



# VANITY FAIR

## THE WACHLER FAMILY BRINGS VINTAGE JEWELRY TO METRO DETROIT

The gift of jewelry is something anyone can appreciate. From pearl to diamond and even lapis lazuli, there's a color, style and shimmer for everyone looking to adorn themselves in the finer things. It takes a certain skill to match the sparkle of a precious stone to the glimmer in someone's eye as he or she opens the velvet box of luxury. But for Gary Wachler, he's always been able to provide the perfect match.

As a third-generation jeweler, learning several skills under his grandfather, father and uncle, Gary has grown to understand the process of buying and selling estate jewelry, timepieces, antiques and memorabilia. So much so that he's decided to continue the family legacy and open up his own store in Birmingham — Wachler Estate Collection, which is expected to officially open by the end of May. "We've got a lot of variety," Gary says. "Some fine watches — Rolex, Vacheron Constantin, Jaeger-LeCoultre — that we'll be selling, as well as diamond jewelry and engagement rings. We will also have some new jewelry for those who don't want pre-owned jewelry."

Estate jewelry, which refers to previously owned items, holds history and meaning far beyond the beauty of its appearance. Each piece tells a story, and the story continues as it's bought and sold throughout the years. For Gary, his wife Sue and his son David, the buying and selling process means building important relationships with each customer.

"A lot of our customers have been our customers for many years. We had this one lady who her and her husband were very, very special to us. Her husband passed away, but her son was getting engaged. (Her son) came in, and we sold him an engagement ring, and then the next thing you know, we got invited to the wedding. We've become very close friends," Sue explains. In fact, every time Gary sells something to a customer, Sue jokes that they'll receive another wedding invitation in the mail.

The Wachlers have developed special relationships with clients and customers across the country and rely on the philosophy of buying and selling jewelry as heirlooms instead of as scrap pieces. Gary, who is also a custom design expert, invites customers to bring in old jewelry and breathe



new life into it. "The custom design jewelry goes well with the estate jewelry," Gary says. "A lot of times people have stones or jewelry that they've inherited, but they wouldn't wear."

Whether it's a ring passed down through generations, your grandmother's pearl necklace or a brooch you don't know what to do with, Gary will sit down and design something new using old aspects of the original piece. It's a creative and thoughtful way of saving old memories while creating new ones in a piece of jewelry that's right for you.

Although busy preparing the store for its opening, the Wachlers are also giving back to those in need. Around eight years ago, Gary, along with his mother Eileene, began buying small, colored stuffed animal bears and bringing them to children going through difficult times. Comfort Bears for Kids now donates thousands of teddy bears to hospitals, care houses and other organizations where children need comfort. "When we open up our store, we're definitely going to have a big area with our little bears, and a picture of Gary's mom (who passed away not too long ago)," Sue says.

Wachler Estate Collection is also developing an online presence through social media. Gary's son David, who specializes in fine watches, updates most of the websites including the business' Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr and Instagram accounts. This allows customers and clients remain up-to-date on everything that sparkles and shines.

For the Wachlers, the estate jewelry business is something that stimulates a sense of adventure — an unending treasure hunt for elegant items that tell a one-of-a-kind story. "I used to think jewelry was always something that would be the most expensive item, but there are a lot of things out there that are very valuable," Gary says. "It's a constant learning experience. You're always coming across new things." — Audrey LaForest

[wachlerestate.com](http://wachlerestate.com)  
[comfortbearsforkids.org](http://comfortbearsforkids.org)

photo: Asia Hamilton