

FARMINGTON NOTES

An 'excellent' job!

Lois Gerber, a registered nurse and Farmington Hills resident, is this year's recipient of the Excellence in Nursing Award, given by the Kappa Iota Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, an international nursing society.

Gerber's career has spanned 18 years as a community health nurse. She is the owner/director of Community Connections Inc. an in-home geriatric assessment, planning and case management service in Farmington Hills.

In addition to her Community Connection activities, Gerber teaches community health nursing at the McAuley School of Nursing at the University of Detroit.

Blood drive at Gill

An American Red Cross blood drive will be held 3-9 p.m. Monday, Nov. 22, at the Gill Elementary School, 21195 Gill Road, Farmington Hills. Walk-ins are welcome. Reservations can be made by calling Denise Bratcher at 474-5781.

Designing people

Farmington residents Frank and Kim Yanke of Yanke Designs, won first place in the Design category of the Michigan Jewelers Association's fifth-annual Jewelry Design competition.

Kim Yanke's tanzanite ring was one of the many creations judged by a panel of jewelry experts on the basis of originality, beauty, wearability, quality of workmanship and commercial appeal.

The Yanke's, whose Yanke Designs is located in Franklin, also won the award in 1989.

Items for Farmington Notes may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, dropped off at the newspaper office, or faxed to 477-9722.

Green and odor free
Dry cleaner cleans up with system

Efficiency without pollution or odor — and at a profit. That's what is offered by a Farmington Hills dry cleaner.

By BILL COLTANT
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills dry-cleaning business is finding that being environmentally sensitive can pay real dividends.

Although American consumers have consistently shown a desire to "shop green," for many that has meant making a sacrifice for the environment. Country Cleaners' co-owner Bob Karakashian said his customers aren't punished for thinking green.

"Our system is not only pollution free and odor free, it allows us to be much more efficient," he said.

Country Cleaners, in the Concord Center at Halsted near Grand River in Farmington Hills, bought an Italian-made Realeter dry-cleaning machine 11 months ago after Karakashian studied several different types of fully enclosed systems.

Most dry cleaners actually don't dry clean anything, but use a liquid, perchlorethylene or "perk," to clean clothing.

The process usually involves handling the wet, solvent-laden garments that must be dried in a separate machine.

Using that system, Country Cleaners went through about one 55-gallon drum of perk a month, with the dirty solvent having to be hauled away to a special and expensive waste facility.

"We will now use about one and a



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Keeping it clean: Bob Karakashian of Country Cleaners shows off his environmentally safe machinery.

half drums for a year," he said. "That's a real savings."

In addition, the fully enclosed system does not allow the fumes to escape the facility and employees don't have to handle the smelly garments. "There is no odor and you don't have to use gloves," said Beth Hollon, a 15-year employee from South Lyon. "This way you don't have to worry."

Joanne Solto, also of South Lyon, said she has mostly worked on the laundry and pressing side of the business, but still suffered the effects of the old process.

"You could always smell it," she said. "I never really got used to it."

The European system distills and recycles the cleaning fluid and has two cleaning drums instead of the one most traditional cleaners use,

giving it a 100-pound capacity as opposed to the 40-pound capacity his business had before buying the unimpressive looking machine.

Karakashian said because the fluid is completely clean after distilling, white clothes turn out cleaner.

"Some dry cleaners will have to wash (dry clean only) clothes first

See GREEN, 16A

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