

Suburban Life

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Thursday, February 16, 1989 O&E

(F)1B



Dick Roth and his 7-year-old daughter, Katie, dance at the Father-Daughter Dance Friday.



Two-year-old Jamie and dad, Doug Anderson, take time to pose for a picture. Doug is a Farmington Hills detective.

Hearts and roses

Daddies and daughters dance to the beat

By Susan Buck
staff writer

THE MEN each arrived alone with a younger woman, and their wives didn't mind a bit.

More than 850 fathers and daughters arrived Friday night at the fourth annual Farmington Hills Daddy/Daughter Dance held at Mercy Center.

Each year, the event brings out more and more doting fathers and well-loved daughters. Last year's event drew 650, according to Pam Hayes, the recreation programmer who organized the celebration.

"We sent out invitations to every girl in the Farmington school district in grades kindergarten

The dance floors were filled with fathers who gyrated without missing a beat . . .

through five," Hayes said.

BEFORE 7 P.M., couples began to queue at the door as fathers waited at the coat check, making small talk with other dads in line. Daughters stood politely in dresses bedecked with bows and ribbons, glitter and glitz. Their eyes scanned the crowd for friends.

A handful of girls wore floor-length gowns.

The fee of \$10 a couple and \$5 for each additional daughter paid for a boutonniere for dad, a corsage for daughter, photos of dad and his daughter and refreshments.

Three separate rooms, each with its own disc jockey, were reserved for the event.

THE DANCE floors were filled with fathers who gyrated without missing a beat to pop tunes like

"My Girl," "Lady in Red," "Cherish," "Faith" and "Walk Like An Egyptian."

Round and round they spun their daughters, who giggled with glee. Few wallflowers were in sight.

And you thought your husbands couldn't dance to those fast songs, didn't you, moms?

Doug Anderson, a Farmington Hills police detective, took a break from dancing with his only daughter, Jamie, 2½, who could be barely seen above the table top. With a punch-stained mouth, she munched on a cookie.

"Dance" was her one-word reply, when asked what she enjoyed most about the event. She answered shy-

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photos by THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer

Elena Spencer, 8, being spun around by her dad, Craig, recently moved to Farmington Hills. The family tries to take part in every community activity, like Friday's dance.

Preparing for pageants with style, flair

By Debbie L. Sklar
special writer

CONTRARY to belief, it takes more than a pretty smile and an hourglass figure to make those stiff-nosed judges stand up and take notice at a beauty pageant.

At Couture Boutique in Farmington Hills, owner and dress designer Mouheba Jordan says she's an expert when it comes to preparing a woman for a beauty pageant.

"I can tell a girl exactly what she needs," said Jordan pointing to a rack of sequined gowns. "I can show her how to walk, talk, choose the right bathing suit, and of course, design a gown proportioned to her figure. Anyone can sell you a gown, but not everyone can sell you one that's going to fit."

Jordan offers a few pointers for those who are contemplating entering a contest.

"It's nice to look sexy to a certain extent, but I think she should concentrate on looking sophisticated and complete," she said. "On stage she shouldn't be selling sex, but setting an example as a young lady who deserves to be crowned."

JORDAN SAYS she can't guarantee high points in other categories. But when it comes to judging the evening gowns, "I know she's going to get the most possible points she can, because we've fitted her perfectly in color as well as style and size," she said.

The small boutique is filled with a bevy of glamorous evening gowns in every color and style of the rainbow, loungewear, pageant-style bathing suits and dazzling costume jewelry. Sizes range from 4 to 26.

Known throughout Michigan as the "Pageant Lady," Jordan said she outfit women for just about every pageant in the state. "They also come from Indiana and Ohio," she said.

A Lebanon native, Jordan has lived in the United States for 27 years. She has been in business for herself six years.

"When I came here I really wanted to be successful," she said. "I wanted to make our people back at home proud of me and my family."

WHILE TRYING to get a handle on the English language and raising a family, Jordan still practiced the trade she brought with her from Lebanon — sewing.

"Even at my young age, I always managed to make scarfs or monogram something for someone," she said. "I always felt I had an eye or a gift for sewing."

After three years of working out of her home, where she monogrammed everything from sheets to physicians' lab coats for Henry Ford Hospital, she decided to open her own business.

"It just got to be too hectic working out of my home," she recalled. "I knew that it was time to move out."

Jordan says she opened her first shop in Livonia six years ago, but stayed only nine months. "I didn't go into the business to make money, but to give my children the opportunity to work as well as watch them grow before my eyes," she said.

AS BUSINESS began to prosper in Livonia, Jordan decided to move out to Farmington Hills because she felt there was a market for dress designs that she was creating in her spare time.

Since 1983, Couture Boutique has specialized in "making every woman look her absolute best."

"This isn't your regular store where you buy a dress and walk out with it," she explained. "It's a shop that custom designs each and every garment to fit that individual woman's personality."

"We can take a plain dress jazz it



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Mouheba Jordan, owner of Couture Boutique in Farmington Hills, shows a dress that will be modified for a customer. Cuffs will be added to improve cleavage, the waist will be fitted and

shoulder pads will be added. The original dress was designed by Alyce Hamm of France.

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