

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

## BIZ'R

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st," he said with pride. "I went into the shoe business cold — no experience, no contacts. But on my first buying trip I was upfront with the manufacturers about my lack of expertise and they helped me. I made the right selections. The shoes complement the clothes I sell and appeal to my fashion customers as well as the students from nearby Wayne State University. It's a mix that's working."

"But when I heard this store was for sale, I hired a lawyer and went after it. My aunt, Lillian Karamanian, owned it and she wanted to retire."

Jeffrey Axt

Axt originally thought he wanted to sell men's wear, but discovered he had a knack for buying and selling what women want. His best-selling line is Joseph Ribkoff. Axt's parents, Sylvia and Robert, also of Troy, help out in the stores. He relies on them, especially when he's away on buying trips.

Axt grew up in Southfield and Troy, graduating from Troy High School in 1978. He took some classes at Oakland University.

"My grandfather from Istanbul, Turkey, made, blocked, and cleaned hats at Charlie's on Woodward in downtown Detroit many years ago," Axt explained. "My father later ran Charlie's Style Shop in Detroit. It's kind of fate that I have my business in Detroit, too. I have a very strong commitment to the city of Detroit. I want to be a part of the solution to its problems."

Each of his 15 employees is dedicated to giving one-on-one personal service to every customer. He counts among his best clients, media personality Nikki Grandberry, wife of Urban League president, Linda Griffiths, and Barbara Palazzolo, advertising account representative.

"Jeff managed to bring in clothing that appeals to the professional women working in the New Center area as well as the residents of the surrounding community who frequent the shopping center on weekends," Palazzolo said. "His taste in clothes is wonderful."

Axt hopes word of his stylish, service-oriented shop will spread to suburbia and attract new customers to his downtown destination. He doesn't rule out new locations down the line. But right now, he insists, he's working 12-hour days to stock his boutique with original, attractive styles, the best collection of hats in the city, and a special collection of footwear.

**BIZ'R** is open Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Phone (313) 875-9600. Other major retailers in the New Center Building include Winkelman's, Gantos and Crowley's. Next door, shoppers can also visit the shops of the Fisher Building.

## Retail Realities

Target's fashion department is going places according to spokeswoman Corbin Seltz.

That's because Target's clothing departments are stocked by a group that travels the world to track trends from the Paris runways to the street fashions of New York, she explained. Last year, for the first time, Target presented a fashion show in New York, inviting style editors "to show we're there and want paying attention to," Seltz said.

Target's clothing is competitively priced, due to volume ordering, private labeling to ensure quality and cost-effective displays that use posters to show variations of the fashions on the racks instead of mannequins.

Seltz said Target is also working to lower the turnaround time to meet faster to getting trends manufactured and into their stores.

## Gordon visits malls



**Sesame Street Stuff:** To promote the opening of the first two Sesame Street General Stores in Michigan, Gordon (Roscoe Orman) stars in a children's musical on Saturday, July 29, at Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi, and Sunday, July 30, at Lakeside Mall in Sterling Heights. The free performances will be held at noon and 2:30 p.m. The Sesame Street General Stores carry logo-ed family apparel, toys, videos and gift items for the home. There are presently 37 such stores in 17 states, owned by the S.S. Retail Stores, Corp.

## RETAIL DETAILS

Retail Details features the latest news briefs from mall and Main Street shopping centers. Mail submissions to: Retail Details, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax them to: (810) 644-1314.

### TAPPER'S WINS DESIGN AWARDS

James Pierowich of West Bloomfield, master jeweler and designer at Tapper's Fine Jewelry in the Orchard Mall in West Bloomfield, won first place in the \$5,000-plus category of the national Jewelers' Circular Keystone Retail Design Contest. Tapper's itself was also honored with the JCK award for marketing excellence.

### SPECIALTY LEASING IS HER GAME

Laurie A. Baker has joined the staff of Schootak Brothers & Company of Southfield as a specialty leasing representative. Baker will implement a new program for temporary tenants and cart leasing for the company's properties which include Universal Mall, Macomb Mall, Wonderland Mall and Laurel Park Place. She will also administer lease renewals. Baker comes from Frank's Nursery & Crafts, where she coordinated the opening of more than 100 seasonal Christmas stores each year.

**BORDERS BENEFIT** Borders Books in Birmingham, Livonia, Farmington Hills, Utica, Dearborn and Ann Arbor will donate 15 percent of the total cost of purchases made July 28-30 to Stoppin' Out, which provides direct care services to children and adults living with AIDS and HIV in southeast Michigan. Shoppers must request the donation at the check out counter at time of purchase.

### WINCHESTER CHANGES

At a recent meeting with nearby homeowners, the Winchester Mall owners told Rochester Hills residents that new retail tenants are on the way. Shoppers will have a Linens & More, Dick's Clothing and Sporting Goods Store, Winkelman's, F&M Distributors, and Mac's Hardware. The department store at the retail complex at Avon and Rochester road.

There is also the possibility of an Old Navy store, a bookstore, two family restaurants and a cooney island singing lessons. Several doctors are considering offices on the site.

Andy Shaw, spokesman for the Rochester Avon Company, owners of the shopping center, said the mall renovation is a multi-million dollar project. He hoped

the new mall would be open by July 1996. When completed, the shopping center will be expanded from 270,000 square feet to 365,000 square feet, with a completely resurfaced and re-landscaped parking lot.

Shaw said the Star Theaters on the premises will also renovate, adding reclining seats. Portions of the Winchester Mall have been boarded up for the past year while retail plans were being formulated.

### BARNEY'S BUSINESS

Heard along the retail grapevine... Barney's at the Somerset Collection, Troy, will be one of the national stores included in the company's big Warehouse Sale plans, sometime this fall. In this annual ritual from the New York store, steeply discounted merchandise is sold — everything from designer clothes and accessories for men, women and children to housewares and gift items. Watch for it! We'll keep you posted.

### MALL AUCTION AID

The crew at Livonia Mall need merchandise, services and gift certificates for their 6th Annual Celebrity Auction to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Marketing director Bill Checks works tirelessly behind the scenes each year to gather, tag, and auction off celebrity items to raise money for the MDA. This year's big event runs through midnight in the mall's center court on Saturday, Aug. 19. To offer any assistance or merchandise, Checks welcomes calls at (810) 476-1166.

### BIG BAND SOUNDS

Also, live from the Livonia Mall, Seven Mile and Middlebelt, the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra performs on Thursday, Aug. 3. The Munchkin Talent Contest is set for Saturday, Aug. 5, and the American International Circus entertains on Aug. 18-20. Performances are free to shoppers on stage near Crowley's. Times to be announced.

### GIFT SHOP GIGGLES

The Hotel Baronette, located on the outskirts of Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi has opened a gift shop. Merchandise includes "Honey, I Miss You" packages for travelers, containing two champagne flutes, a terry robe, a bottle of sparkling juice, candles and sachet — all ingredients for a romantic homecoming. The "Honey I Miss You, and I'm Stuck in Michigan" packages include all Michigan-made mementos including Carp River Tart Cherry Preserve, Raspberry Fudge Sauce, Chunky Vegetable Dip, Sanders Fudge Sauce, Bullfrog candles, pins and earrings.

The shop also features business gifts, Geo. F. Trumper and Floris of London fragrances, polo-style shirts, golf accessories and multi-lingual greeting cards. For more information call (810) 949-7800.

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