

New business owner is plaster master



photos by SHARON LeMUEUX/staff photographer

Tamara Peyakhov, owner of Fun With Plaster on Grand River, is a new face in downtown Farmington.

By Susan Buck
staff writer

You've had fun before, but have you ever had fun with plaster?

Tamara Peyakhov, a West Bloomfield resident and new downtown Farmington business owner, is ready and willing to demonstrate a technique known as plastercraft.

Plastercraft allows the artist to vary each item simply by changing the techniques used in finishing.

Fun With Plaster opened at 33405 Grand River on Oct. 12. Ten months ago, Tamara opened her first store by the same name which is located in the West Bloomfield Plaza at Orchard Lake and Maple in West Bloomfield.

These are family-owned businesses and Peyakhov's son Fuad, 17, and daughter Julietta, 15, assist on the weekends. The Farmington store is open seven days a week.

Peyakhov came to America in 1979 with husband Isak and their two children, leaving their hometown of Baku, Soviet Union. There, Tamara taught music and piano for 10 years. When she came to this country, Tamara trained and became a dental technician for Nelson Dental Lab in Ferndale.

ALONG WITH year round novelty items, like vases, trinket boxes, statues and plaques, Tamara tries to have seasonal and holiday items available. Christmas items in a wide range of affordable prices already are on the shelves.

"There can never be any mistakes made because, if a color is wrong or a technique is not quite right, or the lines are not perfect, or even if you change your mind, all the artist needs to do is wait until the original paints are dry (approximately 15 minutes) and paint over them," she said. When the painting has been completed, all items are sprayed with either a gloss, pearlescent or sparkle finish and the item is ready to display.

The entire process takes about one to two hours, depending upon the size and complexity of the plaster piece chosen. All paints and glazes are non-toxic and air-drying for ease in using.

Items begin in cost at \$4.50. When customers finish, they have a project they can take home.

Plastercrafting provides a creative outlet. Tamara first became interested in the craft when her daughter went to Plaster Playhouse, a similar store, in West Bloomfield years ago.

SLOWLY, TAMARA began thinking of opening her own business and brought up the idea to her husband, Isak, a co-partner in Rancher's Beef Outlet, a meat wholesaler in Pontiac.

"Are you serious?" Isak asked. "You'll have to work 24 hours a day."

She was serious. Tamara, who still feels guilty if she's not home for dinner, always makes it a point to prepare dinner ahead of time. "I cook tonight for

tomorrow night," she said.

When beginning a project, Tamara advises customers to try something simple first. All painting can be done in the store for \$1 paint charge.

"You can use all my paints and all my brushes," she said.

If the customer, prefers, paints can be purchased and taken home for a \$1.25 a cup. "If they get tired of the work and want to come back the next day, it's always possible," Tamara said.

She offers a birthday party room for a \$15 room rental fee which includes invitations and goodie bags. The only other cost is that of the item to be painted, (\$3.50 minimum) and a \$1 paint charge per item. Each child also receives a balloon, a magnet and a Fun With Plaster Club Card as a goodie bag. The \$15 service charge must be received within a week to hold the selected date.

Parents bring in the party food.

"Parents can decide the price range of the items (to be painted) ahead of time," she said. "When kids get done, they're so proud, because they've done something with their own little hands. It's more educational. It's like an art. In addition to plaster painting parties, we also offer T-shirt painting."

She also offers Thursday Ladies Night sessions, painting lessons for children on Tuesdays and Thursdays and adult painting sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Gift certificates are also available.



The fun goes on seven days a week at Fun With Plaster in downtown Farmington.



SHARON LeMUEUX/staff photographer

A new crime prevention van is expected to be used for educational purposes and at investigative scenes for the Farmington Public Safety Department. It was purchased with the help of a federal crime prevention grant. Pictured here are Commander Chuck Lee (left) who handles

the department's special operations, Lakeway Street resident Diane Allen who is a Neighborhood Watch block captain, Farmington Mayor Shirley Richardson and Public Safety Director Frank Lauhoff.

Anti-crime van joins Farmington police fleet

By Casey Hana
staff writer

Farmington special operations of officers have a new tool for education programs and investigation at crime scenes.

A new 1991 Dodge Caravan has joined the Farmington Public Safety Department fleet as a crime prevention vehicle.

The van, equipped with lights and sirens and needed materials for fire and crime scene investigations, was purchased with the help of a \$10,200 federal crime prevention grant, some of the department's drug forfeiture money and the city's general fund.

"We hope to make it a permanent part of the department," said public safety Director Frank Lauhoff. The original intent of the van, he said, was to "place an emphasis on subdivision areas, and with kids. We've

Public safety director Frank Lauhoff said the original intent of the van was to 'place an emphasis on subdivision areas, and with kids. We've been looking to expand our current crime prevention program.'

Been looking to expand our current crime prevention program." The van is expected to be used for the school liaison program at Farmington High, the THINK drug education and self-esteem program done in elementary schools, community based programs including Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch, and

for fire inspections by Fire Marshal Joe Schornack, said Commander Chuck Lee.

RESIDENTS WILL also see the van responding to all serious accidents and fires and at major crime scenes including burglaries and robberies, where it will be used for evidence collection.

Total cost of the van was \$12,900, plus about \$4,000 to add a radio, siren, exterior van markings, and other needed equipment.

The city had originally applied for a \$23,000 grant, but requests were pared back due to budget cuts. State Rep. Jan Dolan was instrumental in getting the grant for the city, Lauhoff added.

The van has been assigned to the department's Special Operations Group, which is headed by Lee and includes the detective bureau, and fire and community relations operations.

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