

Hills woman has no reservations about job

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON HILLS—Miss Gracie was just back from Portugal, looking rested and relaxed with a golden tan and sparkling gray eyes. It was the second time the Farmington Hills woman had flown to that country this year, and only one of the 10 trips she has taken to Spanish-speaking countries since January.

"The only thing I could give it up for would be a millionaire," she said, laughing.

NOT SO.

"I had no idea what you could do with this job," she said, laughing. "I had, I would have started here sooner," she said. Actually, she had applied earlier for the job, but turned it down in favor of another. She had been attending college on and off for more than three years and started several jobs, only to quit in search of something more interesting.

"I had five different jobs in one year until I found this one. I would just start and quit and quit," she said. She has worked for American now for five years, and wouldn't ever consider going to another airline.

"I would feel delayed. I feel a responsibility with the people in my office and for the company."

If you would walk into the airline's office, you would see Miss Gracie with a headset, resembling Lily Tomlin's



SALLY GRADIE

Executive. But her job is more than that of an operator. Officially known as a reservation salesman, Ms. Gracie gives fares and flight times and makes reservations. During the week, Ms. Gracie may work anywhere from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., in any one of a number of overlapping shifts. Employees trade shifts according to individual tastes.

It's very flexible. It breaks up the monotony of a regular nine-to-five job, and if you have a doctor's appointment or personal business to take care of, it's really good."

BECAUSE OF HER maturity, Ms. Gracie has five passes to fly on American flights and pays only a service charge of a few dollars for the ticket. The travel opportunities excited her at first, but the nervous had dulled until recently.

"I got so that it was no big thing. It was just like somebody would just pick me up and put me in California or wherever. Then I'd have to find for myself, home or here," she said.

She would spend a few days in the new spot, then wing back home. For a while, it got to be kind of a drag.

"I'd have to sit other countries, but I've never gotten to know what they're like, the customs and the people."

That has changed since she has moved in with her parents and managed to save a little money to spend the extra time in another country. Most of the time she manages to

stay with friends and avoid hotel expenses. As a reservation salesman, Ms. Gracie has a salary comparable to a teacher's, she said, she often attends college classes to learn new techniques and has recently attended one called RSVP.

This class stresses ways to overcome the customer's buying procrastination. "We try to overcome any objection. If we ask them if they'd like to make a reservation and they say they'll call back, we try to overcome their objection."

SOURCE OF HER job satisfaction comes from something rough schedule and changed services. "You know what's most fun is helping the problem passenger. It gives me a good feeling to be able to calm them down. Sometimes they'll call up and get really angry and yell. After you talk to them awhile and try to

help them, they'll usually calm down and apologize. "I just tell them, 'That's OK, you're understanding perfectly and sorry once is enough. They usually hang on patiently.'"

Ms. Gracie will move from Farmington Hills next year when American Airlines consolidates its reservation offices in Cincinnati, Dallas and Los Angeles.

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THREE FOR ONE

Farmington city council names new committee members

FARMINGTON—Peter Protop, Farmington attorney who is chairman of this year's Founders' Festival, has

been named to a three-year term on the Farmington planning commission. Protop replaces Dennis Flannery, who has served Farmington from 1968 to 1974.

Reappointed to three-year terms on the planning commission were James Mori and William Hartack. Hartack is the city council's representative on the planning commission.

The city council also appointed members of the zoning board of appeals and the beautification commission.

Reappointed to three-year terms on the planning commission board of appeals were Howard Tupper and Lee Haggard. Tupper, former of councilman Richard Tupper, was appointed after city attorney Robert Kelley ruled a city charter provision stated at expiration did not apply.

Farmington seniors are graduated

FARMINGTON—Several seniors were omitted from Farmington high school graduation lists recently published by the Farmington Observer & Beecher.

North Farmington High School graduates include William Lough, Thomas Bensch, David Bensch and Carol Collins.

Harmon High School graduated Maryann Ahlert, Dennis Ahlert, Mary Belfort and Judy Marbach.

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