

AWARD

FROM PAGE A1

Westland school district. "Everything happens for a reason," Rohn said. "I got laid off nine years in a row at Wayne Westland. You'd spend the first four weeks at home wondering if you were going to work or not. It was horribly stressful, but if it hadn't happened, I wouldn't be looking for another job. And things happen for a good reason. If you are lucky, you find out the good reason."

Though a number of people offered her their cell phones so she could tell her husband the good news, Rohn decided to wait and surprise him when she drove the new vehicle home.

She has a free use of the car for one year, which includes maintenance and insurance. Rohn picked from 26 different models including Mazdas, Nissans, VWs, an Acura, Chryslers, Jeeps and Hondas. "This is what you call shopping," Rohn said.

Dan Hiller, general manager for Suburban Honda, Acura, Chrysler and Jeep, all on Haggerty Road, explained Rohn wasn't getting a free lease but use of the car for one year.

Hiller, along with David Parker, a fixed operator director for the Suburban Collection, and David Fischer, who was representing his father, the owner, were present at Farmington High School when the announcement was made.

Rohn's name was pulled in a drawing with the names of two other district teachers of the year. All were selected by committee.

Tom Seremet, an eighth-grade social studies teacher from Warner Middle School, and Diane Hanaway, a fourth-grade teacher from Wood Creek Elementary, also received awards Monday.

The district was extremely appreciative and would have liked all three teachers to have the use of a car, Maxfield said. Hiller said the dealership wasn't aware three teachers would be honored. "We assumed there was only one teacher of the year," Hiller said.

The dealership hadn't considered a possibility, for example, of perhaps having the three



JOHN BARRETT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Farmington High School Principal John Barrett ushers Paula Rohn into her room for the big announcement.

teachers divide the use of the car during the course of the year, Hiller said. However, he added, "We don't want to make this too complicated."

Rohn has been a teacher at Farmington High School since September 1989. She teaches grades 9-12, teaching advanced calculus class, pre-calculus and algebra. She has been chairman of the mathematics department at Farmington High since 1992.

Rohn was a presenter at the annual DACTM Mathematics Conference in 2001. She's been a member of the district math curriculum and text selection committee since 1995. She's organized a team of middle school and high school math teachers in order to create smooth transition from middle to high schools since 2000.

Since 1997, she's been the chairwoman of SMART (Student Managed Academic Resource Time), the organizing team that manages block scheduling.

Rohn said she never wanted to be anything but a teacher and always loved math. When she was in fifth grade, the nuns who taught at St. Mary's of Wayne would ask her to help explain math to her fellow classmates.

"By the time I got to high school, my friends were calling me on the phone saying, 'Help me with math,'" she said.

Still, nothing prepared her for the teacher of the year honor — or her new, flashy ride.

"This is just too crazy for me," Rohn said.

All the district's teachers of the year will be honored at the March 18 Farmington school board meeting and are eligible for an Oakland County award.

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3 honored as best of the best

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Three Farmington Public Schools teachers have been honored as the best of the best within their district.

They're now candidates for the 2002-2003 Oakland County Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award.

Farmington Public Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield led an entourage of school officials to each school March 3 to personally inform each teacher.

"I'm sure you probably thought this was the Publishers Clearing House," Maxfield said to an audience of Warner Middle School students.

Thomas Seremet, who teaches eighth grade American History and the Old West at Warner, was honored along with Paula Rohn, a math teacher at Farmington High School (see related story, page A1) and Diane Hanaway, a fourth grade teacher at Wood Creek Elementary School.

All three will also be recognized at the March 18 Farmington School Board meeting.

Maxfield read from the nomination applications, which included statements from fellow teachers, parents and students.

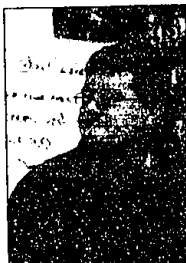


PHOTO BY BILL BREZLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
The somewhat abashed Tom Seremet listens to the accolades from students and peers.

"Mr. Seremet has turned my absolute worst subject into my favorite," wrote student Samantha Feinberg. "He doesn't teach the regular perfunctory way, by reading out loud from the book and answering questions. He teaches in a manner that causes teachers laughter and smiling faces, things not all teachers see from their students. His class is the class I wait for all day. Mr. Seremet excites his students with his lectures."



Diane Hanaway is a fourth-grade teacher at Wood Creek Elementary School.

Seremet started teaching in the district in 1998 and has been at Warner since 2000.

"Several students named for the Superintendent's Excellence Award have named Tom as an influential teacher," wrote teacher Mary Leyman.

Seremet was both pleased and surprised.

"I wish I had thought about my wardrobe," he quipped.

At Wood Creek since 1990, Hanaway was quietly working with a student when the group arrived to announce her award.

Fellow teachers streamed into Hanaway's room, offering hugs. "On a scale from one to 10, she's infinity," said student Tommy Vento.

Fourth grade teacher Christ Cronin praised Hanaway's teaching style in the nomination application.

"Diane's ability to take her lesson plans and transform them into something much more meaningful for her students is truly an art," Cronin said. "In addition, her unflagging enthusiasm for her students and colleagues energizes and inspires our entire learning community."

Alyssa Filbruzzi, a former third grade student, said Hanaway helped her learn how to become organized. "I hope you won't leave Wood Creek because there are a lot of kids who can benefit from your teaching," Filbruzzi wrote.

Hanaway called the award overwhelming. "I'm truly honored and very flattered," Hanaway said. "Every year, I've had the best group of kids and I tell them that every single day. I push hard, sometimes, I think, maybe too hard. I always tell my students you get what you ask for. If you don't ask for anything, you don't get anything."

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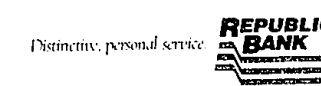
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