

NEWS

FARMINGTON NOTES

An award winner

What better way to take sick children's minds off their problems than heading to the North Pole for a visit with Santa Claus?

Thanks to Margo Salyer, a Farmington Hills resident, nearly 300 youngsters ages 3-6 have done just that.

As a member of Silverliners, the former flight attendants' association, Salyer commands a plane for this annual holiday excursion. She organizes the donation of the plane, crew, food, toys, clowns, magicians and Disney characters.

For her efforts, Salyer was named one of six Jefferson Award winners by WJBK-TV, Channel 2. The Jefferson Awards honor individuals who perform extraordinary public service.

Salyer and the others were honored April 7 at WJBK-TV's Southfield facility.

Salyer has been organizing this "North Pole" flight since 1974. Usually, about 40 young cancer patients from Children's Hospital spend 90 minutes on board the plane, leaving their troubles on the tarmac.

They spend the time visiting with the crew, eating lunch and being entertained. Upon arriving at the North Pole, Mr. and Mrs. Claus and a band of elves join the party to distribute individual bags of toys to each child.

Salyer's nominating information has been sent to Washington, D.C., for the national competition. Winners from 75-80 local television stations are being reviewed for possible further recognition for a national Jefferson Award.

Top volunteer

Amey B. Kern of Farmington Hills has been named one of the 12 Michigan Metro Girl Scout Council Corporate Volunteers of the Year.

Kern, a software estimating consultant with Electronic Data Systems, has worked five years as a Girl Scout volunteer. Currently, she serves as a neighborhood director, training department committee members.

She has previously been awarded the Cluster Achievement Award and the Green Angel Award in Girl Scouting.

Kern received her award at the recent Corporate Tomorrow's Power luncheon in downtown Detroit.

Mary Lore has always wanted to grow and fix things. Now she has her chance as owner of McFarland's, a 65-year-old flower shop and greenhouse in Farmington Hills.

BY BILL COULTANT  
STAFF WRITER



Mary Lore says her decision to run a florist and greenhouse business in Farmington Hills was "a freak thing," a chance reading of a

want ad.

But seeing her eyes light up as she shows off the McFarland Florist and Greenhouses on Grand River near Eight Mile, you know this was fate for a woman who has made a career of turning businesses that are in the red to green — as in money.

Lore, who graduated first in her class from the University of Michigan-Dearborn in 1979, has become a specialist in finance, with the task of turning businesses that were having trouble into profitable enterprises.

She has always loved gardening and has wanted to run her own business for the past few years. So when the opportunity to buy McFarland's came last spring, she took it.

"I've always loved to fix and grow things," said Lore. "I had wanted a company of my own. I've always loved flowers and I've always loved to garden."

Lore, 36 and single, said she puts about 40 hours into running her business after coming home from her day job as a financial trouble shooter for a downtown Detroit firm.

Although the hours are long and she claims sleep is important to her, Lore seems revived by the snap-

Growing a business

Finance expert digs in at garden shop



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Turning a business green: Mary Lore shows off her bougainvillea at the Farmington Hills flower shop and greenhouse she owns.

gona, bougainvillea and lilies that surround her as she tours the two-acre business founded by James C. McFarland in 1928.

Dressed in a business suit, Lore walks carefully over the muddy floor of one greenhouse built in the 1930s. Her expression of delight seems to resemble that of the late Natalie Wood.

She's a confident, aggressive businesswoman who betrays a childlike excitement in making something of her own prosper. She has even remodeled and moved into a fieldstone house next to the flower shop.

Although she praises the staff, including those who have worked at McFarland's for years, Lore said her new venture hasn't been a snap.

"I never realized how backward the industry is," she said. "It was like taking over Russia."

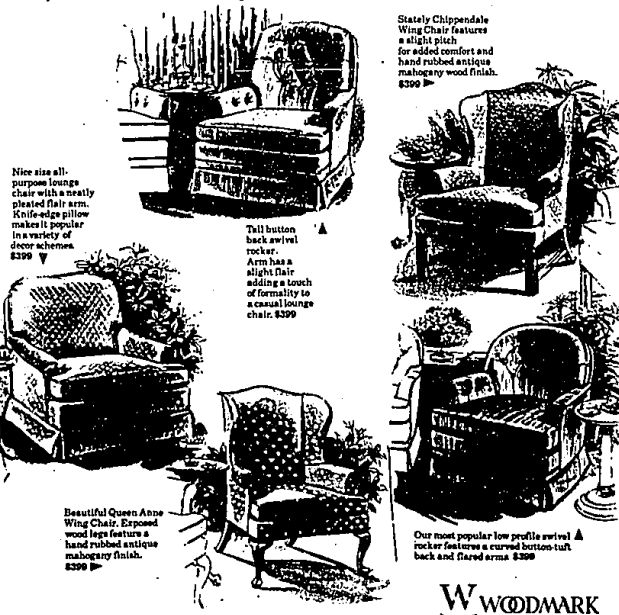
But that is apparently a challenge she's up to. With new marketing strategies, seminars to teach people of all ages how to garden, and an increased product line, Lore's business

See GROWING, 13A

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