

House of worship: Neighbors have seen the outside of the \$5.1 million Jain Temple take shape. Below, several idols adorn the inside of the site. The official opening this week includes a religious procession Sunday.

Temple

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Engineer and society member Chuni Gala stepped in and put together a new team of contractors a year ago. Work continued until two hours before a city inspection, and the temple received its occupation permit.

The society authorized \$2.6 million for the first phase and has raised the rest. With 3,000 people expected this week, society board members project another \$2 million could be found through donations.

"The people who believe in this have really opened their checkbooks," said Bhupendra Shah, Jain Society board member. Jain Society of Greater Detroit formed 20 years ago. The society has grown from 60 to 350 families, which includes 35 in Farmington Hills alone. Many are business professionals.

Jainism is one of the oldest religions in India and co-exists with Hinduism there.

Non-violence is the major tenant as Jain scholar Chrimadh Rajchandraji is said to have

influenced Gandhi, society members said.

Jains believe there are souls in every living being and subscribe to the theories of karma and reincarnation. Many Jains are vegetarians and even yield to the smallest creatures on sidewalks.

"When I walk outside, I have to look three and half feet in front of me," said Ashok Choksi, a Jain Society board member and West Bloomfield resident. "I have to make sure I'm not harming any living being."

Those who enter the temple are required to remove their shoes. Black clothing is also forbidden.

"This is a pious place; Shoes bring in dirt and other things you don't want," Choksi said.

In the Jain's view, souls of living beings acquire karma through attachments to worldly possessions. The pursuit is to purify the soul of karma and to reach an eventual state of nirvana.

"The state of perpetual happiness is nirvana," Choksi said.

Sunday's parade as part of the installation of 11 idols in the temple will be a joyous affair. Some 1,500 walkers will take part and floats will depict Jain



themes. Along with several dignitarians, two Jain monks Muni Shree Jinchandraji and Gurudev Chitrananuji are expected to attend a service, which will be electronically fed to TV monitors in nearby tents to handle the overflow of worshippers. The society has a place it can call home, organizer said.

"One of the objectives is we wanted to have a centrally located temple," said Praful Shah, Farmington Hills resident. "The reputation and it's a good community."

Landscaping, sports kept businessman busy

Known throughout the area for his way with landscape design and his big heart, longtime Farmington Hills resident Nicholas Sarkisian will be remembered today at 11 a.m. during funeral services at St. John's Armenian Church in Southfield.

The 66-year-old local businessman died June 28, following complications from heart disease and cancer.

"He was a man filled with wisdom and love," said his wife of 34 years, Gayle Sarkisian. "All of his friends were treated like family."

All for the past 17 months, he never gave up until he knew he was near the end. He was very strong," said his wife.

During his final days at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Mr. Sarkisian was treated to a visit from his new granddaughter, who was born in the same hospital the Thursday before his death.

"They were kind enough to

bring her over to see Nick," said Gayle Sarkisian. "They were very gracious."

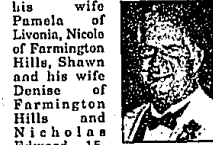
Born July 30, 1931 in Detroit, Mr. Sarkisian was known throughout this area for his business, Green Plant Design, located for many years in Livonia and, most recently, in Farmington Hills. He had lived in Farmington Hills for 30 years.

"His genuine sincerity and concern for others endeared him to a multitude of friends," family members said in a statement.

He was a 60-year member of St. John's Armenian Church of Southfield, coached amateur hockey for nearly 30 years and enjoyed attending sporting events, golfing, traveling, cooking and tending to his gardens and pool. His favorite hobby was enjoying the sun and being at home with his family.

Arrangements were handled by the Javison and Heeny Sundquist funeral homes.

He is survived by his wife Gayle, children Christopher and



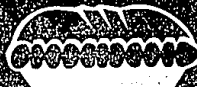
Sarkisian

his wife Pamela of Livonia, Nicole of Farmington Hills, Shawn and his wife Denise of Farmington Hills and Nicholas Edward, 16, who still lives at home and attends Plymouth Christian Academy.

He was also close with surviving cousins: Mary Tovvalian and son Brian of Livonia, Sarkis and Kathy Sarkisian of Rochester Hills and Dikron Sarkisian of Virginia, Gayle Sarkisian said.

The family asks that memorial donations be made to the Nicholas Sarkisian Memorial Fund, 29646 Highmeadow, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48334. Money will be used for cancer research and a future scholarship fund for young hockey players.

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