

The making of a gold ring...

By Tom Bauer
staff writer

A 20 dollar bill is taped to one wall of Paul Terterian's work shop. "Good luck, Paul" is scrawled on one side of the bill. The name of a large Detroit-area jewelry store is stamped on the other.

Terterian — Russian born, of Lebanese citizenship and a jewelry maker by trade — says that \$20 represents the first money he earned in the business in this area.

That was seven years ago. Since December, Terterian, whose father and grandfather were jewelers, has headed up his own jewelry-making operation — The Artisans — in the rear of a conventional jewelry store in Farmington's Muirwood Mall.

TERTERIAN SAID he believes that his is one of the few such operations in the Midwest.

"We make jewelry," said Terterian, a 28-year-old Southfield resident, "any kind . . . rings, pendants, custom orders."

"A customer will come in and say — 'I have a stone here and I'd like you to make a ring for it. I want it to be something different, something unique' — and we'll do it."

These days, Terterian does most of his business in gold rings, both custom orders for individuals and what he calls "manufacturing" for retail outlets throughout the country.

"We have the equipment to finish



Harry Ounjian sets stones in a recently-made ring.

2,000 rings a week," he said. "Other manufacturers can't compete with our prices because we do such a volume business."

STARTING FROM scratch, Terterian and his six-man crew construct rings from pure 24-karat gold shipped in from New York each day by special courier.

The gold is "taken down" to 14 karat with the addition of a silver-copper alloy. A hot torch is used to melt the gold and alloy.

Wax rings, exact duplicates of the

real ones to be made, sprout from a wax "tree." The wax rings are then placed into a metal container called a flask, and covered with a substance that hardens around the wax rings like cast.

The flask is placed into an oven capable of temperatures of 2,000° and the wax melts, leaving ring-shaped holes in the cast. The melting process can take as long as 12 hours.

"YOU HAVE" to melt it slowly . . . If you take it (the temperature) too high or do it too fast, the cast will break."

Later, the flask with its inner cast is removed from the oven, turned upside down and filled with the liquid 14-karat gold. The gold fills the holes that once were wax rings.

The cast is removed by placing it in a hot, soapy liquid that vibrates. What emerges is a gold tree, bristling with gold rings. The rings are then broken off the tree and buffed and polished on machines.

Five ounces of gold, an average shipment, cost Terterian \$2,200 (the price varies with the market fluctuations) and is enough for hundreds of rings.

PRECIOUS STONES — diamonds, rubies and emeralds — are placed in the rings by other experts. Harry Ounjian handles that task for Terterian.

A custom-made ring can be had for as little as \$150, Terterian said. One recent custom order involved a size 16

ring ("The guy had the biggest finger I've ever seen") with a cobra snake head on it. It cost \$1,000.

"Business has been slow, but Terterian expects things to pick up soon."

"I'm basically an optimistic person. I'd like to think we're coming out of this recession. I'm expecting a great Christmas season."

Terterian, who expects to become an American citizen soon, didn't have a lot of choice about his vocation. His parents and parents' grandparents picked it for him.

"WHEN I was a kid, I was told I was going to be a jeweler. I didn't like that because I was told. But as I learned the trade, I found I liked it."

After emigrating to Lebanon with his family, Terterian further developed his skills as an employee of Van Cleef and Arpels, a famous Paris jeweler known as "The Tiffany of Europe."

"I had to pass a test before I could work there. They sat me down and showed me a picture of a bracelet and said 'Make this so it looks better than the picture.' The bracelet in the picture looked perfect to me."

"I worked on that bracelet for four days. When I was done, they looked at it and said, 'That's fine. You're hired. Don't even bother getting up.'"



Wax rings, replicas of the gold ones soon to be made, sprout from their tree.



Paul Terterian, president of The Artisans, examines a custom-made gold ring.

photos by RANDY

About \$2,200 worth of 24-karat gold awaits mixture with an alloy in Paul Terterian's work shop called The Artisans.

INSIDE ANGLES

JUDITH ANNE GLEESON, former North Farmington High School graduate and MSU graduate in criminal justice, received the Michigan Judicial Institute Scholarship. The scholarship helped pay for her participation in a national training seminar in Washington, D.C. She works as a court administrator in the 43rd District Court in Ferndale. She is taking graduate courses in criminal justice at both Wayne State University and Oakland University.

APRIL 17-23 has been proclaimed by the President Reagan and supported by Gov. James Blanchard as National Volunteer Week to honor the 92 million volunteers in the country. Of that number, 1.7 million volunteers serve in the tri-county area and contribute an estimated \$7.9 million in time.

A CLINIC FOR RUNNERS offered in connection with the third annual Providence Hospital Novi Run will be held at 3 p.m. Saturday, April 30, in the Lord & Taylor Court, Twelve Oaks Mall. The run will be held Sunday, May 1. Tips on nutrition, injury prevention, equipment, technique and strategy will be given. A question-and-answer period will follow the talks. Two local marathon runners, a physician and an equipment expert will make presentations in their areas of expertise. The runners will be Doug Kuria, winner of the 1982 Mardi Gras Marathon, New Orleans; second-place winner in the 1981 Detroit Free Press Marathon; and Gary Wolfman, winner of the 1981 Dixboro Run and the 1981 Livonia YMCA Run for Youth. Steve Moore of the Footlocker store in Twelve Oaks will speak about running shoes and equipment. The free clinic is open to the public.

Run participants will be able to choose their own pace in the Novi Run on Sunday, May 1. A one-mile run or walk has been added to the day's events, which will include the 5,000-meter race over flat pavement and the 10,000-meter course of 50 percent pavement with rolling hills and 50 percent dirt roads. The starting gun goes off at 9 a.m. at the Novi High School on Taft Road, south of 10 Mile. Late registrations will be accepted between 8 and 8:30 a.m. at the school commons. Entry fee for either of the two races is \$6 before Wednesday, April 27, and \$8 on Sunday, May 1. The first 400 entrants will receive a free T-shirt. Fee for the run/walk is \$3. Racers will be grouped according to age in male and female categories: 12 and under; 13-18; 19-24; 25-34; 35-39; 40-49 and 50 and over. Trophies will be awarded to the overall male and female finishers in the races. The first three finishers in each age group will receive a medal.

Registration blanks are available from the Novi Parks and Recreation Department and the Providence Hospital Novi Ambulatory Care Center, 10 Mile Road and Haggerty, or by calling Providence Hospital's community health education department at 553-9041.

into the University of Detroit's Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the International Honor Society in History. To qualify for the academic honor, students must achieve a B or higher grade average overall and a B+ or higher average in history courses. The 1983 inductees were admitted into U-D's Zeta Sigma chapter of the honor society by alumni members during ceremonies held March 4 on the McNichols Campus. U-D history professor Herman J. Muller presided at the ceremony.

THE FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL reappointed Margaret Walker and Donald Munter to serve another three-year term each on the Farmington Historical Commission. Their previous terms expired on March 13.

PAT'S PEOPLE, a group of Irish singers and musicians who were longtime entertainers in Old Village Inn, are now back in the pub on Grand River, east of Farmington Road. The music starts at 9 a.m. every Friday and Saturday night.

MICHIGAN NURSE WEEK will be May 1-7. More than 65,000 registered nurses in Michigan will celebrate National Nurses Day on Friday, May 6. Dorothea Milbrandt, president of the Michigan Nurses' Association, described Michigan Nurse Week as an opportunity to improve public understanding of nursing. Local Nurse Week activities have been scheduled throughout Michigan. Michigan Nurse Week is an annual event sponsored by the Michigan Nurses Association, the largest professional association for registered nurses in Michigan.

FIVE BRIEF SATURDAY courses for gardeners and nature lovers will be offered this spring at Michigan State University's Hidden Lake Gardens. Hidden Lake Gardens is a 670-acre arboretum designed for the study and enjoyment of scenic landscapes. Located in the rolling Irish Hills glacial terrain off of M-50 east of Jackson, the MSU showcase offers temperate, tropical and arid conservatories, miles of scenic roads and walking trails, and more than 2,000 species and cultivars of trees and shrubs arrayed in eye-pleasing patterns. The non-credit courses, to be taught by the staff of Hidden Lake Gardens, include: spring bird walks, 9-11 a.m. Saturdays, April 23, May 7 and 21; beginning bonsai workshop, 1-5 p.m. Saturday, April 23; spring nature walks, 1-3 p.m. Saturdays, May 7, 21 and June 4; houseplant clinic 9-10 a.m. Saturday, June 4, until discussion of trees and projects of attendees is completed. Fees range from \$3 to \$30 with discounts for couples. For additional information, contact the garden's office, 431-1060. Group tours also are available throughout the year.



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