hap
Good Thinking™

Christmas in the Country
September 19, 20, 21, 1997

IMA Sports Arena, 7001 N. 11th St. at Center (800-100-ATTN)

ENJOY COUNTRY SHOPPING AT ITS FINEST! (Shop & Save!)	Don't Miss These:
• 100+ Shops • 100+ Restaurants • 100+ Entertainment Venues	• 100+ Entertainment Venues

Also featuring our Designer Showcases & Mini Lecture Series.

See and hear about the latest trends in country decorating brought to you by the Country Decorating Guild's Fall & Fall '97 Country Showcases at Williamson, Michigan, MI, Leander's Gallery, Harland, MI, Country Earth and the Antique Warehouse, N. 11th St.

Pre-Book this at the \$3.00 pre-booking fee. One and only seating, please!

Margo Miller 517-652-8941 For Dealer Inquiries Call: Gail Lyn Miller 517-224-8446

CHIMNEYS

- Cleaned
- Screened
- Repaired
- New

ROOFS

- Repaired
- Re-Roofed
- New
- Leaks Stopped

CROWN CONTRACTING, INC.
42810 W. 10 Mile, Novi
(313) 427-3981
SINCE 1952

PLUS:

- LICENSED
- INSURED
- GUARANTEED
- Senior Citizen Discount

(248) 344-4577

A Quality Life

Our Geriatric program provides 24 hour basic nursing care. Our staff includes RNs, LPNs, CENAs, a full-time recreational therapist and activity coordinators as well as volunteers.

- Cheerful semi-private rooms
- Meals prepared by chef (kosher meals available)
- Barber/beauty shop
- Respite and extended stays
- 24 hour physician coverage
- Restorative nursing program
- Recreational programs

To schedule a tour, or for more information, call Sherry Samson at (810) 350-8070.

THE Lake Land CENTER
26900 Franklin Rd. • Southfield, MI
(810) 350-8070

GUARDIAN ALARM

Your LOCAL Alarm Company

We protect where we live

75% OFF

Basic Package \$99

Retail Value \$399. Telephone Connection Kit, monthly monitoring fee and monitoring agreement required.

Two Months Monitoring FREE!

1-800-STAY-OUT

Guardian Alarm

1-800-782-6888 • 24-hour Operators • www.stayout.com

- Local Monitoring Station
- Local Sales and Service
- Residential Alarms
- Commercial Alarms
- 100% Money Back Guarantee

Check our website for home safety tips —
www.stayout.com

PLUS:
Free activation on existing alarms — **\$200!**