



After the Vinter on Grand River in Farmington closed its doors for the last time in January, Jerry Jakacki and his crew went to work to turn the shop into a photo studio.



Instead of wine racks, the shop now houses the Jakackis' studio, which includes facilities for commercial and portrait photography.

Studio focuses on personal touch

For Jerry and Michele Jakacki, the focal point of downtown Farmington is their airy photography studio situated in a new location on Grand River.

The studio, next to the Village Mall, Grand River and Farmington Road, is painted in bright spring shades of yellow and kelly green that brings a bit of the outdoors into the normally dark-painted world of photo studio waiting rooms.

Its sunny ambience matches the personal and professional style of the Jakackis.

Their relaxed mood shows through in their portraits. Instead of sitting their customers down for a formal session, a Focal Point studio portrait is as likely to take place amid the trees and flowers of the Community Center in Farmington as well as in a traditional living room setting.

THEIR CUSTOMERS helped them move from the studio to on location assignments.

"People like natural settings," explained Mrs. Jakacki, 25.

"In Farmington, people are proud of their homes, too. They don't want studio portraits anymore," she said.

Aiming for pictures that are "more of a statement than a portrait," the Focal Point staff consults clients about the type of setting in which they are comfortable and want to be remembered.

Family portraits can run the gamut from a traditional pose to a shot of mother and dad playing with the children outdoors.

One family decided on a photo which showed them against the setting sun

on the grounds of the Community Center. Since their backs were to the camera it was more of a mood picture than a bona fide family portrait.

Such variety appeals to Jakacki, who became interested in photography 10 years ago. Repetition stifles creativity, according to Jakacki.

The key to their style is to allow the family to be spontaneous during the sitting. An informal atmosphere around the studio helps to loosen up the family.

"If you don't like people, get out of the business," advised Mrs. Jakacki.

ENJOYING CUSTOMERS is part of the job. It also helps when dealing with non-English speaking clients.

"You build up a rapport with them. You have to have patience with non-English speaking customers," Jakacki, 31, said.

Gestures and a few words in each language are used to communicate with the client.

"It's a matter of taking the extra time for them," said Mrs. Jakacki.

Words ending in "e" sounds are usually smile-raisers, according to Jakacki, who is on the board of the Detroit Professional Photographers.

"It can backfire on you. One time I was taking a picture of a man who spoke Russian and who wanted a passport photo. The whole time he was here I pointed and he nodded if he wanted something. Then I used an Russian word to make him smile. He was so glad to hear someone speak his language he started to talking to me really fast.

'The best compliment we ever get is after we show the couple their pictures and they say, 'we didn't see much of you.' "

Michele Jakacki

"I had to say 'wait a minute,'" said Jakacki.

Like working with the foreign-born, weddings also demand extra time to focus in on individuals. Unlike most photographers, the Jakackis' view weddings as choice assignments.

"THEY'RE ONE of the pleasures of the business," he said, contradicting some of his colleagues who dislike the pressure of photographing a wedding.

"There are a myriad of personalities and you have to tune yourself into each one," he said.

Tuning into the wedding couple takes special care.

"Lots of couples think photographers are a pain in the neck. We try to keep it candid and take the formal shots before the party," said Mrs. Jakacki.

They work according to the philosophy that a good photographer is unseen and unheard.

"The best compliment we ever get is after we show the couple their pictures and they say, 'we didn't see much of you,'" said Mrs. Jakacki.

"It's their wedding. It's their show," she said.

When the Jakackis were married two years ago, hiring a photographer for their wedding was the least of their worries. Eight photographers had cameras at ready for the event.

Photography also helped to bring the couple together.

JAKACKI, who studied photography in New York after he left the Army, became interested in the craft when he bought a camera in Japan while on leave.

He met his wife after he had set up his own salon in Detroit. She was working for "Photography by Irene" a studio in east Detroit when Jakacki walked in one day to compliment some work.

Her experience in photography began after she finished high school. She went to work for Irene, then attended the Rhode Island School of Design.

"My family was photography oriented. We took pictures on all occasions. My father bought a camera for us and I was the one who stuck with it and took all the pictures for the family," she remembers.



Michele Jakacki helps a customer to select the right frame for her portrait. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Gail Nymshak retouches a portrait of her sister Debby that was taken at the studio. Miss Nymshak works behind the scenes with studio manager Eileen Buehler.



Jerry Jakacki consults with a customer over the type of portrait that would interest her.

BUSINESS PEOPLE

ROLLO FISHER of Southfield has been appointed a senior vice-president at Detroit Bank & Trust.

Fisher graduated from Wayne State University and began his career at the bank in 1948.



THOMAS THOMSON of Birmingham has been appointed a first vice-president of Detroit Bank & Trust. Thomson is the chief economist and

officer-in-charge of economic analysis at the bank. He joined the bank in 1974.

GERALD WRIGHT of Southfield is one of four people appointed district manager to represent Owatonna Tool Co.



THOMAS LAUTERBACH of Southfield has been appointed product and market development manager for

North American tubing operations with Bund Tubing.

Lauterbach had been associated with Chase Brass and Copper Co.

DONALD RUNKEL of Troy has joined Wilding Advertising in Southfield as an account executive.



WILLIAM SMALLWOOD of Birmingham has been appointed manager of labor relations on the presidents

staff of Sperry Vickers in Troy. Smallwood has a business degree from Oklahoma University.

JOHN NEFF of Bloomfield Hills has been appointed vice-president, industrial marketing-North America for Dana Corp.'s industrial power transmission division.

Neff received his education at Carnegie-Mellon University and Harvard University Business School.



GEORGE HINKES of Troy is the new manager of taxes for the trans-

portation equipment group of Borg-Warner Corp.

Hinkes attended St. Mary's College in Minnesota and De Paul University in Chicago.

JAMES YODER of Farmington was appointed trust officer in the National Bank of Detroit's trust division.

Yoder has been with NBD more than six years.



ROBERT WHITALL of Birmingham was recently promoted to vice-president for engineering by Schweitzer Industrial Corp.

Whitall formerly was associated with Amchem Products, Inc. and the R.C. Mahon Co.

GREGG BRUMM of Bloomfield Hills has been appointed an assistant secretary of D'Arcy-MacManus & Masius Advertising.

Brumm earned his degree from Amherst College and a master's degree from Stanford University.



A. DALE MONCRIEFF of Birmingham has been appointed methods officer in the National Bank of Detroit's methods analysis department.