



Vince Mirabella opened
Hart Jewelers in 1964



Hart Jewelers store 1990s

After a lifetime in the jewelry business, Hart Jewelers owners Pat and Kathie Turner close their doors for good.

HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE DIAGNOSIS AFFECTS THEIR DECISION

Pat and Kathie Turner met in the 1970s when Pat came to work for Kathie's dad, Vince Mirabella, at the Hart Jewelers location in Maplewood, Missouri. They married in 1980 and when Vince retired in 1988, Pat and Kathie took the jewelry business to St. Charles. They stayed linked to their community through engagements and weddings, births and deaths, laughter and friendships.



From left to right: Hart Jewelers founder Vince Mirabella, store manager Cynthia Smid, owners Pat and Kathie Turner

In 1990, they brought in a store manager, Cynthia Smid, who had no jewelry experience but soon became invaluable to the Turners. "Now, Cynthia knows as much as Pat and I do," said Kathie, "and you can tell she's become a part of our family, too."

After 35 years, unforeseen circumstances led the couple to make the decision to retire and hang up their repair tools for the last time. Pat has Huntington's disease, a degenerative brain disorder that slowly debilitates the mind and body. For a jewelry repairman, impaired coordination is not an option. "Huntington's disease will eventually take over Pat's life," Kathie said.

For Pat, leaving behind the shop he worked to build has significance beyond a career move. He and Kathie looked

back at the work they had invested in the company and realized the true impact that closing the store would have on them. "It's our livelihood", Pat said. "We've made numerous friends through the years and a lot of our customers have become great friends."

When they announced their decision to retire and close the family business, the response from long-

time customers and friends was astounding. Some bought items for their children in order to pass on the Hart's legacy.

Their decision also brought the usual amount of anxiety. In addition to leaving behind an active work life, there was the financial impact and, more importantly, maintaining the Hart Jewelers reputation. That's when the Turners enlisted the aid of Wilkerson and Associates – the nation's leader in conducting transitional events for retail jewelers. Their retirement sale was a huge success and exceeded the projected goal Wilkerson and Associates had given them. The Hart Jewelers legacy came to a graceful end.

With the event behind them, the Turners can focus their energy on another cause: raising awareness and money for Huntington's disease research.