# Stitchery helping Hmong settle in

MONG WOMEN claim they can carry a baby on their backs, while carting farm tools and sewing cross stitch on fabric, as they traverse the fields of Laos.

In Michigan they are still sewing, still caring for their babies, still working outside the home.

But they have added another burden — refugee life in a foreign coun-

try.

For the 2,000 Laotian mountain people who have settled in the tricounty area since 1975, life in America has not been all rainbows and filmers like the cloth stitched by Himong needlecrafters.

"All around, the Himong are probably the most difficult refugees to place because they're basically darming people," said Joan Fost, refugee placement director for Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, an organization that has settled 169

Hmong in the Detroit area since March and will find sponsors for another 35 this month.

"There's no job skill transfer. European refugees have held jobs like most of us have, and they're easier to place. The limongs are farming people. And they tend to migrate to where their people are — mostly in cities."

BUT THE ages-old art of needle-work called "pa nadu," translated as "making cloth beautiful like nowers," may help smooth the translation from mountain village to urban neighborhood for many women and their mountain village to urban neighborhood for many women and their mountain village to urban neighborhood for many women and their recently discovered tolk art additions. Hmong sittchery is among the finest," asys Sue Julian, who served in Thalland and now works with a cooperative of 150 needlecrafters at the Hmong Cultural Center in northeast Detroit.
"The sitchery grew out of what the Hmong did on their costumes. The techniques they use have been used by other folk artists, but there's a unique blend of differences that make it identifiably Hmong — fine symmetry, astounding colors. That's a hallmark of Hmong stitchery — a dash and daring in comblining colors."

The Birmingham Unitarian

dash and daring in Columbia Cos-ors."

The Birmingham Unitarian Church will cap a weeklong celebra-tion of Hmong culture with a display and sale of needlework 12:30-3 p.m. Sunday at the church, 651 N. Wood-ward

ward. Carol Wendt of Troy, a member of Carol Wendt of Troy, a member of the church art committee, organized a similar diaplay while working with the Hmong at an international center in Indianapolis. When she moved to Troy three years ago. Wendt sought out the Hmong community in Detroit. She became acquainted with Julian and decided to promote an exhibit that would coincide with New Year festivities, celebrated Nov. 28, by Hmong communities in Flint, Detroit, Lansing, Pontiac and Saglnaw.

"I'M ALWAYS trying to do a kind "I'M ALWAYS trying to 0.2 kms of mission in helping to redefine art. Our notions of art are dominated by artstocratte, central European standards that don't represent our country today — what we are to-

'All around, the Hmong are probably the most difficult refugees to place because they're basically farming people.'

refugee placement director

day," Wendt explained.
"I always prefer a multicultural

"I always prefer a multicultural approach."

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not line art, our etc has processes in its."

The matchbook-sized cross-stitch reverse applique, batk and embrodery patterns embellished clothing, hatk, baby carriers and funeral garments in Loss. The designs have been enlarged and applied to pillows.

bedspreads, wearable art and orna-ments for the American market.

"When they came out of Laos they had time to work on it everyday be-cause there wasn't anything to do in the (Thai) refugee camps," Julian ex-plained. "People discovered them as a tourist attraction and bought their stitchery.

"It takes three times as long to finish a piece here, because they have school, family and are holding down jobs."

YER MUA, Detroit, rises at 5 a.m. to make breakfast for her husband before spending about five hours sewing every day. Time-consuming reverse applique and cross stitch on pillows and jackets are her specialty. YER MUA, Detroit, rises at

pillows and jackets are her special-ty.
Younger women, like Mee Chang, a senior at Osborn High School in Detroit, are less interested in learn-

ing the craft.

"I could see but I don't want to."
Changad noting that endiess houroffers are strain her neck. "During
time people will adopt more
American ways."
She plans to study computers at
Wayne State University next year.
Mean-while, other women take
turns volunteering at the cultural
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turns volunteering at the cultural
tenter at 1282 Pelky. The cooperative, which returns 80 percent of
proceeds back to the artists, has yencrated enough stitchery over the last
three years to stock the two-story
building, a converted house behinZion. Lutheran Church, south
McNichols near Grantot.
Stitchery sales provide supplie-

Stitchery sales provide supplemental income for Hmong familie and are shared with relative trapped in Thai refugee camps who have been left behind in Laos

Grants from the church, Luthern's Social Services and the Episcopal diocese of Michigan have helped at tablish the center and provide bases and sewing training for confimembers.

members.

A grant from the city of Detrication will help expand the center next year, providing meeting space, diplay space and areas for gardenia sewing and cooking classes. The certer is open 1-5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays.



Yero Mua stitches reverse applique. Hmong needlework is called Pandau (making cloth beautiful like flowers).

"So, our job here is to continue to make churches aware the need is still there."

CHURCHES LIKE Antioch Lu-theran in Farmington Hills and Lu-theran Church of the Master in Troy have responded with sponsorship commitments and promises of finan-cial aid.

first few months and support them, trying to get them into English class-

Sponsors sought for refugees

es and find the husband employment."

The family, Chong Bee, 25 h wife Moua Ka, 21 and their two chat dren, also have relatives in Pontase "I'll be fun. Our congregation: 1 growing-in terms of the younger argoup, We have a 1 to 6 small chat dren here. This is like adding to the family," Parks said.

The social ministry committee at the Troy church will provide furch baskets and financial assistance for three Himong refugee families new month, and the social state of the control of

three Hmong refugee families new month.

"Church or group sponsorship is best because you have more man power to work with." Post said one eventual good is friendship write sponsorship.

Groups, families or churches of terested in finding out more about sponsorship may call Post at n. 7700.

## business briefs

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a pro-motion, are planning a new ven-ture or project, or have informa-tion about other business-related tion about other business-related happenings — and there's a Farmington-area connection — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news with other Observer readers. Send items to: Business briefs, Farmington Observer, 3203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

NEW VP
Jack Aluto of Farmington Hills
was named vice
president of sales
and marketing for
Adhesive Systems,
Inc., a newly
formed subsidiary
of Diversified
Chemical Technologics, Inc.
Aluto will be re-

Chemical Technologies, Jack Aluto
logies, Jack Aluto
logies, Jack Aluto
possible for directing all sales and
marketing activities for the division's product line, which includes
custom formulated hot-meit, vinyl
latex, acrylic and epoxy-based
adhealwe products.
Aluto has spent the past 18 years
in the industrial chemical market,
holding various sales, technical and
managements positions.
He is a member of the Chicago
Drug Association, Chemical Specialties Manufacturing Association, International Lubrication ManufacturAssociation and the Society of Automotive Engineers.

PR FIRM NAMED
Troy-based Damone/Andrew, an office and industrial real estate development, construction and management company, has appointed Hermanoff & Associates of Farmington Hills as its public relations firm.

firm.

Damon/Andrew has developed and currently manages 70 properties in the Midwest and Florida. The property encompasses 3 million square feet of office, industrial and property encourses square feet of office, industrial au-research space. The company has offices in Fort Lauderdale and Tampa.

WRAPS UP TRAINING Michael O'Brien, an

WRAPS UP TRAINING
Michael O'Brien, an associate of
the Detroit/Herb Agency of Massachusests Mutual Life Insurance Co.,
has completed one week of specialized training at the company's home
office in Springleid, Mass.
The Farmington Hills resident
was a member of the company's bome
office in Springleid, Mass.
The Career Development Hills
career Development Hills
care Development on the Career Developmen

al representatives who successfully completed the training.

compreses are training.

NOW CERTIFIED
Debra Hoppe, an independent,
Farmington-based aerobics instructor, attended the three-day International Dance-Exercise Association
(IDEA) Educational Conference in
Washington, D.C.
She passed the IDEA Foundation
Industry Certification examination
before the conference. The IDEA
Foundation is IDEA's non-profit sister organization. More than 7,000 instructors have taken the exam since
it was first administered in May uctors have taken the exam since was first administered in May

it was first administered in May 1986.

More than 1,200 instructors and business owners from around the world participated in the sold-out conference.

Hoppe took part in lectures, workshops and activity sessions on injury prevention in low-impact aerobies, contraindicated exercises and pre/postnatal exercise, which she specializes in.

"It is so important to stay up to date with new exercise research and technique, especially in regards to pre-postnatal women. Exercise during pregnancy is still in its infancy." Hoppe said.

IDEA, with 14,000 members in 38 countries, is the world's largest professional organization for aerobics/dance-exercise professionals. It promotes safe and effective exercise through networking and education of its members.

DUE TAX REFUNDS

The Internal Revenue Service is trying to locate Michigan taxpayers who are still due tax refunds from their 1986 federal income tax re-

their 1986 rederal income tax reviews.

John Hummel, IRS Michigan District director, said 1,010 refund checks worth \$388,743 were rounded by the Postal Service as undersolved by the Postal Service of a mounts from \$1 to \$15,116, and average \$395, Hummel said.

The IRS believes most of these taxpayers moved or changed their last names during the year, and falled to notify the Postal Service or IRS.

IRIS.

When a refund is returned by the Postal Service, the IRIS attempts to locate the taxpayer by follow-up. "But there are always a small number, who cannot be found," Hummel

Richard F. Waller, Everett and Teresa Greenlee, Lionel Lejeune and Teresa Greenlee Michael Coopes.

Michael Coopes.

NEW MEMBERS

The Farmington/Farmington

The Farmington/Farmington

Hills Chamber of Commerce has

releomed several new members.

They include: Apartment Furni
ture Rental, Inc., 38435 Grand River,

18-7738; Menof, Sheplow, Weinstein

& Co., 28580 Orchard Lake, 655-8200,

Leonard's Custom Draperies, 277
0880; Skylight Inns, 349-7400; Great

Lakes Computer Systems, 476-8848;

Thomson McKinnon Securities, 626
5600; Michael S. Downs & Associates, 474-2204; Real Estate One, 477
1111.

ates, 474-2203, Real Estate Ost.

Also Sunshine Insulation Co., 4775552; Midwest Video Productions,
474-6775; Volk Corp., 477-6706; Hilsum's Inc., 334-655; Nelson Brothers Carpeting, 471-2701; BDH Services, 949-8700; Waugs Estetrical
Service, 477-6739; ROI Security Selectrical
Services, 477-6739; ROI Selectrical
Services, 477-6739

Inc., 478-1117.

Shoppers recently were asked how frequently they visit or shop in downtown Farmington?

The majority, 52 percent, said they shop or visit downtown once or wice a week; 21 percent said they come downtown every day. Nears of the said they shop or visit own on the said they come downtown every day. Nears of the said they come downtown every day. Nears of the said they come shoppers visit at least once a week.

week.

About 70 percent of those surveyed live in either Farmington or Farmington Hills. Six percent live in Livonia, 4 percent in Detroit.

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