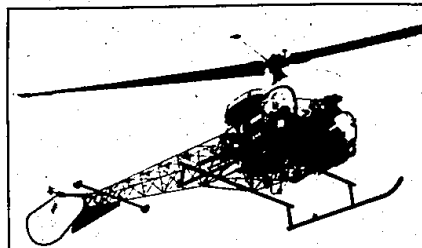




The Salvation Army Band performs for the crowd in downtown Farmington Saturday. Pictured are volunteers Eric Bicknell

(left) and Jim Swan, Capt. Homer Smith and volunteer Bob Taylor.



Even Santa is moving into the 21st century. In lieu of reindeer, his trip to downtown Farmington Saturday was via helicopter. Saturday's visit by St. Nick and other festivities downtown were the kickoff of the holiday season.

Santa arrives

City cheers as jolly old elf flies in — by helicopter

HAVE FARMINGTON-AREA kids been naughty or nice this year? Only the jolly old elf could say for sure.

More than 500 kids and their parents crowded the Downtown Farmington Center parking lot Saturday to cheer the arrival of Santa Claus. He traveled to Farmington by helicopter, then spent the day gathering wish lists which he took back to the North Pole.

St. Nick's arrival launched a day full of activities in downtown Farmington and the annual holiday shopping season. Activities included ornament-making at the Farmington Community Library, free showings of the movie "Home Alone" at the Civic Theatre, tours of the Farmington Historical Museum and trolley rides throughout downtown. Merchants hosted holiday sales, and a number also had giveaways for visitors.

Members of the Farmington Players theater group dressed in Dickens-period costume and entertained

throughout downtown.

"It really did go very well," said Wendy Strip-Sittsamer, executive director for the Downtown Development Authority. The DDA co-hosted the holiday festivities with the Downtown Farmington Business Association. "It definitely drew a bigger crowd" than last year, she said.

Three businesses won the holiday window-decorating contest sponsored by the Farmington Observer-Warren's Corners won for Best Use of Merchandise, Focal Point photography studio won for Best Overall Design and Why USA All-American Properties won for the Most Creative Display. Winners got plaques and \$500 worth of advertising in the Observer.

Overall, Strip-Sittsamer called the day a success, and believes such events help draw people downtown at other times. "The question is: Did they have a good time in downtown Farmington?" she said. "I don't think all the results can be measured that day. People might see a store they like and come back."



The crowd of more than 500 waves and smiles to Santa, who hovers above in his helicopter, waiting to land in the Downtown Farmington Center in Farmington Saturday morning.

Hills shops look to future as mall plans for changes

By Tim Smith
staff writer

West Bloomfield Township's lagging retail business stands to soon get a shot in the arm — in the form of shops moving from Loehmann's Hunter Square Shopping Center in Farmington Hills, where they faced eviction.

At least one of the shops evicted from the mall — Mariomax Salon — has already committed itself to moving to Crosswinds Mall, at Orchard Lake Road and Lone Pine. Another six are discussing the same move, while others are planning to move to nearby Orchard Mall.

The shops will move no later than March 1, 1992 from the Orchard Lake-14 Mile plaza. Several tenants said they believe their former stores will be bulldozed to make room for a parking lot and discount department store.

A spokesman for new owners Sherr Development Corp., vice president Stuart Sherr, couldn't discuss specifics about the project other than to say negotiations are taking place with potential tenants.

Meanwhile, that some soon-to-be-displaced stores are considering a move to Crosswinds is good news to spokesman Bob Goldman, of Farmington Hills-based Lauree Ltd. Crosswinds has had several storefronts open in recent years.

"I AM NEGOTIATING seriously with quite a few of them," Goldman

'Crosswinds Mall is a beautiful mall and it's time for business to pick up.'

— Mario Bitonti
Mariomax Salon

said early Tuesday afternoon. "I'd be very excited about the opportunity to bring them into the (Crosswinds) mall. The ones we're negotiating with absolutely are ones we're looking at to complement those (stores) existing in the center."

Later Tuesday, the first official move was confirmed when Mariomax owner Mario Bitonti signed a lease with Crosswinds. He'll move his salon in February.

"Crosswinds Mall is a beautiful mall and it's time for business to pick up," Bitonti said.

Word that stores are planning moves into Crosswinds was welcomed by at least one current tenant, Ed Supowit of Mish-A-Gosh Cards and Collectibles.

"The more the merrier," Supowit said. "People bring people."

ACCORDING TO Bitonti, he received word in November from Sherr Development Corp. that Mariomax Salon and most of the stores in the Farmington Hills center had to move by March 1, 1992. Sherr Development had just pur-

chased the mall from Farbmam, Stein & Co., a company temporarily managing it for a Denver bank.

The latter took over the center in December 1990, after poor business forced the previous owner (Schostak Brothers & Co. of Southfield) to lose it. Robert Sher, Schostak executive vice president, could not be reached for comment.

One store probably not facing a move is Loehmann's, said spokeswoman Ruth Ann Lapham.

"New owners bought it, they're planning on redesigning the mall," Lapham said, noting she has heard about demolition plans.

Another business, Winkelman's, is apparently planning to move to a new site located at either end of Loehmann's. "We are staying and looking for expansion," said store manager Wendy Coussens.

BITONTI SAID he thinks the eviction of approximately 20 shops in favor of a discount department store such as Target or Marshalls would change the flavor of the retail business at Loehmann's-Hunter Square.

"They're going to try to attract new people," he said.

Stuart Sherr said he couldn't discuss whether a retail store such as Target is being lured for the redesigned center or if the existing shops will be torn down.

"Plans are too indefinite to give you an answer," he said. "We're pursuing a number of ways to make this project economically viable."

Hospital names orthopedics chief



Dr. Robert Mandell

Botsford General Hospital recently appointed orthopedic surgeon Dr. Robert Mandell as chairman of its Department of Orthopedics.

Mandell will direct the operation of the department and serve as the department's representative to the hospital's Executive Committee.

Mandell has been affiliated with Botsford since 1971. He is a graduate of Springfield College in Massachusetts and completed his internship at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital.

In addition to holding a private practice in Farmington Hills, he is also an active member of the community. For the 11 years he has served as the team physician for Farmington Harrison High School. In 1987, he was elected as an honorary member to the Michigan High School Coaches Hall of Fame. Man-

dell also presently serves, by governor's appointment, on the Advisory Committee of the State of Michigan Workers Compensation Bureau.

MANDELL IS certified in orthopedic surgery by the American Osteopathic Board of Orthopedic Surgery. He is president-elect of the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics and an associate clinical professor at Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Mandell resides with his family in Farmington Hills.

Botsford General Hospital is a 336-bed osteopathic teaching hospital serving Farmington Hills and surrounding communities. The hospital is affiliated with Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

CAMELS HAIR

BLAZER

\$240

An excellent gift,
the classic sport coat in camel
or black. Two-button styling,
flap pockets, center vent,
soft shoulders. An authentic
thoroughbred he'll enjoy
wearing. Sizes 36-48 regular,
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