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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Jody Soronen now has the responsibility of directing the Farmington/Farmington Hills chamber of Commerce in addition to her duties as a member of the Farmington Hills city council.

Soronen takes helm at Chamber

By M.B. Dillon Ward
staff writer

Farmington Hills City Council member and former mayor Jody Soronen has been named executive director of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce. Long active in governmental and political affairs, Soronen replaces Ron Rice, who served for a year. Her wide-ranging experience includes service as a Michigan Municipal League trustee and a member

of the organization's Urban and Legislative Affairs Committee.

Soronen is a board member of the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) and an executive committee member of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

To make time for her new post, Soronen recently resigned as chairwoman of SEMCOG's Council of Regional Development. In that capacity and on other SEMCOG committees, she has handled matters rang-

ing from winter shipping to lighting airports; reviewed applications for federal grants and made recommendations on water and air quality, transportation and housing.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying promoting the community and working with people," said the 20-year Farmington Hills resident of her latest appointment.

"It's nice to be paid for doing what I've been doing on a volunteer basis."

Soronen describes the task assign-

ing her as "the promotion of businesses in the community. We have to make sure the rest of the world knows we exist, and that this is a fine place to do business, shop and live," she said.

"We have to make sure we do all we can to attract business and shoppers of all kinds."

Among the projects Soronen is now launching are the compilation of a community directory, demographical statistics for potential

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Smokers' day is mixed bag

By Craig Picchura
staff writer

Even at the turn of the century cigarettes were known as "coffin nails." This was decades before the U.S. Surgeon General issued his health warning now printed on packs and advertisements for cigarettes.

Now it seems the world is divided into four distinct groups:

- Those who've never smoked.
- Those who will continue smoking till they day they die.
- Those who'd like to quit smoking.
- Those who've quit smoking.

Persons who smoke but would like to quit were the target once again of the annual "Great American Smoke-out" sponsored by the American Cancer Society. An agency spokesman estimates 16 million of the nation's 35 million cigarette smokers tried to stop smoking on Thursday, Nov. 18, the day of the smoke-out.

Further, the society's best guess is that 5 million Americans made it through the day without smoking a cigarette and 1 million persons in the country quit for good after surviving the one-day moratorium.

IF 1 MILLION Americans quit smoking following Thursday's smoke-out, they must not have been on the street when the Farmington Observer conducted its unscientific man-on-the-

street interview in downtown Farmington.

No one we spoke to quit Thursday although some said they've quit just recently and one man who delivers cigarettes to stores says he's definitely quitting Jan. 1. It's not a New Year's resolution but rather the date a federal tax on cigarettes will be imposed, hiking the price of a pack even higher.

"I'm definitely quitting Jan. 1," said Craig McNaughton, 20, of Pontiac, a truckdriver for Schiller Inc., a company that distributes cigarettes, candy and sundries to supermarkets.

"I quit twice before for three months but always went back. Gum is a good substitute but I don't like chewing gum. It's kind of spastic."

While most persons — even avid smokers — think the smoke-out campaign is a good idea, it really rankles some.

"Them s.o.b.s tell me what the hell to do and spend more damn money working on that (anti-smoking) campaign because smoking's supposed to cause cancer," says Bill Hone, 75, of Farmington. "Well, you tell me what doesn't cause cancer?"

"It's like seat belts. You hear how if people wear seat belts they'd save lives. They don't talk to the people killed wearing them. This country's going to hell."

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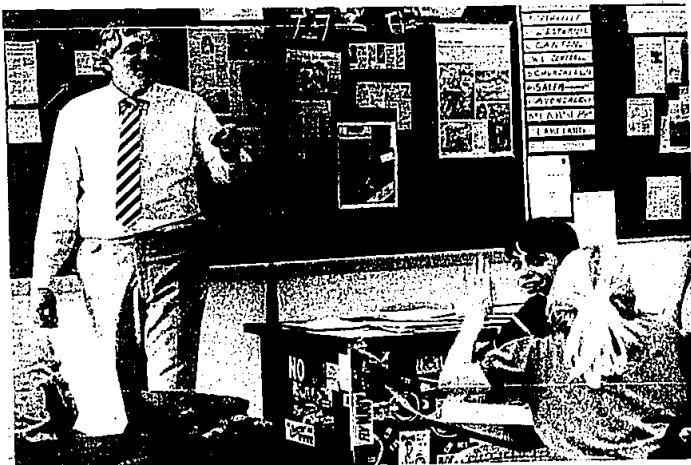


STEVE CANTRELL/staff photographer

Horse heads are given a new coat of paint by a worker at the warehouse where floats and other items for the Thanksgiving Day Pa-

rade are prepared. The parade also requires hundreds of volunteer workers to keep things in motion.

Hawk fans bonkers over championship battle



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

John Herrington coaches history students when he's not busy on the gridiron.

Orchard Lake gets beauty assessment

Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills' nouveau Main Street, will be transformed into a shady and verdant tree-lined avenue if merchants' mettle mirrors that of city officials.

The city has invited 30 property owners, merchants and business operators with Orchard Lake addresses to an informational meeting to discuss the appearance of the road 4-5:30 p.m. tomorrow at Farmington Hills City Hall.

"The whole thrust will be to see if

there's sufficient interest. If so, the city would work with the property owners on a street tree program," said Assistant City Manager Bill Costick, who christened the beautification plan about a year ago.

"Hopefully we'll get a decent turnout. We want to act as a catalyst in the project, and if the effort is successful, we could do this in other areas of Farmington Hills."

The city is proposing the planting of "nice-sized trees," unlike those planted along Orchard Lake in the past.

"The county planted some trees after they paved (Orchard Lake), but what they planted didn't amount to a hill of beans," Costick said.

"A few trees were planted in July, and they all died," he said.

A Farmington Observer poll cemented Costick's aesthetic idea, he said.

Oral Quarrel, a weekly survey, re-

cently asked readers what they considered Farmington Hills' biggest eyesore.

"Over half the criticism was on the state of Orchard Lake Road, and we see it as the city's role to act on the problem," said Costick.

"Orchard Lake is one of our main thoroughfares, and we'd like to encourage property owners to pay more attention to landscaping and sprucing it up."

Even the few non-football fans at Harrison High School have reaped rewards from the defending Class B state champions' climb to Saturday's semifinal playoff game against Milford Lakeland.

Classes have been cut short to accommodate school pep rallies, and "the teachers are lightening up."

"They all spend the first part of the class talking about the games, and if there's a football player in the class, they don't give as much homework," said senior Trudy Hausmann, who's escaped several physics assignments that way this season.

Tim Smigelski, a senior tackle for the Hawks, said playing football for coach John Herrington "is the funnest thing I've ever done."

"Everybody plays as a team — we're brothers. No matter what happens, everyone sticks together," said Smigelski during a timeout from classes in the Harrison cafeteria Friday.

Senior Julie Fish said "everyone's been friendlier" since the Hawks began their soar to success on the gridiron.

"More people are going to the games. We've had two big pep assemblies, and everyone gets all rowdy and excited."

Harrison principal James Gelfer cautioned, "We have tried not to overdo that, and take it more in stride since we've been there previously."



Julie Fish



Trudy Hausmann

"We don't want people running around not thinking about their studies."

The halls of Harrison, however, were alive Friday with a student body anxious for the arrival of the next day's kickoff.

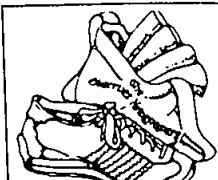
The team's attitude couldn't be better, added Gelfer.

"The players are confident, but not overconfident. They're very serious and very positive."

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