



Farmington Hills residents and owners of Skandia Hans and Mary Ann Hansen (at left) pose in front of their new showroom with vice president Mark Celnor and landscape architect Joyce Haller.

# Landscapers showcase gamut of environments

By Richard Lech  
staff writer

**S**KANDIA Landscaping has unearthed a new way of planting ideas in its customers' heads.

The Livonia firm recently opened a showroom store that exhibits its interior and exterior landscaping skills in full bloom.

"We're not just selling plants. We're here to sell environments to people," said Mary Ann Hansen, who owns the firm with her husband, Hans.

Hansen said, "Nothing else combines all these talents under one roof."

**T**HE SKYLIGHT-LIT store is a far cry from the old white house and greenhouse that used to serve as Skandia's headquarters. The old buildings were torn down to make way for the new just in time to mark the firm's 30th anniversary.

Working with architect Henry Lemieux of Lindhout Assoc. of Livonia, the Hansens sketched out what they wanted in a showroom and began construction in December.

"It looks very much like our house," Mary Ann Hansen said, referring to the Hansens' plant-bedecked home in Farmington Hills.

The name Skandia reflects Hans Hansen's Scandinavian roots. Born in Denmark, he came to the United States in 1948 when he feared that all Europe was about to be engulfed in World War III.

Arriving in the United States, Hansen couldn't speak a word of English and had only \$25 in his pocket. But he brought with him horticultural skills picked up on the apple orchards and farms of his native land.

**A**MONG THE "environments" on display are a courtyard with waterfall, a conference room overlooking the courtyard and a plant-filled restaurant area.

"Every room makes that statement — This is what we can do in your office, in your restaurant . . ." she said.

The store's office serves the dual purpose of functioning office and showroom, Hansen said. Customers can see for themselves how they can transform their own offices by stringing hanging plants across the top of the walls or using plants as room dividers.

Outside, a series of sandstone retaining walls, hedges, flowers, shrubs and decks shows Skandia's exterior landscaping abilities.

Half of the new facility's space is taken up with a warehouse, lit by high-intensity discharge lights. There potential customers can browse for the plants they want.

The 10,000-square-foot showroom store, on Middlebelt between Six Mile and Seven Mile, opened for business July 1. It gives the Hansens something they had wanted for a long time — a showcase for the products of the Skandia staff's green thumb.

"I don't think there's a place like this in Michigan. It's unique," Mary Ann

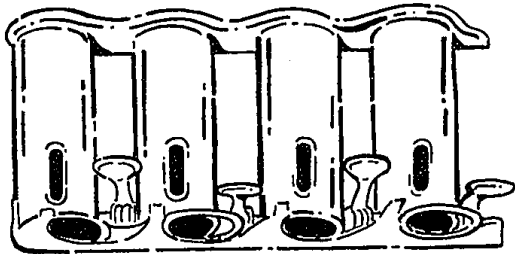
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