

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, JUNE 5, 1995

## SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

## Grads pick top 10 gifts for college life

It's June it must be graduation time. I'm the mom of a high school graduate this year, so June is a hectic blur of senior picnics and breakfasts, awards assemblies, final exams, visiting relatives, and finally, the ceremony and all-night celebration to which I have been assigned the 2-4 a.m. shift.

Who has time to ponder the perfect graduation gift? In the true spirit of David Letterman's infamous lists, and with a little help from my teen-age friends, I have compiled the Malls & Mainstreets Top 10 Gifts for Grads.

10. The Heavy Duty Personalized Laundry Bag, custom made by The "Bag Ladies" of Bloomfield Hills. Sarah Cherkov and Glany Peltier's classy yet practical bags have been sold by word of mouth for the past 10 years. The heavy-duty duck fabric bags measure 20 inches by 36 inches and are hand-painted in school colors with the student's name, the school name and the school logo; the price, just \$30, includes tax. To order, call (810) 258-6171 or 253-0090.

9. A Franklin Planner will organize your college student almost as well as you did at home. The Franklin Quest stores in Twelve Oaks Mall, Novi and Lakeside Mall, Sterling Heights, offer a zipper binder that's slim enough to tuck into a pocket and takes up little valuable space in a backpack. Made from fine calfskin leather, the binder includes six rings, three vertical pockets, business or school ID card pockets and a pen loop for \$75.

8. Sport Time Watches by Bulova feature university insignias and can be custom ordered for the college of your choice. The Swiss-made, water-resistant quartz watches include the date, just \$35.95, an ideal gift from Blidney Kravall. Suman, Big Beaver Road and I-75 in the Top of Troy Tower.

7. Compact Disc Cubes from Crato & Barrel in the Somerset Collection, Troy, are sleek wooden crates with handles for storing and transporting 108 CDs — \$39.95.

6. The Original Swiss Army Mini Desk Clock is perfect for the cluttered dorm desk or night stand. Find it at The Sharper Image in the Somerset Collection for \$95. Also check out a long-time favorite — the classic red and black Swiss Army watch, \$125.

5. A portable box fan is a dorm room necessity. Brookstone in the Somerset Collection offers an array of fans, including the cordless "big breeze" folding box fan for \$24.99.

4. Quik Notes is a credit card-sized recorder that stores messages for those times when the paper and pen aren't handy; the price is \$40. The more sophisticated version is the Quik Memo Pad at \$100. Both are available at Brookstone.

3. The "Screaming" Scream Pillow is the perfect outlet for exam-time frustrations. Reduce anxiety simply by squeezing the famous Edward Munch image. Primal screams will escape from the depths of the pillow! Just \$26 at The Print Gallery, 29203 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield.

2. The Universal Remote Control is my older son's gift of choice. Program the TV, stereo, VCR and CD player all in one handy remote unit, \$25 at Brookstone.

1. Big Brother Clock Radio has numbers that are large enough to keep even the most busy-eyed student on time for class. If he tunes out the music and the alarm, he can't help but notice the giant lighted clock numbers, \$35 also at Brookstone.

Congratulations grad! Continued success!

Linda Bachrack is a Birmingham resident. You can leave her column ideas at (313) 953-3047, mailbox 1889, or fax them to (810) 644-1314.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls & Mainstreets next week:

- Meet a trio of unique retailers at The Gypsy's Light.
- Linda Bachrack goes shopping for Father's Day gift ideas.
- Added Attractions lists interesting events at area shopping centers.
- Retail Details briefs you on store openings and closings.

## Crowley's means business in fight for survival

Crowley's continues its comeback, hoping to end the year on a third profitable note.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

Despite first quarter losses that were double those of the same time last year, Crowley's president and CEO Dennis Callahan said the 87-year-old Detroit-based retailer "is in good shape again."

In an interview with the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Callahan said that during Crowley's annual meeting in May, incentive stock op-

tions were offered to key employees and the 10 directors on the board. And furthermore, a bulk of shares held by the Schottenstein Professional Asset Management Corp. of Columbus, Ohio, were bought back from the company so that Crowley's "now has its destiny in its own hands."

On the verge of bankruptcy in 1992, Crowley's hired Callahan, 51, to save it. He proceeded to cut oper-

ating expenses by \$7 million. He closed a marginal Crowley's store in Westland. He borrowed \$8 million from Schottenstein's which fended off the Chapter 11. (And in November 1994, he paid back Schottenstein's with a new line of credit he secured.)

"Our longtime funding is in place for the next three years," Callahan said proudly. "The control of the stock is now in our own house, and so far we've shown a profit the last two years."

The salvation plan called for Crowley's moderate-priced mer-

chandise lines to be expanded to solidify the department store's base offerings. More upper-end designs like Liz Claiborne and Carol Little were added to the lineup at customer request.

Crowley's stepped up its use of vendor co-op advertising. It beefed up its direct mail campaign to "level the playing field between newspaper and house advertising."

Callahan said the operating expenses he cut came from payroll reductions at the corporate headquar-

See CROWLEY'S, 6B

## Ron Leal mixes casual and chic

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

Sportswear designer Ron Leal gives a distinctive spin to the classics that charms customers as much as his visits to Jacobson's do.



Warm regards: Designer Ron Leal leaves the stage after his spring show in New York. Leal visits local Jacobson's stores twice a year because Michigan women love his Canadian-made clothes.

## More Value City stores will open

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

A second Value City Department Store is coming to town, set to open in the Taylor Crossing in August.

Value City broke into the metro-Detroit market in March with a store in Westland on Warren Road between Wayne and Newburg. There are other locations in Flint, Lansing, and Grand Rapids.

"We're very pleased with the market in Westland," said Herb Minkin, spokesman for the Columbus, Ohio-based discount. "We've gotten very positive feedback from our new customers."

Value City offers its shoppers savings of 40-70 percent on clothing for the family, sports equipment, luggage, cosmetics and linens. There are currently 82 Value City department stores across the country.

More locations are planned for metro-Detroit although Minkin said specifics are not yet available.

"We get our merchandise from buy-outs, end-of-season manufacturers clearances, and our own stock," he explained. "Our buyers are out in the marketplaces pounding the pavement

and negotiating savings for our customers every moment."

Minkin said Value City differs from the competition like T. J. Maxx because price points start much lower, moving from budget to moderate to designer.

The company is publicly owned under the parent company Schottenstein. Minkin said the company first began offering off-price merchandise in 1909 when its founding fathers sold men's accessories from a horse

and buggy in the streets of Columbus. In 1917, the family's first store was established.

Julie Biscoe of Plymouth said she found a pair of Guess jeans at the store for \$34.99 the first time she stopped by.

"I bought them right away," she laughed. "I never thought I'd be able to afford the designer jeans I've tried on in other department stores for \$60."

Herb Minkin

## Retail Realities

True devotion to the cause: "The L.L. Bean headquarters in Freeport, Maine has closed only three times since it opened in 1912. Once when Leon Leonwood Bean died in 1967; once for President Kennedy's funeral; and once when a snowstorm found so much snow on the roof it threatened to cave in."

— From "A Fashion Encyclopedia" by Catherine Houck

All retail businesses in suburban Malls and Main Streets are invited to submit announcements of upcoming events and promotions for Added Attractions. The deadline is the Wednesday before publication on Monday. Send the facts to: Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax to: (810) 644-1314.

MONDAY, JUNE 5

### HEALTH TESTS

Free blood pressure tests 8-10 a.m. Room C of the Community Center, lower level. Sponsored by Garden City Hospital. Westland Center, Wayne/Warren. (313) 425-5001.

### PUPPET SHOWS

The tale of Peter Rabbit is presented daily through June at 7 p.m. Saturday performance times 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Sunday 1 and 3 p.m. Meadowbrook Village Mall, Adams/Walton, Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

### PISTON VISITS

Basketball star Joe Dumars signs autographs as Hudson's shows off its newly remodeled Men's Department. 7-8 p.m. Main floor. Refreshments. Manufacturers representatives take special orders, answer shopper's questions 5-8 p.m. Northland Center, 8 Mile/Greenfield, Southfield. (810) 443-6000.

## ADDED ATTRactions

THURSDAY, JUNE 8

### ART EXHIBIT

Works from "The Artistic Touch," a book about what motivates artists in all mediums by West Bloomfield art teacher Chris Umwin, displayed through June 17 at Doubleday's Book Shop. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Cookdick, Troy. (810) 645-0060.

### INFORMAL MODELING

See the latest fashions from Hersh's modeled during lunch from noon to 2 p.m. Stage & Co. Orchard Lake/Levy, Maple, West Bloomfield. (810) 855-6622.

FRIDAY, JUNE 9

### INFORMAL MODELING

Featuring styles from Clothes Encounters informally modeled during lunch at The Grand Cafe, noon to 2 p.m. Fridays. 33316 Grand River, Downtown Farmington. (810) 815-9101.

### INFORMAL MODELING

Latest looks from The M-Den and Foot Locker informally presented noon to 2 p.m. at D.Denison's and Allie's American Grille. Laurel Park Place, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 463-1100.

### LUNCHEON ON BUDGET

Norman Marcus hosts jewelry designer Carollee to

benefit Gilda's Club's support group for people who have been touched by cancer 11:30 a.m. Lunch and lecture on pearls. Third Floor. Reservations required. Tickets \$30. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Cookdick, Troy. (810) 851-6357.

SATURDAY, JUNE 10

### FASHION SHOW

Crowley's presents its latest summer fashions with models from Fanninque Les Hommes Modeling School. 1 p.m. Crowley's front lobby. Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph, Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

### FARMER'S MARKET

Now through Oct. 28 every Saturday in the Village Commons Shopping Center parking lot. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Flowers, fruits and vegetables. Grand River/Levy, Farmington Rd. Farmington. (810) 473-7276.

### PIANO CONCERT

Carl Farnstrom performs, 1-2:30 p.m. Center Court. Also, informal modeling of fashions from Gantios, The Gap, and American Eagle Outfitters. Laurel Park Place, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 591-7696.

### KIDS CRAFT

Children invited to make a tie for Father's Day. 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Center Court, Free. Register in advance at Information Booth. Supplies limited. Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph, Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

### KIDS STORY

Art therapist Sherri Downman presents "The Rainbow Fish," and helps guests ages 3-7 build a colorful aquarium. 11 a.m. Children's Book Department. Borders Books, 13 Mile/Southfield, Birmingham. (810) 644-1518.