

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

(79A)

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

Host your next party outdoors

Finally, we can sweep off the deck, scrub the barbecue grill and ready the pool for summer.

Warm, sunny days and moonlit evenings beckon us outside, and what better way to entertain than a casual, fuss-free get-together on the patio?

With the help of some local party-planning experts, I've thrown together four festive outdoor parties. Just add your favorite friends for a summer soiree to remember.

Celebrate Memorial Day Southwest-style. Let's start with the invitations. Penn & Paige in downtown Rochester offers a unique personalized invitation service called The Isabelle Collection. Isabelle is a computer that lets you style your own invite and create messages on an exclusive selection of designer cards.

Hot Pepper is a good choice for our party (75 each). It features a border of red, yellow and green chili peppers.

Now, what to serve? I turned to Bonnie Fishman, the celebrated chef and owner of Bonnie's Patisserie, 29229 Northwest Highway, Southfield. She shared her Tex Mex menu ideas.

"For summer parties, I usually start with a grilled item," says Bonnie.

She suggests Splay Beef Tenderloin, rubbed with a savory cajun spice mixture. Accompany the meat with a cold poached salmon dressed in a mango/papaya salsa. Black bean and corn salad with fresh lime juice complements the entree, as do mini corn muffins and shrimp Cuernavaca in a piquant tomato sauce served atop rice. For a cool, refreshing dessert, consider a citron tart.

Barbie turns 35 in style

■ Happy 35th Birthday, Barbie! You've still got it after all these years! According to Kaybee Toy stores, you're their bestselling category, season after season.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Like all legends, Barbie The Doll, is no stranger to controversy.

Girls either love to play Barbie, or they don't.

Barbie is a harmless hunk of plastic, or Barbie is a tool of oppression that forces young women to measure their worth in terms of physical beauty and material possessions.

On her 35th birthday, Barbie has heard it all. But she holds her pretty little plastic head high, leading sales in the toy industry, year after year.

"Playing Barbie dolls never harmed me," laughed Kim Higginbottom of Farmington Hills, shopping for Barbie at Kaybee Toys at Twelve Oaks Mall. "I loved playing Barbies when I was growing up and now my daughter, Claire, 4, loves her Barbies. Even Scott here, 2, likes to play with Barbie."

"You can change her outfits and send her off on adventures. My only complaint is that the quality of Barbie has changed through the years. My Barbie's clothes had real metal zippers and plastic buttons. Now her clothes have Velcro closures and the material isn't that good."

Faith O'Keefe, spokeswoman for Kaybee Toys based in Pittsfield, Mass., said Kaybee stores are concept shops for Barbie, locating all Barbie merchandise in a section near the front of the store because customers demand it.

"She's just the most popular, bestselling item we carry," O'Keefe

See BARBIE, 10A



JIM JACOBFIELD/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

'60s meet the '90s: Barbie and Ken, circa 1965, (left) meet the new Hollywood Hair Barbie and her very '90s boyfriend, Hollywood Hair Ken. The question of why Ken's hair is painted on while Barbie gets the more life-like thing continues to stump a new generation.

Fun facts about Barbie

- Ruth and Elliot Handler founded Mattel Creations in 1945. In 1959, Ruth created Barbie, so girls like her elementary school-age daughter, Barbara, could play out future roles in high school and beyond from the safe distance of childhood.
- More than 800 million dolls have been sold since 1959. Placed head-to-toe, these dolls would circle the Earth more than six times.
- In 1959, the Barbie franchise produced \$1 million. By 1992, that figure jumps to \$1 billion.
- Barbie is the 19th best-known brand name in the world.
- The original Barbie cost \$3 in 1959; today the value of an original Barbie doll in mint condition is \$4,500.
- 351,000 Barbie dolls were sold in 1959.
- 15,000 readers subscribe to "Barbie Bazaar" magazine.
- Barbie was placed inside the bi-centennial time capsule sealed in 1976. It will be discovered in the tri-centennial year 2076, the favorite doll of this century.
- Barbie gets 120 new fashion designs annually.
- Barbie has had over 600 professional makeovers.
- The typical American girl between ages 3 and 10, owns an average of 8 Barbie dolls. (That's seven in Italy, and five in Germany and France.)
- The bestselling Barbie was Totally Hair Barbie, introduced in 1992. She sold more than 10 million units, earning worldwide sales of \$100 million.



What a doll: The 35th Anniversary Barbie is the first-ever, special-edition vinyl reproduction of the original 1959 Barbie doll, authentic in every detail. Call Mattel: 1 (800) 524-TOYS.

Roughing It

Now that we've whet your appetite, how can you spice up your patio? Simply Squares of Burlap cover the tables. Gather the corners in raffia bows and clusters of small chili peppers. Then head to the closest Pier 1 Imports for colorful chili pepper placemats (\$2.19) and napkins (\$2.99) cactus candleholders (\$4.79) and bamboo torches (\$5.59).

Dean Mooney, proprietor of Twigs & Blossoms, Ltd., 319 Main in Rochester, suggests bales of hay scattered about the deck and plenty of knotted bandanas, cow skulls, and beaded wire twined with ropes. "Sunflowers are perfect for a Southwest theme," says Dean. He envisions a flowing, casual arrangement of sunflowers, twigs and cacti tumbling out of a cowboy hat as a centerpiece.

Do you have a graduate in the family? Gather her closest friends for an alfresco desert party with a pretty Monstera Garden theme. Again, Isabelle can help you design an invitation. I love Summerlime, a sponged watercolor in blue with a border of yellow and peach flowers.

If you're in the mood to splurge, choose from the exclusive William Arthur collection of incredible cards and social stationery or select parchment paper from The Prima Collection (Pam & Paige). Bonnie recommends petite pastries



(leaves, brownies, mini fruit cheese-cakes, eclairs and cream puffs) and a centerpiece cake, perhaps topped with fresh flowers.

For variety and color, add a fruit and vegetable basket to the dessert table and consider some filling California rolls and mini stuffed bagels. Set the table with hand-painted florals from Truly Gifted, 515 S. Washington, Royal Oak. The bowls, platters, vases and pitchers are splashed with impressionist-like flowers in lively pastels (\$27 and up). Look for Caspari napkins, voliere holders, green wire baskets and twig servers to coordinate.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls and Mainstreets next week

■ Linda Bachrack shops for Not-So-Boring gifts for the graduate.

■ Added Attractions lists the latest special events at the malls and Main Street shops.

■ Retail Details offers news about merchandise deliveries and store openings.



Tuxedo ace suits choir

Editor's Note: This is the second story in a new monthly feature of the *Malls & Mainstreets* page, acknowledging excellent customer service. Shoppers can win a canvas shopping bag for themselves and their favorite sales person by submitting short stories about positive shopping experiences. This testimonial was submitted by Christine Bonner of Rochester Hills.

As business manager of the Detroit Oratorio Society, a non-profit classical music organization, I must see to it that our male singers are attired in formal wear during concerts. For this reason, several of the men in the choir

buy their own tuxedos. However, the choir rents tuxedos for those who do not own their own.

For the past two years, we've been dealing with President Tuxedo at Oakland Mall in Troy. The staff is always accommodating and very generous with discounts to our organization. But after attending one of our concerts, the store manager, Milt Neuman, realized there was a way he could be of further help to us.

In our effort to enhance the art and culture of the metro area, President Tuxedo donates the tuxes we require for our concert. An expenditure has been eliminated!



Milt Neuman: Went the extra mile.

Retail businesses in suburban malls and on suburban Main Streets are invited to submit announcements of upcoming special events and promotions for Added Attractions. The deadline to submit news is the Wednesday before publication on Monday. Send announcements to Malls & Mainstreets, 36321 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150 or fax them to (313) 591-7279.

MONDAY, MAY 23

ART & PUPPETS

The Reluctant Dragon puppet show through May. Monday-Friday 7 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m., Sunday, 1 and 3 p.m. Free at mall's puppet stage. Also, makevide exhibit of artworks by students from Rochester Community Schools through May 31. Meadowbrook Village Mall, Adams/Watson, Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

WALKERS MEETING

Free blood-pressure screening and home safety tips. 8-10 a.m. Sponsored by Botzford General Hospital's Emergency Department. Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 482-1100.

TUESDAY, MAY 24

QUICKLY EXHIBIT

Honoring Queen Victoria's 175th Birthday. Antiques by Pamela exhibits framed documents signed by the Queen and other memorabilia from her diamond and

ADDED ATTRactions

golden jubilees. Refreshments served. Through May 25. 331 Main Street, Downtown Rochester. (810) 652-0866.

FRIDAY, MAY 27

INFORMAL MODELING OF FASHION FROM DOWNSIZE and Petite Sophisticates, noon to 3 p.m. D. Donahue's, Sheraton Garden Court. Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 482-1100.

SATURDAY, MAY 28

SAND CASTLE

90-ton, three-dimensional Looney Tunes sand sculpture, featuring a Looney Tunes soccer match, on display through Aug. 15, in the Briarwood Grand Court. The work was created by sand artist Todd VanderPhym of Sand Sculptures International, based in L.A. Creations known for precise detail and life-like figures. A real, don't miss! Bring a camera. Briarwood Mall, S. State/Eisenhower, Ann Arbor. 769-9910.

SUNDAY, MAY 29

STORYBOOK SUNDAY

WHRC radio personality Linda Land reads "Old Tur-

Help salute helpful folks

If you've had a recent shopping experience where a sales associate went above and beyond the call of duty to provide customer service, Malls & Mainstreets wants to hear about it!

Drop us a few lines describing the shopping situation and don't forget to name the store and shopping center involved. Accounts published on the Malls & Mainstreets pages will win an Observer & Eccentric canvas shopping bag.

Write: More Than You Bargained For, c/o Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36321 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150. Include your name, address and daytime phone number.

Use 1 p.m. Center court. Kids redeem book reports for discount tokens. Newcomers welcome. Parents with same-day mail receipts of \$50 or more get free, storybook mat. 99-cent kids meals. Fairlane Town Center, Michigan/Hubbard, Dearborn. (313) 593-1370.

CLASSICS BRUNCH

Co-sponsored by WQRS. Local musicians perform in concert. Rotunda stage. Noon to 2 p.m. Brunch catered by Sebastian's Grill. \$20 tickets available at concierge desk. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Cookridge, Troy. (810) 643-6360.

FASHION SHOW

Fashions for moms and daughters from Chico's Casual Clothes, Expecting The Best, and Kutz Kutz. Sponsored by West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Department at Shennandoah Country Club. Pett lunch, 2 p.m. Show, 3-4 p.m. Reservations required. \$12 adults, \$6.50 grs 9 and younger. West Bloomfield. (810) 334-5600.

MONDAY, MAY 30

MEMORIAL DAY

Malls and Main Street shops are either closed or opened shorter hours today. Laurel Park Plaza will be closed; so will clothing retailers at Orchard Mall, Oakland, Wonderland, Fairlane, Lakeside, Twelve Oaks and Briarwood will open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Somerset Collection, Meadowbrook Village, Livonia Mall will be open noon to 5 p.m.