

# Vino from page 10A

recommends Trigger Fish as "the best steak."

Mary's Meats Inc., are sold in the meat department. Godiva Chocolates has its first "grocery boutique" in the bakery, also home to bread and pastries from 20 different local bakers.

The Great Seafood Co. supplies fresh fish from east and west coast dayboats. Fish is flown direct six times a week. English Gardens operates a full floral shop at the market entrance. Marcel Shurman's greeting cards fill a rack near the bakery. Gourmet and organic grocery staples come from local companies like Geronimo and Billy Bones.

The doll department shares counter space with Juliette's first class 15-year-old catering company, offering dishes-to-go, dips, 35 different salads and gourmet gift baskets. Orders are taken for special occasion entertaining.

The coffee beans are stored in stainless steel drawers. A humidor in the front of the store houses the finest cigars from around the world. A small wine cellar stores "the good stuff" at the right temperature.

These state-of-the-art grocery departments surround center aisles filled with grocery items like

sauces, condiments, pastas, cereals, baby food, organic dog food and yes, even toilet tissue.

The merchant's vino is strategically placed throughout the store, standing on shelves across from the food items they best complement. Sales associates are stationed in the aisles, ready with advice and suggestions for customers who wish to tap their expertise.

"We simply went after the best," Jonna explained. "We brought in the best products, the best people, the best prices. Five of our best-selling gourmet items are under \$2 each. We got the products customers asked for so they don't have to leave our store and stop somewhere else for this or that."

The Jonnas are positioned for the 21st century. They want to change the way you shop for food.

"Did you know that 85 percent of the food sold in America comes from four companies: General Foods, Nabisco, Kraft and G.P.C.?" he posed. "It's important to support the independents because they are the backbone of America. That's why we have the entrepreneur's products in our stores."

Ed and Juliette Jonna married

34 years ago on Nov. 26, 1961. They raised four children; three joined them in business. They have four grandchildren. Working long hours during the week and visiting their stores on weekends, leaves little time for the golf and travel they enjoy.

To relax, the Jonnas play cards every Saturday night with longtime friends, like Georges, who owns Melody Farms.

Jonna was born on St. Patrick's Day in 1939, and grew up in a family five brothers, one sister in the Boston Boulevard area of Detroit. His father was also in the food business and was Jonna's in-

spiration.

"I remember a sign dad hung up in our Union Pacific market in 1949: We sell the best hamburger in the world. I said, 'Good dad, come-on. The best in the world?' But darned if hamburger sales didn't skyrocket and along with them, the sales of buns and pickles. I tell my kids, 'A is good, but the A-plus is better. It will break your back, but the best is always worth it.'"

Jonna recently took the back seat in his business, giving the driver's seat over to his children. The Royal Oak and Dearborn stores became the property of his

brother and longtime partner, John.

"Most family businesses die after three generations and I don't want that to happen to ours," he said. "Also, my wife and I have been working very hard for a very long time and we want some care-free years to enjoy."

He recalled the lean years when merchant of vino opened in Troy to such a slow start he had trouble making his house payment each month. He credits Detroit News writer Tish Myers with "getting it all started for us."

"She stopped in one night, saw our great selection of wines and

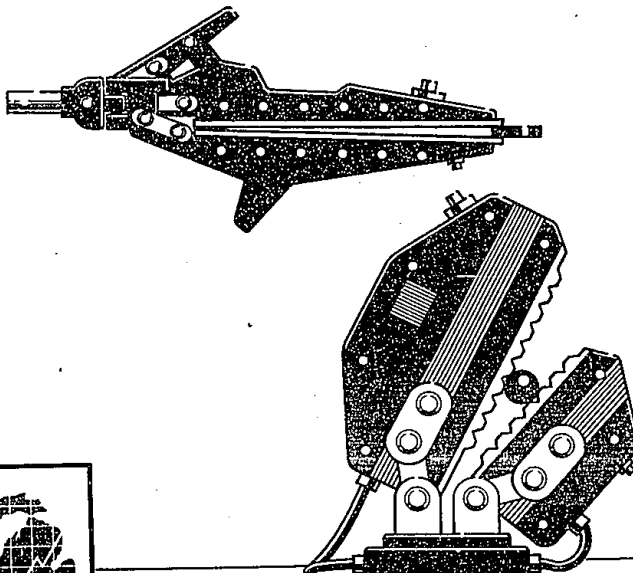
wrote a big article about the store," he explained. "J.P. McCarthy read it and called me to talk about wine on his radio show. Ever since then, I discuss the holidays and entertaining with wine on WJR the Monday before Thanksgiving. I've been asked to continue my guest spots, even though J.P. has passed away."

Jonna is a local wine celebrity and there is always a Merchant of Vino wine table at charity fundraisers, courtesy of the Jonnas.

Jonna's reputation grows with the American thirst for wine.

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## Retailers from page 10A

conference at Fairlane Town Center in Dearborn Nov. 15 to focus media attention on the busiest retail time of the year, the months of November and December, when according to Robert Taubman, president of Taubman Centers, retailers do one third of their annual business.

Taubman reported that national retailers predict sales of 3.5 percent over 1994, with Michigan consumers planning to spend an average of \$77 for each person on

their list compared to \$58 last year. Those surveyed expect to buy gifts for 17 people, compared to 15 people in 1994.

Both surveys found underlying confidence in the economy, tempered by continuing concerns about the future. Sixty-percent of consumers said they will shop at department stores and specialty shops (retail outlets generally found in malls) compared to 66 percent from last year.

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