

# SUBURBAN LIFE

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 1992

## SOCIAL EYES



DENISE LUCAS

## Parkinson group hosts benefit party

To enlighten Social Eyes with information on upcoming events involving Greater West Bloomfield/Lakes, Farmington and Southfield area residents, call 442-2339 or mail information to Denise Lucas at The Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

**M**ore than 180 guests and supporters of the Michigan Parkinson Foundation gathered at the majestic Grosse Pointe Shores lake-side mansion of Marlene and John Boll for the Parkinson's annual Garden Party and Auction.

The fund-raiser, co-chaired by Claire Chambers and Barbara Wrigley, brought in east and west philanthropists David and Doreen Hermelin, Betty Gerlach, Ron Lamparter, Mary Anne and Art Van Elalander (recently named "Outstanding Philanthropist of the Year") and Bill Davidson to support this cause.

Last year's Parkinson prez Ken Meade, owner of Lexus of Lakeside (and more), was spotted looking good and 30 pounds lighter, escorting West Bloomfield Deborah Fisher to the event.

Seated with Dr. Don and Dale Austin was spirited Helen Lerner. "I'm the best thing that's happened to West Bloomfield," Lerner teased.

Sandy and Sheldon Schreier of Southfield unfortunately left before Palace owner David Hermelin started "Hermelin's Humorous Auction Antics." However, the couple savored the culinary delights of the Michigan Culinary Olympics Team that will compete in Frankfurt, Germany, Oct. 11-18. Three members of the culinary staff of Schoolcraft College, along with two Schoolcraft students, will be among 10,000 chefs from around the world. Our Michigan team is looking for local sponsors to help it reach its golden goal. Call Chef Gabriel at Schoolcraft College for more information.

Based on the outstanding menu served up at the Bolls, these chefs have a chance. Four food stations were set up along the perimeter of the big top. Pasta, seafood, poultry and desert stations served up angel hair pasta with smoked salmon, fresh dill, tomato concasse, asparagus and artichokes, Louisiana crab cakes, southwestern chicken scallopini on roast red pepper sauce and fresh pear strudel with dried cherries.

Interior designer Sandra Baer dropped in late after attending the Fashion Group's fashion show at The Community House in Birmingham. "Five Michigan designers showed their designs," remarked Baer, "and it was on par with Paris." Fashion Group's next event will be a benefit luncheon with designer George Simon presented by Jacobson's on Sept. 10 at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham.

## What About Abboud?

Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Joseph Abboud? Not. American clothing designer Joseph Abboud may not be in the "big boys" league yet, but with his philosophical view of fashion, an affinity to a color palette of the earth, international marketing skills and, quite frankly, being a Hollywood-like bunk, I predict Joseph Abboud will be a household word (worldwide) before the year 2000.

Working under the labels of Joseph Abboud Menswear, J.A. Apparel, Joseph Abboud Womenswear Collection, Joseph Abboud Men's Accessory Collection, JAIL (a line of tailored clothing for the young professional), Joseph Abboud fragrances for men and women, J.O.E. (an acronym for Just One Earth) sportswear line and shops, his company has grown by leaps and bounds since he set up shop in 1986.

This month Saks Fifth Avenue opened nine J.O.E. shops across the country.

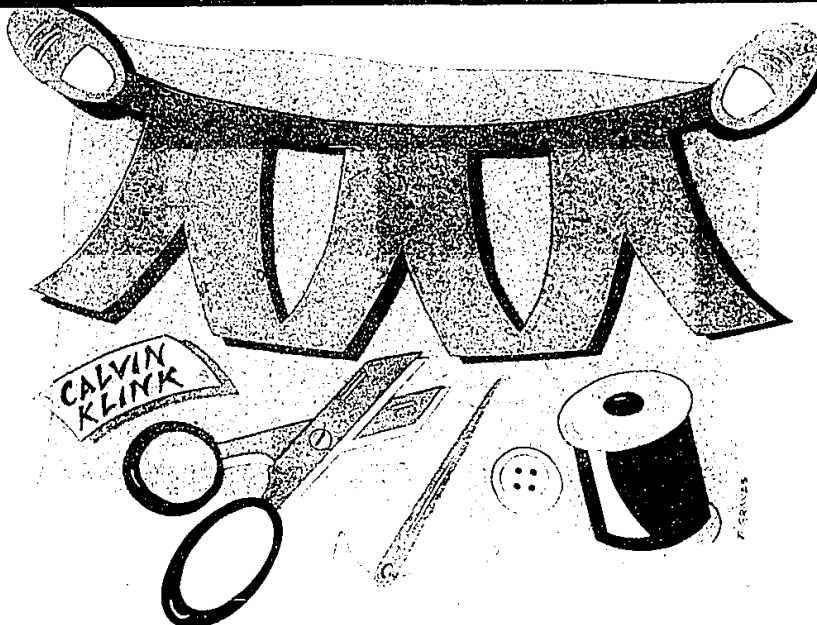
"J.O.E. is rugged, comfortable sportswear that's as familiar as an old friend," explains Abboud.

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DENISE LUCAS

Benefit goes: Doreen Hermelin (left), Sandy Schreier and Sherwin Schreier enjoy the outdoor dinner.



## Bogus goods or bodacious bargains?

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

**I**f it doesn't have the name is it the same?

Well, in some cases yes, according to bargain shopping guru and former Southfield resident Sue Goldstein. The well-known author of consumer guidebooks called "The Underground Shopper" sees knockoffs of name brand products as one of the latest rages in an increasingly competitive retail market.

Clothing, watches and handbags may look, feel and even smell like a Gautier, a Rolex or a Judith Leiber — but they're not the real thing. They also don't put the sting on the wallet.

"To the naked eye . . . a lot of people don't know the difference," said Goldstein, who has appeared on numerous TV talk shows. "That is my mission, to at least make you aware that there are copies out there and sometimes the quality is just as good."

In reality, such retail outlets as The Gap and the Limited for years have taken ideas from clothing designers and, in turn, produced their own versions for sale. Goldstein contends some of the makers of designer names do less ex-

pensive knockoffs of their own products in order to tap into the larger segment of cost-conscious shoppers.

## Growing industry

The proliferation of companies specializing in facsimiles of well-known items continues, Goldstein said.

A perfume manufacturer in New York makes a fragrance on the claim it's similar to Giorgio. A company in San Antonio produces knockoff jewelry based on designs from Tiffany's and Cartier.

Classic Handbags & Imports in Houston sells imitations of Judith Leiber and Chanel handbags out of hotels around the country. (A showing of J.Tiras Classic Handbags will take place 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15, in the Casa Lewis Room at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Southfield. Goldstein will be on hand to sign copies of

her books.)

Not surprisingly, duplicators of name brand products raise the hackles of their originators, who reportedly watch closely for any copyright infringements. Some experts don't see knockoffs as a looming threat to designer name products.

"Nevertheless, there will always be people who buy brand names," said Robert Shultz, an instructor in fashion buying and merchandising at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. "We'll all survive in the end."

But how does the consumer benefit from knockoffs?

The imitations may be less expensive, but as to whether they are of the same quality varies.

Fashion!Dallas, a section in the Dallas Morning News, did an informal comparison of knockoff handbags to the Chanel and Judith Leiber models. Flaws such as weak supports, lower grade leather in the interior and inferior

detailing were cited in the wannabes.

The disparity in price tells a different story, though. The Judith Leiber bag made in the United States went for \$890; its replica made in Hong Kong for \$275.

## Quality issue

"Like anything else, it's up to the consumer to discern the quality," Goldstein said.

In the case of some clothing items, the quality is the same. Obviously, a less-expensive knockoff of a handmade wool sweater is more likely to be machine sewn and be made of acrylic. But it's likely to be as well-constructed.

"Why pay for someone's laborious efforts?" Goldstein asks.

The bottomline for the quality of clothing or furniture is whether it feels comfortable. Shultz recommends shoppers check the item thoroughly, scanning the stitching or checking how it's constructed.

"The consumer is not so dumb today," he said. "Before you might have been able to pull off selling them shlock, but not today."

## Travel bug leaves author feeling giddy

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Doris Scharfenberg's bug started as most afflictions do — with a fever.

"I have a problem with hay fever in the summer," said Scharfenberg, who is a Farmington Hills resident. "I'd pack up the kids in the station wagon and we'd head up north."

Little known to her, Scharfenberg's pollen-induced sneezes would blossom into a full-fledged bout of laboring as a travel writer. The road to recovery is a long one, dotted with several wondrous discoveries.

At 67, Scharfenberg is hardly searching for a cure. Those weekend getaways up north inspired her to write, which has since evolved into a stream of published magazine articles and a handful of books on this state's bountiful delights.

"The Long Blue Edge of Summer: A Guide to the Shores of Michigan" (Momentum Books) and "Country Roads of Michigan" (Country Road Press) have been released this year.

## Double read

Two books in one summer? The graduate of Hillsdale College and mother to four grown children is giddy.

Some people find their avocation straight out of college, dripping with idealism, ambition and inexperience. Then there's someone like Scharfenberg, who waited until she was nearly 50 to discover her niche.

See TRAVEL, 2C



Travel bug: Doris Scharfenberg, 67, of Farmington Hills didn't start writing about her travels until she was nearly 50. This summer is the high point of her late-blossoming career, putting two books, "The Long Blue Edge of Summer" and "Michigan Country Roads," on the market