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Night shirt from the "Dirty Harry" group is a tunic-length or full-length dress worn with a skirt and matching leotard and a laundry-bag shirt—all belted together with natural rope.

Bette Appel lines up good-living clothes

Bette Appel is a local designer with a national following. Her American country clothes are carried by Henry Bendel in New York, by many of the chic California shops and locally by Saks Fifth Avenue, Me & My Lady and Healthy Jones.

Bette Appel favors unwords to describe everything she makes to unlothe women.

"I like unwords and I like unafraid clothes," she said from her perch atop a high stool in her cubicle office adjacent to her design room and clothing factory just outside Birmingham.

She decries what she calls "lady-like clothing" for a woman who lives and works in today's world. "I'd like to see a man try to manage a work-day wearing a dress and panty hose," she said.

She designs clothes for women to live in — for work, for play and for relaxation. Some of her devoted customers buy her clothes for jogging, others wear the designs because they want to look healthy and vital. Others, such as Cher and Carol Burnette, because she is a pace-setter.

"Our clothes," said Ms. Appel, "are not security blankets. They are for people who

aren't afraid to hide a 25-inch waistline. They are for people who underdress well. Our clothes are for people who

are happy with themselves because they aren't afraid to wear a \$50 item instead of a \$500 item."



Skin packet pastel khaki jeans (right) combine with a big T-shirt and matching vest. Another Appel design puts elephant pants, in white tissue paper cotton and wearable rolled up for a skirt look, with a rolled hem elephant T-shirt.