



Matthew Blizer, 2, of Farmington Hills, plays at a little table with Legos in Jeanne's Hallmark. His mom, Patricia, said she always shops for cards at Jeanne's because the store has the toy area.



Hikmat Amine owns Richie's Fruit Market.

SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

## Kendallwood gets \$3 million facelift

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He (the owner) didn't do anything that wasn't first-rate," Rice said of the renovation. "It took a whole year, but I think it was worth it. We have tripled traffic. The bookkeeper has noticed a lot more checks and charges."

Her store is 3,200 square feet, 900 square feet more than the old store. She is pleased with the landscaping and underground sprinkling system, she said.

Rice said that she caters to the traditional neighborhood. "We don't go in for the flash and the dash because it doesn't sell," she said. "It's middle of the road."

THE RENOVATION encountered some time delays with scheduling and repairs but major issues have been resolved, said Dale Countegian, Farmington Hills planning and community development director.

Jeffrey Spoon of Newport Construction in Farmington Hills, who has lived a mile away from the center for 12 years, credited cooperation from the city. Working around an active mall proved difficult, he said.

It's too early to tell how business will be for Richie's Fruit Market owned by Hikmat Amine, a former Ford Motor employee and 7-year Farmington resident, who opened the store in early December. It's his first such entrepreneurial endeavor.

"There's a lot of community here so we thought we would open a fruit market here," Amine said. "For sure, we are still losing money. But it (the shopping center) is good because it has a lot of traffic. Once people know there is a fruit market here, they will not have to drive four to five miles for fruit."

He said it will take two or three months to find out exactly how good business will be.

Amine carries homemade Middle Eastern deli foods like babaganouj, an eggplant dish, and tabouille, a parsley and tomato dish.

"We make it like we'd eat it at home," he said.

AT HEARTS & Flowers, Inc. an 18-month-old store, partners Jeanne Trumpy and Sharon Hain are pursuing a new endeavor.

"People are starting to find us

again," Hain said. "The renovation was just disaster city because it was dragged on so long. They had us torn up for every major holiday. For Valentine's Day, our windows were boarded in. For Easter, our sidewalks were out. It was unbelievable."

The store specializes in custom wedding and house decorating calls.

The florist also carries musical Christmas airwalkers.

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