

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1995

(F)98

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

Latest shapewear creates the figure for new fashions

Before you slither into that slinky little party dress, consider what you might wear underneath. More than ever, lingerie is an essential part of the wardrobe, providing solutions to the new demands made on our figures by the world of fashion.

Form-fitting suits, pencil skirts, hip-hugging leathers and slim satin shifts all account for the resurgence of shapewear.

Your mother's girdle is absent in this comeback. It has been restyled by underwear manufacturers as a sexy, yet practical, control garment.

Cleverly coined "shapewear," the new corset is the hot seller in the lingerie department. It's made from technologically advanced fabrics that provide structure without rigidity. Charlotte Pierce, an internationally recognized authority on figure control, recently assisted customers with their intimate apparel needs in Jacobson's Birmingham store.

Scene stealers

Pierce pointed to some of the latest styles in shapewear, including Natori's tummy control waist cincher and similar styles by Olga and Smoothie (\$23-\$34). For evening gowns, she recommends Natori's one-piece body suit (\$58) or Olga's sleek version with a hidden wire frame (\$39) or push-up bra (\$39).

When it comes to bra fit and selection, Pierce is particularly outspoken. Her company, S&S Enterprises, manufactures all of the underwire bras on the market. Today's underwires are soft and comfortable due to new plastic-coated and flattened wires with cushioned tips. With tape measure casually draped around her neck, Pierce explains the importance of bra fit. "There is a sea of bras out there," she says, "so every woman needs help in finding the right one for her. Comfort is subjective. Therefore, fit is the key." Some women like stretch, some need support, but everyone needs the proper underwear look good. "The right bra can actually shape the breasts," she insists.



Support groups

If you try on different types of bras, you can see for yourself the differences that each one makes. An underwire shape, separate and lift while providing ultimate support. A minimizer moves breast tissue out and flattens it—good under knits or a tight blouse. Push-ups provide maximum cleavage and are good for plunging necklines, while traditional styles provide full coverage. A bra with a cut-out frame is good for a full-figured woman. Most women need a bra wardrobe for a variety of fashion looks.

According to Pierce, a good bra should: Not dig into the shoulder. Fit close to the breast bone and not stand away at the center. Contain all the breast tissue inside the cup. Not ride up the back. Be comfortable enough for you to slip a finger underneath the band at the base of the cups.

"Bra fitting is a real service," says Pierce. Once you get the proper fit, you'll be amazed at how sexy, pretty and fun to wear, a bra can be.

Linda Bachrack is a Birmingham resident. She welcomes column ideas and information about unique merchandise to share with readers. Reach her via fax at (810) 644-1314, or call (313) 953-2047, mailbox 1859.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls & Mainstreets next week:

- Linda Bachrack goes shopping for dazzling holiday outfits.
- A simple box of maternity clothes for before during and after.
- Go Behind The Label with Victoria MacKenzie-Childe.
- Retail Details briefs you on changes in the marketplace.

Classic clothes shop closes in Bloomfield



Miner's Bagley Inn is closing in January due to the poor retail sales of the past few years. But the owners plan a restaurant and catering service to take its place.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Citing dwindling sales and the decline of traditional-style clothing manufacturers, Nancy and Dick Miner have decided to close Miner's Bagley Inn, their 20-year-old apparel store in Bloomfield Hills.

The couple closed their apparel/gift store in Grosse Pointe last year for the same reason.

"But all is not lost," said Nancy with a wide smile. "The Miner's are simply shifting business gears. Retail clothing is not the place to be these days. So we plan to renovate the Inn's interior and reopen as a restaurant, hopefully in the spring. We see the historic Bagley Inn as an intimate, fine dining establishment similar to Emily's in Northville."

The Miner's have the building for sale and are looking for a restaurateur to work with them or take over the project. They welcome inquiries at (810) 646-3810.

Their liquor store (a block east of the Inn on Long Lake just west of Woodward) will continue to operate with a catering franchise replacing the gift department in the store. The Miner's point to busy Bloomfield Hills dual-income families clamoring for carryout.

Since Miner's Bagley Inn is on the historic register, nothing can be done to alter the exterior of the building. It was built in 1832 by settler Amasa Bagley. It served as the Bagley home, the Town Hall, the Bagley Tavern, and later a courthouse when Bagley was appointed associate judge of the newly formed Oakland County Court.

"It was the only inn between Detroit and Saginaw in those days," Dick explained. "It became a part of my family when my mother bought it in 1940." Dick's mother, Mrs. Mary Miner, was married to the "First Lady of Bloomfield Hills." The framed tribute and photo she received from

the city on her 75th birthday, hangs in the Inn on the second floor. Mrs. Miner ran grocery stores, first in Birmingham, and later Bloomfield Hills, following the death of her husband when Dick was 6 and Tom, 7.

Jack followed his mother into the retail business. Tom recently retired from Chrysler.

"I guess by getting back into the food business, we've come full circle," Nancy sighed.

Jack and Nancy, both 67, dabbled in several different retail ventures at one time — the liquor/gift shops, the apparel stores, and an antique general store in Keatington, now Canterbury Village in Lake Orion. They have three children and six grandchildren — all of whom have assisted in business through the years.

"Twenty years ago, it was all the rage out East to have classic clothing stores in old homes," said Nancy. "So we took a good, hard look at Grandpa's old home and removed a few walls to open up a clothing store. We brought in antiques to hold merchandise, like this old cheese press from Ohio, and kept the kitchen in the back to offer our customers coffee and cookies when they visited."

The Miner's shelves are stocked with clothing labels from David Brooks, Robert Scott, Gay Boyer, Northern Isles, Geiger, Lane & Salzberg and Vera Bradley. But they lament that 80-percent of their suppliers have gone out of business since 1976.

"We're looking forward to the next challenge, the next plateau," said Nancy. "We've been in the clothing business too long — seen too much of it."

She lamented the loss of the young shopper who is not interested in traditional clothing. She shook her head at retailers who "mislead" shoppers by "marking up to mark down," holding incessant sales and promotions that have hurt most independent retailers.

D. Larry Sherman, owner of Sherman shoes, echoed the Miner's senti-



New ideas: Dick and Nancy Miner of Bloomfield Hills hope to turn Miner's Bagley Inn into an intimate, fine-dining establishment after liquidating the fashion merchandise currently filling their store.

ments.

"The apparel business in the last 11 months has been in the biggest recession in memory," he said. "The lack of sales is affecting both independents and mail merchants. As costs increase there will be more and more of us who won't be able to stay in business."

"People don't buy what they already have in their closets," he continued. "The areas of retail doing well are food and houseware. It's a phase we're going through. Independents depend on loyal customers who are

willing to shop at smaller stores. That's the answer."

A Bloomfield Hills woman who said reports shopping at Miner's Bagley Inn for "a dozen years," was shocked to learn it is closing.

"I had no idea they weren't doing well," she said, asking that her name not be printed. "I will really miss this store."

Items from all the Miner's retail enterprises — antiques, clothing, gifts and jewelry — are priced 25 to 50-percent off during a Going Out of Business Sale now through January.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Woodland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia.
(313) 522-4100.

FREE PHOTOS

Mail hosts free photos with Santa 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. center court. Also free anniversary tote bag with receipts totaling \$100 or more, Dec. 7-10 at Customer Service Desk.
Westland Center, Wayne/Warren.
(313) 425-5001.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6

FOOD TICKET

Ticketmaster will give away a variety of event tickets to shoppers who bring in cans and boxes of food for Red Cross and WGSX Marathon For Meals, 4-6 p.m. at Harmony House, Hoover and 11 Mile, Warren. (Through Dec. 15 food can be dropped off at a truck in the Northwest Shopping Center parking lot, 13 Mile/Woodward in Royal Oak.)
Bloomfield Town Square, Telegraph/N. Square Lake.
(810) 433-0000.

WEDNESDAY CONCERTS

Del Kaufman and a three-piece band performs variety music, 7-9 p.m. in east court. Enjoy complimentary concerts every Wednesday through Dec. 20.
Westland Center, Wayne/Warren.
(313) 425-5001.

INFORMAL MODELING

Casual clothes from Chico's presented noon to 2 p.m. during lunch at Stage & Co. Boardwalk, Orchard Lake/Maple, West Bloomfield.
(810) 855-6222.

THURSDAY, DEC. 7

SOUTHWEST GIFTS

Native West hosts 6th annual Art and Jewelry Festival through Dec. 10. Meet artist Mark Silversmith at opening reception 6-9 p.m.
803 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth.
(313) 455-8838.

KIDS SHOW

Clay dinosaurs with Cavelight Julie at 6 p.m. near the garden area. Also lunch with Santa Claus 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Magic show and surprise for each child included. Repeated Dec. 16 at 11:30 a.m.
Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt.
(810) 476-1168.

FRIDAY, DEC. 8

CLOTHES AT LUNCH

Janet Varner presents informal modeling of latest col-

lections from noon to 2 p.m. at House & Mue, each Friday through Dec. 29.
321 Main, Downtown Rochester.
(810) 652-2212.

SANTA FEA

4 p.m. in Rotunda. Repeated Dec. 9 at 1 and 3 p.m. Tickets \$20. Available at Congregate Desk.
Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy.
(810) 643-6350.

PLYMOUTH SANTA

Santa Claus is in Kellogg Park for photos 5-8 p.m. on Fridays, Noon to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, Christmas Eve from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. 40 trees in the park have been lit and decorated by area families.
Maki/Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth.
(313) 453-1540.

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

ARTIST VISITS

James Labadie returns to Adamo Collection to hand paint customer designs, company logos, and family snapshots on silk ties. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Repeated Dec. 10 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Each tie is \$75, air brushed while you wait or ship in Birmingham.
268 W. Maple, Birmingham.
(810) 644-9224.

PUPPETS/STORIES

"Puppets To Go" perform 1:20 and 2:20 p.m. at Persian Department Store. Also at the store Santa will read holiday stories to children from 10-11 a.m. in center court. Treats for all in attendance.
Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.
(313) 953-7500.

SANTA PHOTOS

Mittelfeld's 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays through Dec. 23.
Main Street/Fourth, Downtown Rochester.
(810) 656-0060.

HOLIDAY MUSIC

Lake Orion High School Wind Ensemble plays at 1 p.m. Gleichman Glass Blowers demonstrate craft through Dec. 10 at Always Christmas store.
Hammered dulcimer player Julie Hussar 4-9 p.m. Canterbury Village, Joslyn/Off 1-75, Lake Orion.
(810) 391-5700.

MONDAY, DEC. 11

SANTA BREAKFASTS

Lakeside hosts breakfasts with Santa through Dec. 22 at various mall restaurants Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9 a.m. Cost is \$3 per person, flat-plate, flat-plate basis. Reserve the Crown entertainers. Letters to the North Pole can be composed and sent at display in center court.
Oga's Kitchen, 1459/Schoolmeier, Sterling Heights.
(810) 241-1744.