

a la mode

His cool ideas sizzle with style



John Thawley's concepts in dress are far beyond the usual ready-to-wear. His combination of traditional and contemporary is unique to the area.

By RUSTLE SHAND
"Men waste their money looking for air-conditioned suits. They will find cars with air-conditioning, but not suits." So said John Thawley when we conferred on an appropriate yet cool summer men's wardrobe to complement a successful image.

"Men don't have the options in dress for hot weather that women have," he said. "Men still have to get dressed for business, and a jacket is a jacket. It's going to be basically warm."

Sizzling summer temperatures can be cooled somewhat by appropriating the increasingly popular sportswear look for some of those medium business days.

"Sportswear is cooler," said Thawley. "But sportswear for men is difficult because when men think of getting into relaxed clothes, they think of old clothes."

For really important business days he recommends a three-piece vested suit — mainly, he said, because they are intimidating and obviously mean serious business. Of course, a vested suit also means you will be warmer than you would be in a two-piece suit.

Thawley's formula for working sportswear into a business wardrobe begins with appropriate wear for a medium business day, evolves into a casual look for after business hours and then moves happily into weekend leisure.

His look begins with the classic Italian cut, suppressed waist blazer or sport coat, pleated waist, tapered and cuffed trousers, and an all-cotton, small collar shirt.

For Michigan warm weather he recommends a wardrobe that, in addition to regular business wear, includes at least one blazer. "Wool only for year-round wear. No polyester, because it does not breathe," he said. "You will be much cooler with wool. If you already have a navy blazer, then you should add another in beige wool."

"A man should have three pairs of summer trousers," advises Thawley: "one in light-weight, wool, gray flannel; two in quality-weight, wool gabardine in camel and in beige."

Shirts should be white, eggshell and powder blue in an all-cotton fabric with a short, medium-spread collar. At

least three ties are required, one burgundy silk knit, one skinny silk knit and one good silk red stripe.

"Also," said Thawley, "a plain white linen handkerchief should be unfolded and tucked in the breast pocket of the jacket."

The final item in the proper summer wardrobe is an off-white, summer-weight cardigan sweater which can be worn alone for very casual occasions or can be topped with a blazer.

Thawley calls his designs, "Very contemporary, but subtle. We call it the velvet sledge hammer," he said.

"Many of our older customers prefer the new look of our authentic Italian designs, but we deal with a lot of young men who are starting out in business. They were raised in blue jeans and they are not ready for the conformity in dress they see in their senior peers. They still want their own look and they don't want to look like their own grandfathers."

THERE IS NO RETRO At John Thawley's. No looking back and certainly no one can say Thawley dresses young men as he did their fathers. He wasn't even born until 1930 — too young to be a "greaser" in that decade and hardly a "hippie" in the '60s.

Even at 47, his inclinations were toward quality clothes. It was at that age that he managed to become the top salesman in a men's clothing store where the major business was selling expensive custom suits from the now-defunct house of Kuppenheimer.

Many 17-year-olds were mowing lawns or pumping gas — biding their time until they found a career direction. Not Thawley. He was bent on becoming a menswear designer. His dream came true just over four years ago when he opened an exclusive custom design men's store on Woodward in Birmingham. The \$425 and up suits styled by Thawley are made by a staff of Italian tailors near Toronto.

Among his customers are many corporate level executives. He also dresses Ted Fuller, the fashionable owner of Oscar's disco. But Thawley seems most proud to be able to say that he dresses Gary Deeb, owner of the Birmingham Theater. Deeb was recently declared one of the best dressed men in town by Monthly Detroit magazine, Thawley said.



For a totally casual look, Thawley dons his tweed jacket and strolls into the weekend in an off-white summer weight cardigan. He calls his look the 'velvet sledge hammer' because of its subtle, contemporary look.

At the end of the workday he flips up his collar and removes his tie for a more casual look. With the handsome oatmeal tweed jacket he wears all cotton beige trousers pleated at the waist and cuffed. He has been known to politely but emphatically refuse to sell his fashions to customers who won't take his advice.



Staff photographs by Stephen Cantrell

fashion calendar

Monday, April 30

Saks Fifth Avenue — An exquisite collection of diamond stud earrings will be featured in the fine jewelry collections on the first floor of the Somerset Mall store during the month of May.

Hudson's — Fashions for the petite woman star in this special Celanese showing of the best looks for Spring summer 1979. The show will feature

fashions to enhance the petite figure. Fashions will be modeled at 12:30 p.m. today in the Northland store, and at 7:30 p.m. in the Oakland store.

Hudson's — In the aisles of beauty Hudson's will welcome the arrival of spring with artists painting the colors of a French country bouquet on their canvases, while Jontue provides the fragrance with its fresh, floral scent.

Call your local stores for appearance times during this week April 30 through May 5.

Tuesday, May 1

Cooper's Arms — Designer fashions from Janet Varner's of Rochester are modeled informally from noon to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday-September through May at the Cooper's Arms restaurant, 305 Main Street, Rochester.

Wednesday, May 2

Jacobson's — Informal modeling of import designs in the International Collections will be done from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Christies of Clarkston Mills — A fashion show featuring clothes from Christies of Clarkston Mills is held every Wednesday from noon to 1 p.m. in Carmen's restaurant on M-15 in Orionville.



Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

Just kidding

What a good idea! The recently opened Children's Bookshop is just what the name says: a place devoted to books for and pertaining to children from birth to the age of 15. Besides an enormous stock of children's books in just about every category you can think of, the store also has a large selection of children's records, games and learning aids plus an adult corner with books related to parenting, coping, nutrition and health.

The Children's Bookshop, Applegate Square, Northwestern at Inkster, Southfield, 354-4741.

Mum's the word

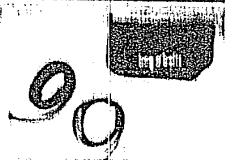
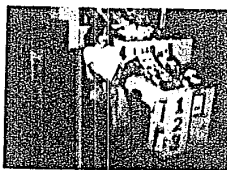
Fifteen years ago, James D. Low started selling flowering plants from his greenhouse to a few friends. Now, through word of mouth, his business has grown to include hundreds of customers. The best part of all is that he will deliver his plants to your home. Various color mums including the daisy and spoon mum, varieties (\$5 each) are available all year round. Right now Low also has ivy geranium and impatiens hanging baskets (\$6) as well as gloxinia plants (\$6). Three days advance notice is requested. James D. Low, 852-1231.

Cheers

These multi-purpose wine racks would be a welcome gift for someone long on hospitality but short on space. Topped by removable wooden trays with ceramic tile inserts, they also serve as good looking cocktail or side tables. Available in your choice of natural or dark stained oak, two sizes are in stock. The two-foot high rack (\$85) holds 12 bottles and the 26 inch (\$65) holds 16 bottles. Miner's of Bloomfield, 41 W. Long Lake, Bloomfield Hills, 644-6314.

Cinchers

Here's a terrific item that would enable you to take care of your child's graduation shopping list in one fell swoop. Called "Bag of Bulbs" (\$18), it's a striped paper bag that contains a group of colorful adjustable belts plus a gold lace belt that each girl like to have. Two packages are available. The first one has five, one inch belts in solid colors (red, navy, white, yellow and green). The second version consists of four striped belts, 1 1/2 inches wide and in solid colors (red, navy, white, yellow and green). Lee Specialty, 4022 W. Maple, Birmingham, 644-3444.



Baby's soon to be a brother...to somebody brand new. And we're ready for that very special event with our Saksweat® Basic Layette...filled with everything a mom could need for baby. Like snap-shirts and diapers, crib sheets and blankets, a bonnet and booties, a terry-soft coverall, gentle sleep-gowns — we could go on forever! Plus all those essentials for soothing and smoothing and general pampering. And when everything adds up to \$110, we'll pack it all inside a big layette basket (there's a chrome stand, too, at \$29) or a generous bathing tub. So, baby — welcome home! The Baby Boutique®

Saks Fifth Avenue

