

In spring, stores are full of new wares

Just as Spring bursts forth with new life, area stores are brimming with new wares, and shoppers with spring fever are likely to find something new around the corner.

Spring is the perfect time to stroll in downtown and Old Town Traverse City. The shopping district is growing from one end to the other - from the gaslight district on the east to the new West Front Market near Division.

Two bright new awnings attract shoppers' attention at the eastern end of Front Street. Newly relocated, Plantasia features lush, large green plants, flowering plants, cut flowers, baskets and unique arrangements. Next door, also is the relocated Higher Self Bookstore with tapes and books for the spiritually inclined sojourners.

Across the street Wild Birds LTD. has everything for the birdlover and his feathered friends. Next door is a new gallery of gifts at Belstone. Selkirks, on the corner, has everything from local cherry products to fresh produce and baked goods. Shoppers can even take home some hanging baskets of flowers or annuals for the spring planting season.

With the approach of Mother's Day (May 10), and Father's Day (June 21), shoppers will be able to take advantage of warm days to browse among the many specialty shops featuring fashions, jewelry and gifts. Good things come in small packages and shops such as Soaps and Scents, the Nutcracker and the Traverse Country Store offer an array of diverse delights.

Recreational enthusiasts restocking their

gear for spring camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities will find the latest equipment and garb in downtown's sporting goods shops, such as the Bahnhof, Bilmar's, Back Country Outfitters and Gauthiers and the new Wilhelms on State Street.

The end of the school year often coincides with the end of the sizes that fit your student. Downtown department stores - Millikens and Penneys - have large children's departments. Bennetons, a women's sportswear shop, carries up-scale fashions for kids and the Carter's Factory Outlet carries a wide variety of styles for infants through size 14. 1st Avenue for Fashionable Children opened its doors this spring, joining Old Town Kid Stuff on Union Street in featuring children's fashions.

If spring cleaning has prompted a desire for a new look around the house, Wilson's Furniture stocks three floors of home and outdoor furnishings. Ernie's Softwares, also on Union Street, features all-cotton futons and furniture. Decorative home accessories can be found at a host of other downtown stores, from Harpers to Country Clutter.

For springtime weather a colorful wind-sock or kite will enhance your pleasure in the warm breezes. Whimsicality, Toy Harbor, the Mackinac Kite Shop and Games Imported offer a wide selection.

If springtime strolling whets your appetite, downtown dining offers some of the finest in the area.

Outdoor dining in warmer weather is possible at the Bean Pot and Big Boy,

while lunch in Millikens Tea Room is fun for people watching, as diners look over the balcony railing to the main level below. You can eat ethnic downtown from pasta at Sydney's to Greek at the U&I, or Irish at Conley's Irish Inn.

For a change of pace shoppers can make up a picnic from selections at Fogarelli's or Mary's Kitchen Port and head down to the Open Space or Clinch Park Zoo. If shopping has left little time for planning a meal, Jean Kay's Pasties have a selection of hot or partially cooked pasties to take home. Their variety of cheesecake would make a nice accompaniment for dessert.

Spring showers may bring bring flowers, but the rain never bothers the shoppers enjoying spring indoors at the Cherryland Mall. Flowering plants around the fountain in the center of the mall bring the outdoors in, and children delight in tossing coins into the water where they are gathered up monthly and donated to local charities.

With hours from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday noon to 5 p.m., shoppers have ample time to wander through the 50-plus stores, including Pranges, Sears and K-Mart.

Just as signs of spring are in evidence outside, the signs in the mall announce the opening of several new stores. Expected in the near future are Winkleman's, a ladies clothing store; Today's Trends, featuring upbeat, trendy clothing for young men and women; and Mr. Bulky, a gourmet, bulk food store. Other stores that opened within the year include Flash 'N Fashion, a jew-

elry and accessories shop, Claire's Boutique and the Pretzel Peddler.

Dining is always just a few steps away, and Palate Pleasers, Main Street Sampler and Harry's Coney Island are good choices for either lunch or dinner. From fudge at Doug Murdick's to frozen custard, hot pretzel's, or cookies baked on site at the Cookie Bin, snacks are available whenever shoppers want to take a break.

The mall schedules special events monthly throughout the year and following is a list of events planned for the spring months:

May
16 - Kids Know: program display and information
22-25 - Blossom Days Arts and Crafts Show
June
6-7 - Coin and card Show
13-20 - Father's Day Putting Contest
27-28 - Doll Show

Logan's Landing, picturesquely situated on the banks of the Boardman River where it flows into Boardman Lake, is noted for its excellent variety of factory outlet shops as well as its beautiful location. Ducks, swans and other waterfowl are as at home as the shoppers strolling back and forth across the covered bridge that connects the two river banks of stores.

Kids Port, Manhattan Factory Outlet and Clothworks offer quality brand name clothing at bargain prices.

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