

Permanent Flowers Come Alive At Artistic Expressions

Patricia Ray knows that she'll never get rich, and this is good news for her customers. It means that she will never have to compromise her perfectionist standards.

Every arrangement is very important to her — she sees each piece as a work of art.

Ray is the owner of Artistic Expressions, a studio that offers unique and original floral arrangements and wreaths as well as antique and unusual vases for homes and offices.

Ray started Artistic Expressions six years ago, after 17 years as an interior designer. She knew there was a need for this type of business first-hand, when she had trouble finding good permanent flower arrangements for her clients.

"That's why I'm very busy," she said. "But I'm happy doing what I'm doing and people seem to appreciate my work. I've found my perfect niche."

Ray uses a combination of dried floral pieces and selected permanent florals to make her arrangements look like they came from the garden.

"My flowers are very different," she said. "I don't know anyone else who does exactly what I do."

Her success has enabled her to create a working environment that makes her — and her customers — very happy.

"It's a very warm little studio," she said. "I have old carpets on the floor and antique pieces of furniture. I want people to feel comfortable and welcome here. I try to make it a very personal place. I



Patricia Ray in her Studio.

remember who my customers are, what colors they like and anything else that will help me give them the service they deserve."

Ray really does try to keep her clients happy. If a visit to the home would help, she will do it without charge.

Even though Artistic Expressions isn't about to expand, the store does keep continually evolving. Ray now carries more variety than ever.

"My stock in antiques, containers and reproduction pieces is constantly growing," she said. Ray also enjoys making miniatures. "They are good for housewarming or as a small gift."

"And I keep getting more and more new ideas!" she added.

Artistic Expressions is located at 725 S. Adams, Suite 22, in Birmingham and can be reached at (810) 644-8349. The studio is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday. It is closed Sunday and Monday.

Ray can also accommodate customers outside regular hours by appointment.

President credits hard work

Kathleen Gallagher Lewis and her father, Myles Gallagher, who owned Trueman Services, one of the nation's original temporary help firms, formed Corporate Personnel Services in 1984. Lewis joined the company as president in 1985.

Lewis credits "hard work, persistence and luck" with her company's success. Corporate Personnel Services now has six branch offices in the metropolitan Detroit area, including Livonia, Brownstown, Pontiac, Troy and Mt.

Clemens. It is a certified Women's Business Enterprise and has been recognized as one of the top 25 women-owned business enterprises in Michigan since 1989.

Kathleen Lewis's professional background includes degrees in both economics and law. Prior to joining Corporate Personnel Services in 1985, Lewis had the distinction of being one of the first female partners with the venerable Detroit law firm of Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen and Freeman.

Annually since 1989 Crain's Detroit Business has named Lewis as one of the top women business owners in Michigan. In 1994 she was honored as one of the top Women of Achievement in the State of Michigan by the National Association of Women Business Owners.

In response to a growing trend in employment relations, Corporate Personnel Services has developed an employee leasing program that reduces employers' overhead and paperwork. Corporate Personnel Services has the capability to serve as an off-site, full-time personnel and payroll department.

Lewis faces the challenge of a growing business in an ever-changing business world with discipline. She maintains her perspective "by keeping my focus on the job at hand."

In addition to managing her company, Lewis is involved in many civic and community activities. She is married and the mother of three busy children.




Company president:
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Artistic Expressions

Custom Florals by

Patricia Ray



Centerpieces

- Wreaths
- The Unusual
- Vintage Vases

• Brass, Silver, Stone & Ceramic Containers

725 S. Adams
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