

Gavel, 'taste for chicken' passes hands

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Farmington Hills city councilman Terry Sever will have to develop a taste for chicken, if his upcoming year as mayor follows city traditions.

Outgoing Mayor Jody Soronen gave a brief speech Monday night, highlighting her year in the city's top elected post and offering her successor some helpful hints on handling the mayoral position.

"My advice, is learn to like chicken, don't let brides and grooms set your weekend schedule, let the staff guide you, and smile," Soronen said.

The mayor presides over city council meetings, conducts marriages for residents, is head of the city for purposes of military law and represents the city at a number of civic

events and luncheons -- many of which offer chicken as an entrée.

Soronen will pass the gavel to Sever Jan. 1.

"I do so willingly, but with some regret," she said. "It's been a great honor to serve as mayor of this city."

SEVER SAID Monday he would like to consider some changes at the beginning of his term, including restructuring the city council agenda to move public comment below some of the scheduled items.

Soronen highlighted some city accomplishments during the past year, including: several major road projects, the development of Heritage Park, updating the city's Master Land Use Plan, the beginning of the Year 2000 Project, plans for physical expansion of the fire department, introduction of the E-9-1-1 emergency telephone number, heightened



Jody Soronen (left) will turn over Farmington Hills' mayoral reins to Terry Sever Jan. 1.

study of solid waste disposal options and special emphasis on the city's Old Town section, formerly Section 36.

Soronen credited city staff and members of boards and commissions and involved residents for the city's progress.

As a final gesture, on behalf of the city council, Soronen offered a "key to the city" to councilwoman Jan Dolan, who leaves at the end of the month to represent the 69th District in the state House in Lansing. Planning commissioner Philip Arnold will replace Dolan on the city council.

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Judges set to serve in 47th Court

Visiting judges begin taking the bench in 47th District Court in Farmington this week, as District Judge Michael Hand takes some time off.

"I haven't had a vacation in three years," said the Farmington resident. "I've gone to all those seminars -- they keep telling you about stress. I decided to listen to them. This is my own idea."

Chief judge for 1988-89, Hand, 69, is expected to return to the bench in late January. Carl Ingraham, former district judge in the 48th District Court, filled in this week.

Hand has been a local district



Michael Hand district judge

court judge for 20 years. He must retire when his last six-year term expires in 1990, when he'll be past 70.

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