



Underneath it all lurks a superkid!

By KATHY PARRISH

Dressed in crisp corduroys and a plaid flannel shirt, five-year-old Craig Thomas looks like the All-American boy.

But underneath the clothes his mother insisted upon, lurks someone else — a wall-climbing crimbooster or a "man of steel" ready to save a falling airplane on a moment's notice.

With the help of brightly colored superhero or cartoon character underwear, little boys — and girls — can

now satisfy both mother's clothing taste and their own.

"I can be anyone I want," smiles tow-headed Craig, who would wear tights and a superhero cape to first-grade every day if he could. "Most of the clothes my mother wants me to wear are just too fan-ey."

Rochelle Blazar stocks "Underoos" in her Rochester children's store because her six- and four-year-old sons love the outfits. They have given up white undies in favor of the bright red, blue and yellow Superman, Batman and Shazam styles.

"It's fun," says the owner of My Mother's Shoppe, which carries toys as well as kids clothing. "They get up in the morning and say 'Today I'm gonna be Batman or Shazam.' It's wonderful to be able to put this on and be someone else," says the Huntington Woods mother, who's joking when she says she's been trying to get Union Underwear Company to expand the item to adult sizes. The clothing, which features 45 styles ranging from the Hulk to the Flintstones and Archie characters, is made for ages two to 12.

She enjoys buying the underwear for her sons. Most of her customers purchase the outfits as a change from the traditional white underwear. "Boys stuff is so drab," says Ms. Blazar, who feels the market is limited for "cute novel things for boys." "This allows the creative imagination to flow."

Aside from the novelty, "Underoos"

also draw on the popularity of TV heroes. "There's the element of fantasy — people leaping tall buildings and doing things we'd all like to do," says Ms. Blazar.

My Mother's Shoppe, which carries toys as well as clothes, carries many superhero items. In stock are "superkid" aprons, tiny stuffed Batmouse and Wondermouse, puppets, backpacks and satin red and yellow "superkid" capes with Velcro for easy in and out.

A former social worker who made capes for the neighborhood kids before she discovered the New York "cape lady" who creates the ones she sells, the storeowner steers away from so-called educational toys.

"The capes don't do anything, but kids can do anything with them," she explains. "If you are Wonder Woman or Superman — or whatever — you take on the look of someone else."

"I try not to carry toys that do anything because it takes away that creative power."

A storeowner with very definite ideas about the merchandise she carries, Ms. Blazar won't stock pajamas treated with flame retardant because of the chemicals in them. Instead, her boys wear their superhero undies to bed in warm weather.

"They wear them all the time," says their mother. "There is always a Superman in my driveway or Shazam going by. It's just a lot of fun."

fashion calendar

Monday, Sept. 24
Michel Kazan — Michel Kazan, synonymous with innovative beauty and fashion hairstyling, will visit his salon in the Somerset Mall to present hair designs and discuss fashions for the coming winter. He will also introduce his fall collection, from long and luxuriously full to short and teasingly innocent hairstyles, which he titles "Feather-It."

Alfred's Restaurant — Each day of the week Alfred's Restaurant in Somerset Mall presents a nighttime fashion presentation from 12:30-2:30 a.m. Featured on Mondays are fashions from Bonwit Teller, Tuesday Jaeger, Wednesday Don Thomas, Thursday Bonwit Teller, Friday Rodier, and Saturday Tennis Lady. For information and reservations call 645-8855.

Tuesday, Sept. 25
Cudik's — Cudik's of Birmingham will introduce Ultracashmere, a man-made fiber that is as close to real cashmere

as Ultrasuede is to genuine suede. The complete fashion line will be on view at Cudik's Fine Furs and Apparel, 294 Brown, Birmingham.

Claire Pearone — A new adventure in accessories will be unveiled by Claire Pearone at her Somerset Mall store, including personal appearances in the coming weeks. Carlos Falchi will be in the store Sept. 25-27 to get the adventure underway.

Wayne County Osteopathic Auxiliary — There will be a luncheon and fashion show sponsored by the auxiliary at Vladimir's in Farmington, with proceeds to be used to support the osteopathic scholarship fund and student loan fund. Also, in the Children's Center in Detroit for its program Teenage Parent Preventative Program. Fashions and furs will be provided by Chudik's of Birmingham. For information and tickets call 545-8355 or 851-4427.



Brad Glass, 5, prepares to bust crime in his Shazam undies and satin superkid cape. (Staff photos by Mindy Saunders)

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Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

Bits and pieces

Blue moon isn't blue and chocolate mint chip isn't green at Scoops Homemade Ice Cream Store. That's because their delicious ice cream is chemical free and therefore uses no artificial colorings. Anywhere from eight to 13 flavors are on hand each day. Once you pick your flavor and the items you want in it, the ice cream is placed on a marble slab and the items are mixed evenly through and through right before your very eyes. Some of the unique items you can select are: M&M candies, ground Reese's peanut butter cups, ground Heath bars, granola grains or carob chips.

Scoops, West Bloomfield Plaza, West Bloomfield, 855-2644.

Of things past

Several years back, Time-Life put out a wonderful series of books called "This Fabulous Century." It consists of seven volumes. Each book (\$11.95) covers one decade from 1900 to 1970 and is a mixed bag of marvelous photos and prose on such topics as the arts, sports, politics, fads and fashions of that particular period. They make wonderful gifts for friends on important birthdays. Whether you give only one volume (the one that covers the year your pal was born) or several, it's a terrific gift that's bound to be remembered.

Bookpeople: Orchard Mall, West Bloomfield, 851-9150 and Prudential Town Center, Southfield, 358-4646.

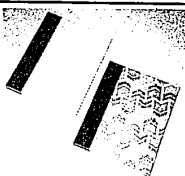
To Paris with love

If you have a valuable sculpture or painting that needs to be shipped to another place, don't panic. The Allen Rubiner Gallery, the only specialist in fine art packing in the area, will do everything for you. First, they will pick up the art work at your home, office or whatever, then they will professionally crate and pack your art to give it maximum protection. Lastly, they will arrange to have it sent anywhere in the world. The fee, naturally, varies according to the size, weight and destination of the object.

Allen Rubiner Gallery, 621 S. Washington, Royal Oak, 544-2828.

Knit pick

Ladies, take note. If you love shetland sweaters, you're going to love The Shop For Pappagallo where you'll find just about every style and color combination you could imagine. The store stocks cardigans, sweaters, V-necks, crew necks, three-buttons and cable knits as well as patterned Fair Isles. They also carry a wonderful variety of turtle-necks that you can wear under sweaters and blouses. Besides the standard colors, there are hard-to-find corals, kelly greens, apple greens and shocking pinks plus striped, printed and appliqued designs. The Shop For Pappagallo, 148 Pierce, Birmingham, 642-5580.



Saks Fifth Avenue



The day into evening sense! of the new dressing of Diane Von Furstenberg. Using Ruffino of Qiana® nylon, she casts quite a feminine spell...letting the whisper-weight softness of the fabric cascade along the body effortlessly, catching it at waist-side with a tie...and then letting it drift...into a flutter of beautiful ripples! Drama unparalleled! In electric blue or real green Ruffino of Qiana® nylon for sizes 4 to 14, '98. In the Diane Von Furstenberg Boutique — where we are all the things you are!

Saks Fifth Avenue, Detroit, Second at Lothrop, open Monday through Saturday, 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Troy, Somerset Mall, Big Beaver at Coolidge, open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10 AM to 6 PM; Sundays, 10 AM to 5 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 AM to 6 PM; Sundays, Noon to 5 PM.