

Suburban Life

Loraine McClish editor/477-5450



Thursday, March 19, 1987 O&B

(F)18

The total look

Fashion concept carried over from one business to another

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

A FARMINGTON HILLS woman closed up shop when her business, The Total Look, was in operation for only a few months to take a position with Mondri.

West Germany-based clothing manufacturer's first store in Michigan. Bidlofsky will be in charge of the total operation of Mondri's, scheduled to open April 1 in Somerset Mall.

"The concept of fashion is the same as mine," she said. "Mondri clothes are classic fashion forward. No fads. All quality. They are pieces I call investment buying. They all have to last."

Bidlofsky worked in Saks in Troy, then headed up FV1 (For Your Image) in Hudson's Northland before opening The Total Look, a wardrobe and shopping service.

"I'd had enough retail experience to know impulse buying when I saw it. I met enough women who had the proverbial closets full of clothes but nothing to wear to know that what I had to offer was needed. I know a lot of fashion-conscious women who hate shopping and become frustrated because they don't have the time to run all over town looking for the right scarf."

"The Total Look was a good idea. I had a good clientele. Whatever I did for my clients I will now do at Mondri's and everybody who works with me will all be carrying out my same approach to fashion," she said.

RENEE DOPULOS, a Southfield resident who met Bidlofsky when she was working in Saks, became a Total Look client "because she bothered to find out what I needed," Dopulos said.

On one occasion Bidlofsky told her customer to "take it off. That's not you."

"How many saleswomen have you ever heard say that?" Dopulos said. "How many saleswomen have you ever heard tell you not to buy it if you weren't totally satisfied when you walked out the door? I have gone back to her time and again and I think I'd go to Fillet if she got a job there."

"She has helped me with accessories and alterations. She helped me pack once. It seemed like I always was taking too many clothes, and for that trip I got away with carrying everything I needed in not much more than a carry-on."

"I wear support hose," Dopulos said. "I needed in too many colors but I have some now in vanilla."

'Whatever I did for my client I will now do for Mondri's and everybody who works with me will all be carrying out my same approach to fashion.'

— Sharon Bidlofsky

In, I have an alligator bag that I've had for many years and didn't want to give up — they are so expensive now — that wasn't being used. But I'm using it now."

Bidlofsky said her client's alligator bag was a good example of her ability to take a quality piece and incorporate it into a useful and usable part of an updated wardrobe.

"I'VE ALWAYS been successful as a salesperson, but I just have never been able to push something off on a customer that I knew was not right," Bidlofsky said.

"And I never would have taken this job at Mondri's if I didn't feel right about it. The clothes speak for themselves. They do not need any selling or any pushing. This is not a shop with a lot of clothing from a lot of different designers. All of the clothes are designed and manufactured by Mondri's with the Mondri label."

"I expect to run the store exactly the way I ran my own business. I have client profiles on lifestyle, good and bad colors, fabric preferences, even fragrances," she said.

"When I opened The Total Look I even had requests to shop for gifts — and I still have. March is going to be one busy month filling the last of the Total Look orders and getting things ready for the grand opening."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Sharon Bidlofsky (at left) and her client, Renee Dopulos, agree on the accessories that are put together to make up an outfit for early spring.

Feminist takes AAUW's 'Enrichment' award

Marian McCracken, a Farmington resident and president of Michigan Conference of National Organization for Women (NOW), is the recipient of this year's "Women's Community Enrichment Award." The award is given annually to one who has enriched the lives of women in the community by Farmington Branch of American Association of University Women.

McCracken was born on the day women received the right to vote and has often joked that it was prophetic that she become a feminist. She has worked in the women's movement since its inception.

Awards are not new to McCracken.

She was honored twice by Michigan Education Association Women's Caucus. First, with its Human Relations Award and then with the Mureen Wyatt Feminist Award. She received the "Feminist of the

Year Award" from Detroit NOW in 1983, the "Role Model Award" from Michigan Federation of Older Women's League (OWL) in 1984, and a special tribute from Governor James Blanchard and the Michigan House of Representatives in 1986.

"She has worked tirelessly and energetically to advance the position of women economically, politically and professionally for many years," said JoAnn Cline, speaking in behalf of the AAUW. "She did this while maintaining a household and being its sole wage-earner because of her husband's illness. She is very deserving of this award."

McCracken is the mother of two adult children and has lived in Farmington for 32 years.

She graduated from Wayne State University in 1942 with a bachelor's degree in fine arts and received her

master's degree from that university in 1974.

She retired from Farmington Public Schools in 1982, after teaching here for 23 years.

During her tenure she was appointed teacher-member of Farmington Schools Title IX Committee. Later the Farmington School Board of Education appointed her to the Citizens Advisory Committee for the explicit reason of preparing a Human Relations curriculum.

Along the way she held a variety of offices in the National Education Association (NEA) on local, state and national levels, and in 1978 was elected president of Michigan Education Association Women's Caucus.

McCracken was an active member of the local AAUW from 1955-61. She worked in the Coalition for Peaceful Integration to prepare for possible cross-district busing.

She is a long-time member of

Farmington Democratic Club and presently sits on the executive board of Oakland County Democratic Party and the 18th District Executive Committee.

For three years she served on the board of Farmington Chapter OWL.

HER INTERESTS have always leaned toward activities relating to human rights as well as women's rights.

She has been a member of National Board of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Metro Area Gay Panthers, Detroit Area Nuclear Weapons Freeze, Oakland County NOW and Michigan Abortion Rights Action League.

In addition to presently serving as president of Michigan NOW, she is a board member of Michigan Women's Studies Association and a chairperson for Michigan Women's Assembly.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Marian McCracken, who has worked in the women's movement since its inception, was honored this month for that work by Farmington Branch American Association of University Women.

Ministers take counsel

Stress, burnout are non-denominational

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

BEING GOD'S intermediary can take its toll after awhile.

Members of the clergy, to whom people often turn during crises such as a death, can feel the effects. Stress and burnout may be non-denominational, but they can dominate those in ministry.

Dr. John Canine, a grief counselor, gave a few tips on dealing with pastoral burnout to a cross section of clergy members at a seminar last week at Madonna College.

The seminar, presented by R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, focused on the grief process, which clergy members deal with often.

Canine (pronounced Ka-neen) discussed the natural phases of bereavement and what to expect over a period of time. More importantly, he gave those in attendance advice on how not to make others' grief their own.

And who better to understand than

a professional grief counselor, who has worked as a chapel coordinator.

"THIS HITS home for me," said Canine, who is director of Maximum Living counseling center in Birmingham. "Many times I have left the office or the funeral home and have said, 'Why am I doing this? To listen to one death story after the other.'"

Members of the clergy know the answer to that.

"You're a pastor, and you love people," said the Rev. Roy Forsyth of Newburg United Methodist Church in Livonia. "You do get emotionally involved."

Like Canine, clergy members are expected to be empathetic at all times.

But in doing such, Canine recommends ministers know their own limitations. And when feeling overburdened, he suggests they talk to someone — preferably someone in the same line of work.

IF POSSIBLE, he added, hire a

professional grief counselor, who has worked as a chapel coordinator.

In addition to presently serving as president of Michigan NOW, she is a board member of Michigan Women's Studies Association and a chairperson for Michigan Women's Assembly.

Usually, they'll officiate at the funeral of a loved one. Later, they'll often deal with questions regarding the sense of betrayal people feel toward the person who died or toward God.

In some cases, they might even perform the wedding ceremony if a spouse remarries. To go the grief course with one person can be taxing enough, let alone an entire congregation.

CANINE SAID ministers should tell the person they're counseling they feel stressed and might have a hard time listening.

That can be difficult. "At times I feel stressed. I try not to let it show," said Sister Conso Lata, who works at the (Angela) Hospice in Livonia. "I work on it often."

"I'm looking for a way of being able to tell people I'm drained and to say, 'Forgive me if I'm not with you,'" said Dr. James Tuttle of Clarenceville United Methodist Church in Livonia. "That's very tough for me to do."

Tuttle said understanding someone else's grief isn't as stressful as the "flip-flop" of emotions he deals with. For example, it's not uncommon for him to officiate at a funeral after he's performed a wedding.

"We have to learn to switch," said the Rev. Ed Baldwin of St. Michael Catholic Church in Livonia. "It's like

Please turn to Page 2.



Grief counselor Dr. John Canine talks to his audience on coping with ministerial burnout.