

# Sharpen your image when gift giving

By Helen Diane Vincent  
special writer

**W**HEN YOUR gift list looks the same year after year — and even you become bored with it — then it's time to venture into The Somerset Collection (formerly Somerset Mall) or Twelve Oaks Mall, where you'll find a Sharper Image store.

Nowhere else, it seems, will you find such a wide assortment of unusual, yet well-designed items for recreation, travel, relaxation or fitness.

As Pattie Roschek, manager of the Sharper Image at Somerset contends, "Although we keep many items from year to year, we are also changing our line constantly in both our catalogues and retail operations to be on the cutting edge of quality items that are unique."

Thinking of how you might delight and surprise the grandfather in the family who always expects to get a conservative shirt and tie, your eye is drawn to the American Pinball machine with its authentic 1954 colors and graphics. There's never a lack of youngsters around the machine on display in the store, so you figure that not only will grandfather have fun with it when no one's looking, but he'll be amused playing the game with his grandchildren. The miniaturized pinball costs \$99.95.



BILL HANSEN

This parrot-like toucan at Sharper Image is sewn of soft, cuddly plush (\$99.95).

**NEXT ON** the list is the mother who may need a reminder that she's as sexy and glamorous as the day she was married. Instead of a sensible and predictable gift, impress her with a black bejeweled sweater, its design based on a collage by Soho artist Winnie Borg. Each limited-edition fine art sweater is priced at \$299.95 and bears the artist's signature. If that

doesn't fit your budget, then the black lace body stocking from Guy Laroche of Paris certainly will. It's \$49.95.

The children on your list who might yawn at the thought of receiving just another toy could be engrossed by the GeoSafari electronic game that makes map lessons easy to understand while being challenged and entertained.

The map lessons ask hundreds of questions of the players about states, countries, capital cities, continents and even the solar system. The built-in computer keeps score, signals correct and incorrect answers, musically, and supplies the answer if you're stumped. GeoSafari costs \$99.95. The thought of a child getting smarter while playing a game is very appealing — which might account for the fact GeoSafari is a winner of the 1989 Parents Choice Gold Award.

**FOR THAT** overly serious older brother or sister who feel so responsible for everyone in the family, the parrot-like toucan sewn of soft, cuddly plush will surely elicit a smile. This exotic species, with the help of four AA batteries, repeats anything you have to say. And as he talks, his wings flap and his beak moves. The talking toucan, perched on a stand, is 18 inches long with a 17-inch wingspan. It's priced at \$99.95.

Worriers or stressed-out relatives on your list might also appreciate China's

700-year old antidote to stress. Since the Ming Dynasty, the Chinese have relaxed and meditated by rolling smooth metal balls in their hands.

Now, the Sharper Image is packaging a set of two, beautifully ornamented enamel balls in a wooden box covered with red silk brocade for \$24.95. These balls ring with a mysterious inner chime when handled and look elegant when left anywhere around the house.

Your list isn't exhausted until the husband — even if it's you — receives the gift that's out of the ordinary. Sharper Image has many choices for men of all ages and interests, but the most unexpected might be the telephone integrated into a scale model of the Kawasaki motorcycle. A flashing headlight and beep-beep horn announce your calls. Only a cord reveals this accurate model is actually a telephone that has tone/pulse dialing and last number redialing, among other features. It's \$59.95.

There's a lot more at the Sharper Image for all the others on your list, from the practical Lightmaster that activates lights the moment infrared sensors detect body heat, to the zany version of an alarm clock in the shape of a chicken wearing sunglasses who clucks, "Wow-w-w! Yea-a-h! Hey, baby, wake up! Come and dance with me. Wow-w-w! Yea-a-h!" when the alarm is activated. This cool bedside bird is \$64.95.

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