

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

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(F)5C

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACH

Boas and beads for holiday style

Whose budget allows for a brand new head-to-toe ensemble this time of year? Sure, there's the office party and the neighbor's open house and the New Year's Eve gala... But the shopping list is filled with names other than your own and there really isn't time to try on cocktail dresses anyway.

The easy and affordable solution to this dilemma is accessorize, accessorize, accessorize. Make them notice your jewelry, your hat or your feather boa—all fashion statements in their own right.

Accessorizing his home last week when his daughter informed me that her black velvet dress is "just too plain" to wear to the dance on Saturday. Although the dress (from It's the Rite in Birmingham) is stunning in its simplicity, I agreed to look for a few complimentary accessories.

Fun with flare

I must admit that the black velvet shawl lined in silver satin (\$38 at Hudson's) and the delicate crystal and pearl turtleneck necklace (\$16 at The Icing in the Somerset Collection, Troy; Twelve Oaks, Nov; Lakeside, Sterling Heights and Fairlane, Dearborn) make her dress that much more special. Her final quest is a pair of long, black velvet gloves.

Feather boas are a dramatic option for holiday nights, and I saw them in pink, red, white and black at Faith Couture in Royal Oak (\$28). This trendy shop also displayed jeweled collars, satin gloves and slitter makeup. Monica Pepper, manager of Gantos in Fairlane Town Center, Dearborn, takes her outfit from work-a-day to wow with some artful accessories, including strappy gold sling-backs (\$72 from Gantos) and a beaded evening bag (\$70), multi-strand gold necklace (\$24), gold fringe earrings (\$14) and gold "explosion" bracelet (\$29) all from The Icing.

Even a double-breasted business suit can take on an elegant holiday look. Replace your no-nonsense turtleneck sweater with a holly berry scarf (\$24 from Casual Corner) and add a frosted Christmas tree pin (\$8.50 from Corey's Jewel Box). Now kick off those pumps and go for the silver evening sandals. Voilà!

Let's talk one-of-a-kind jewelry to accent your special occasion outfit. Jacobson's suggests the Lagos Caviar Collection in sterling silver with 18k gold, pearls and onyx (\$176-\$1,000) or David Yurman's rhodolite cable 'K' pin (\$495). For the

young-at-heart, choose Stacey Moore's hip circle pendants from The Print Gallery in Southfield. Each sterling silver pendant features a symbol representing a quality or value such as Courage, Power and Stability (\$25). They're hot in celebrity circles.

Also, don't miss the silver hand-molded jewelry of Eric Marlow at the Cligue Gallery, Royal Oak or the ornate Southwest Native American-inspired jewelry at Mesa Arts in Franklin.

For the finishing touch—a hat and gloves. Consider Patricia Underwood's beaver felt, leopard hat from Nelman Marcus and a pair of "move-to-the-star" gloves by Daniel Blorke in cashmere, suede or satin stretch from Tender in Birmingham (\$35-\$125).

Linda Bachrach is a Birmingham resident. She welcomes merchandise ideas to share with readers. Call her at (313) 953-2047, mailbox 1889; or fax information to (810) 644-1314.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls & Mainstreets next week:

- Facts about buying gloves your mother never told you.
- Marilyn Miglin visits Saks Fifth Avenue to sign bottles of Phoremona.
- Retail Details briefs you on the latest marketplace news.
- The sock monkeys return for a holiday story.

Smaller retailers learn to fight back

Independent retailers are discovering "safety in numbers" as they seek out trade and professional associations as resources in the battle against the volume giants for shoppers and sales.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO

STAFF WRITER

Allida and Ken Heilmann of Gramercy Park Jewelers in Rochester Hills joined the Independent Jewelers Organization to link up with 900 other jewelers to gain more fire power.

The Melvin Family of Melvin's Hardware Do-It Center in Walled Lake is proud to say they're card-carrying members of the Hardware Wholesale Inc.

And Jerry Mills of Mills Pharmacy in Birmingham said his membership in the National Association of Retail Druggists is a lifeline.

Independent retailers across the nation are enlisting in, or establishing, esprit de corps to buy merchandise, insurance and credit card processing at a group rate; share the latest management techniques; swap sales and marketing ideas; and learn the up-to-date advances in human resources, finance, inventory control, and store design and display.

"Hometown merchants are the traditional backbone of their communities," said Bill Roberts, founder

See RETAILERS, 6C

Last two weeks



Don't miss it! Guests will be enchanted by Hudson's complimentary Wizard of Oz exhibit at Summit Place mall in Waterford through Dec. 31. This sixth annual walk-through holiday display brings Frank Baum's classic tale of Dorothy and the journey to Oz to animated life with 137 characters in 21 vignettes. It's presented in the southwest mall corridor adjacent to Hudson's, open during store hours. Call (810) 683-5299 to arrange group tours.

Nordstrom/Hudson's reveal plans for August grand openings in Troy

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO

STAFF WRITER

Nordstrom and Hudson's are partnering with a handful of lucky local charities to turn their gala openings at Somerset North into benefits.

Seattle-based Nordstrom makes its Michigan debut at the northeast corner of Big Beaver and Coolidge in Troy, on Friday, Aug. 16, at 10 a.m. To celebrate the event, an evening of food, fashion, music and fun is set for Wednesday, Aug. 14, from 7-10 p.m. at the new store.

Guests paying \$100 a ticket, will see a fall fashion show at New York set up under a tent in the parking lot, enjoy a sumptuous dinner buffet,

then dance the evening away to the music of a "renowned orchestra," to be announced.

Nordstrom will distribute the evening's receipts between four programs:

- The Links' development fund for the Museum of African American History in downtown Detroit;
- The Junior League of Birmingham's Empowerment Initiative with Frost Elementary in Pontiac;
- The Junior League of Detroit's support of the Detroit Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children;
- Other ongoing community betterment programs by The Junior Leagues and The Links, Inc.

For ticket information call (810) 640-2613.

Hudson's, opening its 22nd store at the other end of Somerset North on the same day, also will host a benefit evening to mark the occasion. Variety, The Children's Charity, will be the recipient of the funds generated by Hudson's party on Saturday, Aug. 10.

Spokeswoman Chris Morrisroe said, Hudson's is bringing in a "big name entertainer" to highlight the event. "We'll also have food, cocktails and music, plus some surprises the folks from Variety have in mind."

The hours of the event and the ticket prices have not been decided.

Belly Basics: Maternity wardrobe in a box

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN

STAFF WRITER

Big but beautiful. That's how the founders of the Pregnancy Survival Kit think women should look during pregnancy.

And mothers-to-be agree. Sales from Belly Basics—the maternity wardrobe in a box, grossed \$2 million the first year.

Growing up in West Bloomfield, Jody Kozlow Gardner knew she wanted to start a business one day. But never did the Groves High School graduate imagine by age 31, her dream would come true.

With partner Cherie Serota, also 31, Kozlow Gardner experienced a retail void and then rushed to fill it. The partners make hip fashions to wear during pregnancy and customers are beating a path to their door.

It all began over morning coffee while Kozlow Gardner and Serota worked in the marketing department of Henri Bendel in New York City.

They came up with the idea for a Pregnancy Survival Kit while listening to women complain about how hard it was to find clothes to wear during the months they were pregnant.

Then their own pregnancies confirmed the plight.

"We thought, why not make pregnancy easier for women by providing an entire wardrobe in a box?" Kozlow Gardner said. "The Pregnancy Survival Kit is a fashion idea whose time has come. Four pieces of clothing in basic black (tunic, skirt, leggings and dress) mix and match with pieces already in a woman's closet."

The \$150 kit, debuted in September

1994, and carries a woman through the nine months of pregnancy, and the first awkward weight shifting months beyond.

"We sort of road tested the pieces on me when I was pregnant with my daughter," said Kozlow Gardner.

She credited her studies in creative writing, film and business at the University of Michigan with helping her market the idea to retailers. Her experience as senior merchandising editor and copywriter for Seventeen Magazine, plus positions as creative production manager for a worldwide retail consulting firm and marketing manager at Bendel's, ensured success.

See BASICS, 6C



Box of beauty: Four wardrobe basics come in this carton—guaranteed to get the mom-to-be through nine very important months.

Retailers can submit news of upcoming events and promotions for Added Attractions. The deadline is the Wednesday before publication on Monday. Send facts to: Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax to: (810) 644-1314.

MONDAY, DEC. 18, HANUKKAH BEGINS

WIZARD OF OZ

21 animal vignettes tell Dorothy's tale during walk-through exhibit on display from Hudson's through Dec. 31. Free. Additionally, the Summit Place mall has playground for children with daily holiday activities near Kohl's. Mother Goose decor there. On Dec. 19, 19 spotcaster Don Shane visits to raise funds for Pontiac Rescue Mission 1-3 p.m. on Express Train for kids.

Santa Place, Elizabeth Lake/Telegraph, Waterford. (810) 683-5299.

SANTA BREAKFASTS

Lakeside hosts breakfasts with Santa through Dec. 22 at mall restaurants Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9 a.m. Cost is \$3 per person. Rescue the Clown entertainers. Letters to the North Pole can be composed and sent from display in center court. Decor theme is famous buildings around the world. Lakeside, 1450 Schoenherr, Sterling Heights. (810) 247-1744.

CRYSTAL FOREST

Enjoy more than 100 different life-like animals on display when you visit Santa in the Crystal Forest exhibit through Dec. 24. Postal station sends letters to the North Pole in a flurry of sound and lights. Twelve Oaks, 12 Mile/Nov Rd. Nov. (810) 342-9438.

HOLIDAY EXHIBIT

Mall's fountain court now sits high above the roof. Tops are Mary Poppins, seating Santa Claus under 11 balloons whose gondolas are loaded with toys. Santa's elves use bright ribbons to steer their charges.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Fairlane, Michigan Ave./Southfield Fwy. Dearborn (313) 593-1370.

SHOP ABILITY

Now through Dec. 22 Southfield business workers can ride trolleys "Holly" and "Jolly" running from designated office buildings to Northland mall between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. daily. A box bench will be provided to shoppers. Mall's NorthStar exhibit features giant snow globe, station where kids can write and post letters to Santa, and storybook quest. Northland Center, Nine Mile/Greenfield, Southfield. (810) 443-5311.

SHOP ABILITY

Between Big Beaver Rd. businesses and Somerset Collection, free, through Dec. 22. Gift wrap and fresh coffee. For details call Somerset Center, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy. (810) 643-6300.

PUPPETS/BENEFIT

"The Shoemaker and the Elves" presented through December. Showtimes: Monday-Friday 7 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m. Free. Gift wrap and center court by The Rainbow Connection, noon to 9 p.m., Noon to 4 p.m. Sundays. Car will be auctioned off in shopette on Dec. 20. Meadowbrook Village Mall, Waterford/Adams, Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20

LATE-NIGHT SHOPPING

Mall open until 11 p.m. tonight to assist last minute shoppers. Creators, discount fruits, gift wrapping from 9-11 p.m. (Free for two purchases with receipts of \$75 or more.) Vocalist Del Kaufman and a three piece band perform variety from 7-8 p.m. in east

court. Westland Center, Wayne/Warren. (313) 425-5001.

HOLIDAY CONCERT

Rennie Kaufmann entertains 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Garden area. Santa photos through Dec. 24 at stage near Crowley's. Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (810) 476-1166.

INFORMAL MODELING

Fashions from Reel Ends presented noon to 2 p.m. during lunch at Stage & Co. Boardwalk, Orchard Lake/Maple, West Bloomfield. (810) 855-6622.

FRIDAY, DEC. 22

PLYMOUTH SANTA

Santa Claus in Kelllogg 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. Main/Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth. (313) 453-1540.

SATURDAY, DEC. 23

HOLIDAY MUSIC

Hammered dulcimer player Julie Hussar 4-9 p.m. Canterbury Village, Joslyn/Ort 1-75, Lake Orion. (810) 391-5700.

SUNDAY, DEC. 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

Limited holiday hours. Most malls close at 5 p.m.

MONDAY, DEC. 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS! MALLS AND MAIN STREET shops closed for the holiday.