

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

## Crowley's from page 5B

lers, renegotiations with suppliers to change the way the company did business, and the elimination of functions that had become outdated.

The Tel-Twelve Mall store was reconfigured to expand the aisles and make merchandise more visible from front to back, similar changes were made at the Bir-

mingham store. Crowley's has 10 locations in metro Detroit. Callahan told the board of directors that the company lost 2.1 million during the first quarter of

1995, but he was certain Crowley's would post a profit by the end of the year.

"Many retailers took hits in the first quarter because of the weather. It's been too cool to buy shorts and sandals," he said. "We've had to lower prices to move the merchandise and that hurts profits."

Callahan said his plans to put new stores in Rochester, Pontiac, Westland, Southland and Novi are on hold "because we need to do better with what we've got."

He said Crowley's faces the fiercest competition for shoppers from Hudson's and Kohl's. But he said he is confident Crowley's "quality and value strategy" will ultimately put the retailer on top.

"Our petite sportswear business grows by 50-percent each year," he said. "Our best sellers include London Fog, Hagger, Levi

Dockers, Alfred Dunner, Lis Claiborne, Carol Little, Bugle Boy, Guess and Lee Jeans. Others can hold all the sales they want, but shoppers know Crowley's has great values — always."

Callahan profiled the Crowley's shopper as the working woman of moderate means between 33 and 65 years old.

Barbara Fallazolla of Troy, an advertising account executive, said she visits Crowley's in Detroit's New Center area where she works to buy wardrobe basics. However, she doesn't like the clothing selections. She said it pains her to see a store like Crowley's fighting for its life.

"Like so many others, I grew up with the name Crowley/Milner," she said. "They've got a great reputation. I'm afraid though, that they haven't kept up with all the


changes in the fashion industry. They need to take a serious look at the marketplaces where they have stores and the then stock these stores for those people. They're just not doing it."

Jane Bryd of Birmingham, a secretary, disagreed. She said she loves Crowley's for its broad selection of casual wear and affordable prices.

"I've gotten some great buys at Crowley's lately," she said. "I can always find the basics I need for my family at excellent prices. They have very traditional styles which I like."

Ronald Griggs of Farmington is a loyal Crowley's shopper. "You get good deals on quality merchandise there," he insisted. "I buy a raincoat from Crowley's every two years. I also like their selection of shirts and ties."

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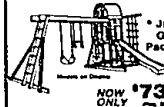
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**Meeting Donny Osmond**



Star shines: Cindi Covins of Rochester Hills and niece Callie, 3, stopped by Hudson's at the Oakland Mall in Troy recently, to meet Donny Osmond in town to promote the November performances of Joseph and the Amazing Dreamcoat at the Masonic Temple.

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Which of the following characters was not one of the seven dwarfs?  
a) Grumpy b) Lazy c) Happy d) Sleepy

What was Aladdin's pet Monkey's name?  
a) Fik b) Abou c) Dodo d) Rafiki

Where did Eric first meet Ariel?  
a) In the water b) In the woods c) on a beach d) at Walt Disney World


Who was Mufasa?  
a) Simba's Uncle b) A tiger c) Kimba's Brother d) Simba's father

What was Walt Disney's middle name?  
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## Leal from page 5B

Reading helps him relax. "These days I'm in the market for a house, and I'm busy looking around," he said. "At this stage of my life, it seems very important to me to find just the right house."

Leal grew up in Hanford, California where his father was a sheet metal worker. His mother was a homemaker. His brother married, had three children and became a lawyer. Leal's destiny took more twists and turns.

"I attended the University of California in Santa Barbara and then the American Academy of Dramatic Art, and then the Cope Cabana School of Hard Knocks," he said with a laugh. "I've been an actor, a screenwriter, a model and I've traveled around the world."

After a vacation to the Greek island of Mykonos, Leal decided to remain in Europe. He stayed for four years. He restored a 200-year-old fisherman's cottage in Portugal. Wrote a play in St. Tropez. He modeled for Walter Albini, the man behind Krisia. Albini later hired Leal as an import manager.

"Back in New York in the mid '70s, I decided to try my hand at designing fashions. I knew it was all about fit and fabrics. I rented a second floor space on 67th Street and came up with a shirt, skirt and trouser in 18 colors," he explained. "One of my first customers was Lee Radziwill. A sketch of my line appeared in Women's Wear Daily and things took off from there."

In 1978, the Halston Corporation backed Leal's first collection of sportswear. In 1988 he joined Jax. Leal credits the late Detroit News fashion writer Taty Stone with advancing his career. They became great friends. Leal served as a pallbearer at Taty's funeral.

"She loved life and people, and so do I," Leal said. "I still enjoy meeting my customers because they're the best. I like attending fashion shows, and I like creating clothes that women feel good about. Once you work in this business you have a responsibility to the women who buy your clothes. You don't speak down to

them. You remain honest with them."

Bonnie Yeager of Brighton attended Leal's fall show in Birmingham and afterward made a few selections.

"I've been wearing Ron's designs for the past four or five years," she said. "The clothes are very well made. The fabrics travel well. I like the details in the garments. They're beautiful."

What's ahead for Ron Leal?

**Sportswear designer Ron Leal**

"My customers are wonderful ladies who relate to me, we understand each other. And so my collections are all about life and based on real human input. Women want clothing that fits in their lifestyle. Their view of clothing shifts with lifestyle changes."

"I plan to recreate my philosophies in clothing... to surround myself with quality people I can fight, live and work with."

Cory Held, director of Jax' operations stateside, said Jacobson is the designer's number one account.

"Customers like Ron's clean clothes. They like the fact that they can build on what they've bought year after year."

**Where can I find?**

Sam DeGrande of Garden City called to say that he might have seen some cookie jars in the shape of chili peppers while vacationing in Boca Raton in the Upper Peninsula.

"There's a Mexican restaurant there called 'Fernando' and I saw that they had some ceramic salt and pepper shakers for sale which looked like chili peppers. Maybe they have chili pepper cookie jars, too."

Michelle Sliger phoned Malls & Mainstreets a few weeks ago, frantic to find such a cookie jar in time for her sister's wedding.

Here come two more urgent challenges:

1. "My bathroom has a three-bulb light fixture. One of the globes cracked, so I went out to the store looking for three replacements. I don't want any dull pieces, yet the globes with three-inch openings for this fixture are very limited. Surely, I don't need to buy a whole new fixture? Much obliged if any readers can help — Sharon Kress of Canton."

2. "Where can I find a musical cake plate that plays Happy Birthday? — Harriet Rotter of Bingham Farms."

If you know where Sharon can find some sharp-looking lamp globes, or Harriet a musical cake plate, please give Malls & Mainstreets a call at (810) 901-2567. You can fax a response to (810) 644-1314. Or write Where Can I Find, c/o The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 606 E. Maple, Birmingham 48008. New shopping challenges are also welcome through these avenues. Thank you!