

East Junior teacher turns to helicopter beat

By CHERYL CHODUN

Colleen Burear-Gallerani just might be able to help you out of a jam—if you're on the road during rush hour and if you're listening to CKLW radio. Ms. Burear is the new voice of Traffic Central, a service offered to commuters by the Windsor-based AM station for traffic-tied motorists.

A Southfield resident and former Farmington teacher, Colleen Burear (the name she uses on the air) recently replaced Jo-Jo Shutty-MacGregor, who had been reporting traffic conditions on CKLW for the past three years.

Now a weather reporter for Channel 2 in Southfield, Jo-Jo did many of her traffic reports from a helicopter. To the surprise of many, Ms. Burear has been broadcasting from CKLW's Southfield office on Lakeshore Rd. and there are no immediate plans for her to go up in a copter for her broadcasts. The use of the helicopter in the future is uncertain.

"The station directors are sitting back and taking a look at the programming situation," she said. "They're weighing the advantages and disadvantages of using the traffic copter."

"I'VE NEVER flown in a helicopter,

but I'm psyching myself up for that day—if it comes."

The accuracy of the traffic information is no different when the helicopter is used, she said. Ms. Burear receives most of her information from a monitoring system, much like a Citizen Band radio. She hears virtually every call that comes through the state police. Additional information is received from the American Automobile Assoc. and other individual callers.

When compiling her information, she has a main in front of her listing all the main thoroughfares such as I-94, I-696, the John Lodge, the Southfield Freeway and the Jefferies. As

each bit of information comes in for a particular road, she jots it down on the form. From that information she puts together her 30-second broadcasts.

She is on the air six times in the morning between 6:20 and 8:30 a.m. (every half hour), and three times in the afternoon between 4:20 and 5:20 p.m. But if a major traffic hazard arises between broadcasts, she said, she can break in to notify travelers.

"I can go longer than 30 seconds on the air if necessary, up to about a minute," she said. "But I try not to because it cuts into the news time."

Ms. Burear said she hopes to help the morning and afternoon drivers

avoid serious traffic jams. "I know, for example, how frustrating it can be to miss the last opportunity to get off the freeway when approaching an accident."

"IT'S ALSO most important for police and emergency vehicles to get through, so the less congestion, the better for all concerned."

She added that even though she's only been at the job a few weeks, she has received some letters from people who have let her know she has helped them. "It really makes me feel good to know people are listening," she said.

And feeling good about what she's doing is very important to Ms. Burear. "When I was teaching, there were so many gratifying situations and I was concerned about losing that. But I'm finding this job equally stimulating and rewarding. In a sense, it is a helping job, much the same as teaching."

There was a time, she admits, when she wasn't sure the switch to CKLW was the right move.

"When I found out about the new job, I was excited and signed the papers without a second thought," she said. Then she went to her principal at East Junior High School in Farmington where she had taught for the past six years and announced her resignation.

"I did feel a bit bad then and signing my resignation was difficult. But I realized," she said, "that signing my resignation would only make me work harder at being successful in my new career."

ALTHOUGH RADIO broadcasting is a new career for her, being involved in the media is not. Along with teaching English and mass communications,

she has done some radio commercials, appeared in several community theater plays, done some freelance modeling, promotional shows and sang with a band.

A graduate of Michigan State University and a native of the Detroit area, Ms. Burear said she always wanted to be an actress, but never took that prerequisite trip to New York or Hollywood to look for that "big break." Now that she's married—to IBM employee Jeffrey Gallerani two years ago—she doubts that she ever will.

"I'm not sure what I want in the future," she said. "Right now I'm just excited with my new job and concentrating on doing the best job possible. I probably want a family in years to come, but always my career too. Yes, I definitely believe a woman can have both. I don't think I want to give up one for the other."

In her spare time, she does some modeling and some volunteer work at Marillac Hall, a home for unwed mothers in Farmington.

At the moment, however, her primary interest is in her new-found job with the radio station. "Everyone there has been really helpful since I started. Right now I am very cautious, and I'm listening to every tip and constructive criticism that is offered," she said.

"One might think that sitting alone in a broadcast booth with just that microphone made me more nervous than just an audience of hundreds."

Ms. Burear said that since she began her new job, many people are quick to say "I see you have Jo-Jo's job."

"I don't have Jo-Jo's job," she replies. "I have Jo-Jo's old job."

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Family life taught

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comes to making the home a secure place, according to Mrs. Van Wingerden.

"My husband represents security to my children. When he's not home, they want to know where is he? What time will he be back?"

Part of establishing a secure home-life for her children is the presence of loyalty in the family. Each member is loyal to the other.

Women should reinforce their positions at home by thinking enough of themselves to confront their husbands emotionally. There should be an equality of roles in the home, according to Mrs. Van Wingerden.

Family Life Today, Inc., will have a seminar at Cobo Hall Oct. 1. For further information, call Mrs. Van Wingerden at 478-5699.

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