



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Farmington Hills resident John Pfeiffer installs ceilings in the Tri-Atria Building on Northwestern Highway.

## Local man on stilts climbs to new heights

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Farmington Hills resident John Pfeiffer recalls his father's career hunting along Northwestern Highway before the building boom hit the Southfield, Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield corridor.

Today, the 1977 North Farmington High School graduate goes to work at his father's old hunting grounds currently the site of the Tri-Atria Building, one of the new Northwestern developments in the Hills. The building is between 14 Mile and Middlebelt.

He can see his house from the second floor of the building where he was working this week. Pfeiffer installs ceilings for Livonia's Jasman Construction, an interior contracting company.

"We used to ride our mini-bikes through here," the Hills resident recalled. Today, he rides his bicycle to work.

PFEIFFER HAS worked in several buildings along the Northwestern

corridor during his nine-year construction career, besides helping on other area buildings such as Tally Hall on Orchard Lake Road.

Not only has the landscape changed along Northwestern, but the way Pfeiffer and his co-workers do their jobs has moved along the same high technological path.

Pfeiffer's day is spent on construction stunts where he works with a continuous bright red laser beam to level ceilings and as a replacement for traditional plumb lines. Workers previously used water levels, requiring two of them to install the ceiling, he said.

Although he gets "rubber legs" from his daily stilt walks, he is able to travel as if he were on his own feet. And the newer technology saves construction companies plenty in workers time, Pfeiffer said.

"The lasers eliminate hours of work," he said.

It took Pfeiffer and a co-worker three days to install the second floor drop ceiling in one part of the Tri-Atria — the first portion of the building being leased out, he added.

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