

## TV from page A1

of media services for Farmington Public Schools, during an unveiling that was broadcast over TV-10.

Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield remarked that the new studio proved that "promises made are promises kept."

Also enthralled with the professional-quality studio were Bill Hartsock and Caren Collins, top officials for the Southwest Oakland Cable Commission.

"I'm awestruck," said Hartsock, mayor of the city of Farmington. "I've been involved with cable for a number of years. When I came here for the (March 17) telethon I was amazed."

Collins congratulated the dis-

trict on its new gem. "Students today really do have the experience and expertise to go far in their career and contribute to the community through this valuable resource."

One of the students Collins might have been referring to was North senior Julie Lefton, who worked the camera directly opposite the podium. Lefton also worked during the district's first ever 24-hour telethon for the Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation.

"I love it," Lefton said. "The technology we have that's available to us is real impressive."

## Endless potential

Lefton is one of 19 TV-10

interns (from all three high schools) who currently work at the studio. Another is North senior Gretchen Pitluck, who wrapped up the ceremonial proceedings with assurances that the expense of creating the studio "was money well spent."

A few minutes later, off camera, Pitluck was raving about the professional quality of TV-10 studio equipment.

"It's up to the students' imagination what we can do with this," Pitluck said. "It's up to the students."

Besides TV-10 programs, which are shown seven days a week, the studio will offer students in regular video production classes opportunities to create,

beginning in the weeks following spring break.

"The next major thing we will do in here," said Dean Cobb, telecommunications coordinator for the district, "is for all students to do a studio shoot. They'll hand me a tape at the end."

During Tuesday's unveiling, Cobb reviewed the history of TV-10, which began with the assistance of a \$50,000 grant of equipment for Metrovision. He introduced longtime colleagues Dave Wertheimer and Sue Cobb and noted how far the studio has progressed since then.

From those humble beginnings, Dean Cobb continued, TV-10 now has worked with more than 400 student interns. Although the studio is based at North, students from Farmington and Harrison high schools

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Cobb joked that he was once told that "all this equipment would wind up in a closet. Well, welcome to this absolutely magnificent closet."

Dean and Sue Cobb, Schmidt, Wertheimer, Don Carter (of Channel 7) and Harrison choreographer Lucy Kovac "made it happen," according to former

North Principal Deborah Clarke, who attended the program (as did Rick Jones, North's current principal).

"I am so impressed and awed by the combined work of our staff and the community to build this for kids," Clarke said. "This is professional quality. Kids can leave here and go to the real world and have the competencies they need. It's an opportunity not everybody can have."

## Quality from page A1

ships, today's artisans cater to a more eclectic clientele.

Doug, a 31-year-old artist from Nori who identifies himself only by his first name, recently applied a rose for a 79-year-old woman. She'd always wanted a tattoo, she told him. So did the 69-year-old widow whose daughters brought her in after her husband had died.

"She always wanted one, but he didn't want her to," Doug said. "We get all kinds."

Sqweege, another one-name artist, talks about "breaking the stereotype" of big burly guys operating in the smoky back rooms of bars on the waterfront. A 31-year-old Farmington Hills resident, he grew up in a family of artists, but didn't take well to formal training.

Now, he shows off a portfolio of

work that includes portraits, free-wheeling designs and Star Wars characters, among others. Sqweege and Doug advise anyone thinking about a tattoo to ask for a look at the artist's portfolio.

## Professional artists

In their business, Tramp said, the emphasis on art separates the professionals from the hacks.

"There are people who are tattooing who don't have any business training," he commented. "They're just in it for the money. A tattoo artist is an artisan. He can pretty much draw what he wants."

Although artists from all over the country call about working for Eternal Tattoos, not everybody gets a job, Tramp said. He now has 30 artists in five locations, and the business has grown every year since he first opened in Livonia in 1992.

Over the past 20 years, styles have changed. Traditional techniques have made way for bold, new colors and lines, tribal and Celtic designs and "fine line" work. Artists work with a machine that runs off a power pack, which quickly moves the needles in and out of the skin.

"Depending on the tattoo, you can go from one to five needles," Tramp explained, demonstrating how the ink is drawn up into the machine's barrel and distributed under the skin by the needle.

"There's different needles for different styles."

Eternal Tattoos receptionist Pam White's first tattoo was a boldly colored heart, on her right upper arm. Though she has five others, that one's her favorite.

"I liked it once it was done," she said. "It's pretty."

That's not to say the beauty

comes without pain. Sqweege describes the sensation as "irritating." Tramp calls it "irritating."

"But it depends," he added. "Certain parts of the body hurt more than others. After the basic outline, your skin is numbed a little."

## Customer satisfaction

Every good tattoo artist knows the signs of the occasional queasy customer. Tramp said it doesn't happen often, usually when people are really nervous or haven't eaten yet that day.

First-timers can expect to learn something about the art before a single needle vibrates. The artists will spend some time talking to customers about what they want, considering age, work and lifestyle.

They try to develop relationships, rather than just inking up whomever walks in off the street.

"Each artist specializes in a certain style," Tramp said. "It's like going to a barber. You have your favorite ones who cut your hair the way you like it."

Artists, too, have their preferences. Some won't do hands, others won't do faces. Some won't tattoo anyone under 18 who haven't first obtained their parents' permission.

Anyone who wants a racial slur, Satanic or gang-related design is out of luck at Eternal Tattoos. Tramp doesn't like any of those things, so he and his artists just won't do them.

"It doesn't matter who they are, or how much they'll pay for it," he said adamantly.

## Cosmetic tattoos

Gina Babyak's specialty includes all manner of cosmetic tattooing. She does permanent eyeliner, eyebrows and lip liner. In addition, tattooing a bit of flesh tone or natural blush onto scars can make them look more natural.

After apprenticing with a cosmetic tattoo artist in Indiana, Babyak came to work for Eternal Tattoos. Tramp feels customers often prefer a woman artist.

"We feel other women will be more comfortable having a woman do it because they put on make-up all the time so they understand it better."

Babyak insists on a consultation, including a skin test, long before she does the actual work. Then she spends time drawing the lines with a marker until her customer is satisfied.

"I'll spend an hour with someone or as long as it takes," Babyak said.

The artists all attend the Motor City convention every year, where they attend seminars and get a look at new designs and equipment. Sponsored by the Alliance of Professional Tattooists, the convention draws an international crowd.

As with any profession, Tramp said, there are good business owners and bad ones. He urges anyone considering a tattoo to find out as much as they can about the art and the shop before making any decisions.

It's important, he said, to find a place where the people take pride in their work. That's been his goal since he applied his first tattoo in 1976.

"It's having somebody come in here and leaving happier, because they're getting more than what they thought they'd get," he said. "We're artists. And we take pride in what we do."



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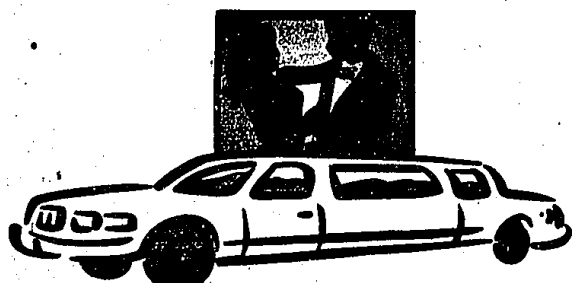
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