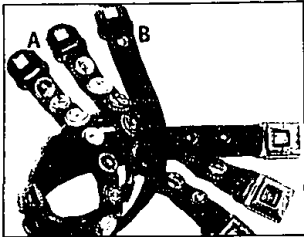


MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, APRIL 15, 1996

10A(F)

Shopping Centered



Buckle up: From Littleearth, and recycled from old cars, the environmentally correct way to keep your jeans up! Available at Guys N' Gals in West Bloomfield.

Cooler teen looks come from the 70s

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

"It's the 60s and 70s all over again," said Lois Levenson, owner of Guys N' Gals in the Orchard Mall. "Everything's hip huggers worn with short cropped tops and belly chains."

Levenson should know. She's seen fashions come and go during the 26 years that Guys N' Gals has been a fashion mainstay in West Bloomfield.

One of her hottest selling items this season is nail polish by Hard Candy. Created by Dinah Mahajer, a former Bloomfield Hills resident and graduate of Birmingham and all Hudson's locations. Look for a line of lipsticks to soon follow.

Levenson's 30-year-old daughter Julie Feldman "lives in little skirts and hip huggers pants with Lycra that hides flaws." She says teens top these with a camisole and sheer shirt by Lip Gloss (\$56) for a naughty but nice statement.

"It's a fun fashion year. The Doll House short skirts (\$20-\$30) add funky to fun," said Feldman. Levenson travels monthly to manufacturer showrooms in New York to search for the latest fashions. One treasure she's found are belts made of recycled seat belts and decorated with soda caps (\$45) by Littleearth Productions.

Last year Littleearth collected more than 80 tons of inner tube rubber, two million bottle caps and 73,000 license plates to recycle into fashion accessories. Scratch and smell T-shirts by Four-words (\$20) provide the clean fresh natural smell of strawberries or cherries without perfume.

Anything goes

Mini skirts topped with tight tees are still selling strong at Frankie and Debbie's. It's the Rita, and Caruso Caruso in Birmingham. The boutiques' owner Debbie Caruso says, anything with a low waist and not a radical bell bottom is hot, along with corduroy painter's pants (\$68) and shorts (\$42) by Butler's Blue Jeans.

"There's no boundaries to fashion anymore. You can wear thermal, corduroy and sweaters in June because in Michigan we have cool nights," said Caruso.

Jeans lead the list of must-have items for males and females once again at Caruso Caruso. The best sellers come from Lucky Brand, Diesel, Replay, Big Star and Ikeda.

Also hot for spring and summer are a sleeveless baby doll dress with empire waist by Ecote in a red floral pattern (\$56) and a long Heidi dress in champagne rayon by Livingston Williams (\$186). Although I didn't see anyone buying the new see-through dresses at it's the Rita, several young women and girls were trying them on.

Short floral print dresses have popped up all over town. At Clothessense in Chelsea, assistant manager Tara Butthoff said "they're the biggest thing because they make us feel good."

"It's the whole spring thing with the flowers. People are tired of winter," she added.

A-line style short dresses by Wanted and 2 of Us (both \$20) bloom with pansies and daisies. A plaid dress by Energie (\$16.99) goes all the way to the floor. A T-shirt by City Slicks (\$12.99) features happy faces boasting all sorts of expressions "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil." Tight fitting sweaters, short shorts, and hip huggers (\$24.99 to \$29.99) fill Clothessense racks.

Happy faces and peace symbols explode on teen merchandise like note books, iron-on patches, candles and claw clips for the hair. Even glow-in-the-dark stars to stick on your ceiling wallpaper from Astral Lights (\$4.99) and make-your-own beads kits.

Clothesline fashions are available in Westland, Farmington, Southfield, Rochester Hills and Troy.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls and Mainstreets next week:

- Thinking about a retail career? The pros discuss the ins and outs.
- Sportswear fashions take center stage.



Store delivers service

■ April Betzler of Commerce Township wrote Malls & Mainstreets recently with this testimonial to excellent service.

Back in September 1995, I decided to flirt with The Furniture Source in West Bloomfield as another destination in my seemingly endless hunt for furnishings for my new home. After exploring most southeastern Michigan furniture stores and part of North Carolina's, I was not expecting a meaningful experience at The Furniture Source either.

I slipped in the front door and became alarmed — an interesting collection of furnishings were waiting for me! A "this is too good to be true" attitude prevailed and I dug for dirt: inflated prices, cheap construction, annoying personnel — anything I could sink my teeth into.

After a few minutes, a salesman, Larry Paffi, approached. He was inquisitive, informative and supportive. I found quality name brand furniture that I liked, the prices were reasonable, and there was an additional discount for cash. My interest was aroused, but would I be let down the aisle of disappointment in the end?

The infatuation grew when I ex-



Keeping the customer happy: Mike Nichols poses with his merchandise at the Furniture Source on Orchard Lake.

pressed an interest in a chair but felt nervous about its compatibility with my decor. Mike Nichols, the store owner, had it delivered to my home the next day for an overnight visit to see if it would work. It didn't. My budget was spared a serious mistake.

My husband, a highly budget-conscious individual, agreed to accompany me to your store. We found an entertainment center and a dining room set that we both liked.

We ordered the entertainment center. It came from the manufacturer several weeks ahead of schedule and the room it was going in was not yet ready. Nichols held it for us until we wanted it. The piece was delivered in perfect shape and at the time the delivery people said they would be here.

Hmm . . . are we past the infatuation stage?

We decided to take the plunge and order the dining room set. However, my fiscally responsible husband wanted to wait until we sold our old one first. Because of this we were down to the wire for delivery in time for a couple of holiday parties. The Furniture Source put us on "rush delivery" and said we would receive the furniture by the time of the second scheduled party but not in time for the first. Sensing my disappointment, Nichols delivered a substitute dining table and enough chairs to accommodate my guests!

We were impressed and we told others. Our friends purchased a dining room set and had an equally pleasant experience. When our dining

room furniture arrived, the delivery people pointed out that a couple of defects were found in the china cabinet and a new one was being ordered. They said I could use the delivered one until the new one arrived. Unfortunately, I discovered other problems with the furniture. "The honeymoon is over," I thought.

But, after inspecting the furniture and contacting the manufacturer, The Furniture Source delivered an entire new dining room full of furniture to my home.

The Furniture Source doesn't just whisper sweet nothings, they offer quality products, fabulous prices and best of all they really do care! I'm looking forward to many years of happiness with my selections.

— April Betzler

We're seeking super salesperson stories

We're shopping for shopping stories about extra special sales people. If you've had a recent shopping experience where a sales associate went above and beyond the call of duty to provide customer service, Malls & Mainstreets wants to hear about it! Drop us a line describing the shop-

ping situation and don't forget to name the store and shopping center involved. Those accounts published on the Malls & Mainstreets pages each month will win an Observer & Eccentric shopping tote for the sales associate and the shopper!

As an added bonus, those nominated have told us they've been featured in their company newsletters and received gift certificates or merchandise for the notoriety. It's a nice way to say thank you to a business person who goes the extra mile to as-

ist and make life easier.

Send your story to: More Than You Bargained For, c/o Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Be sure to include your name, address and daytime phone number.

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

HEALTH-O-RAMA

Free and low cost health tests and services 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through April 17. Customers must be 18 years or older.
Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia.
(313) 522-4100.

CHORUS SINGS

The Livonia Civic Chorus performs at 7 p.m. in the garden area near Sears.
Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt.
(810) 476-1160.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

QUILT EXHIBIT

Saks Fifth Avenue will display a portion of the San Francisco-based NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt — April 17-23 at Fairlane store, April 24-30 at Somerset Collection store. Coincides with The Red Ribbon Ball to benefit the Wellness House sponsored by Saks Fifth Avenue at the Somerset Collection on April 27 at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited to the gala, tickets available by calling (313) 993-1338.
Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy.
(810) 643-6900.

HEALTH-O-RAMA

Free and low cost health tests 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through April 18. Customers must be 18 years or older.
Universal Mall, 12 Mile/Dequindre, Warren.
(810) 751-3161.

SINGLES NIGHT

For single Chuck Muller performs as members of the Farmington Single Professionals invite others for music, refreshments and mingling in the store's cafe from 6:30-9:30 p.m.
Borders Books, Orchard Lake, Farmington Hills.
(810) 737-0110.

FACIAL CLINIC

Guarantee specialists at Saks Fifth Avenue invite customers for skin makeovers and free consultations through April 18. Appointments required. L'Oréal Paris facial clinics scheduled April 19-20.
Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy.
(810) 643-6900.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

COOKING CLASSES

Spring cooking themes are featured in Hudson's Marketplace. Demonstrations and classes at various store locations through May 5. Call for complete schedule and reservations for the free programs.
Twelve Dates, 12 Mile/Road, Novi.

1-800-366-0008.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

SPECIAL ART EXHIBIT

Through May 10, Objects of Art hosts 3rd annual exhibit/benefit of student works from the Kennedy Center Special Artists. All proceeds from the event go to the school and its disabled students, ages 14-26, residents of five Oakland communities. Pieces include garden sculpture as well as paintings and drawings for a worthy cause.
Sugar Free Plaza, 6243 Orchard Lake, West Bloomfield.
(810) 539-3332.

INFOMAIL MODELING

Noon to 2 p.m. at D. Dennison's and Alie's American Grille. Fashions from Land & Seas and Petite Sophisticates featured.
Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.
(313) 462-1100.

CRAFT SHOW

Spring arts and crafts through April 21 throughout the center.
Universal Mall, 12 Mile/Dequindre, Warren.
(810) 751-3161.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

DOWNTOWN DRAWINGS

Downtown Farmington Business Association hosts noon drawing for \$300 Grand Prize. (Actually \$700 with service bonuses). Miss Farmington will draw the winning ticket at the Civic Theater. Chances are six for \$5, or \$1 each.
Grand River/Farmington, Farmington.
(810) 616-7063.

STORYTIME

Clifford the big, red dog visits for some adventures at 11 a.m. in Borders Books Children's Department.
Southfield/13 Mile, Birmingham.
(810) 644-1815.

POON BEAR VISITS

Winnie the Pooh entertains 11 a.m. Children's Corner.
Borders, 30995 Orchard Lake, Farmington.
(810) 737-0110.

SPECIAL EVENTS

YMCA Indian Guides Pinewood Derby 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Also, American Heart Association offers free blood pressure tests, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. near Montgomery Ward.
Woodland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia.
(313) 522-4100.

PRECIOUS MOMENTS EVENT

Enesco Corporation hosts two Precious Moments

Parties beginning at 10 a.m. through 9 p.m. at The Card & Gift Centers at Grand River and Westland in Farmington and Oakland Mall in Troy. Prize drawings, visits with collectors club members, exhibit of "Hallekajahs Hometown," exclusive to event.
Oakland Mall, 14 Mile/John R. Troy.
(810) 586-6710.

KITE FLIGHT

Centerville Village hosts third annual Kite Flight through April 21 beginning at 10 a.m. For more details on family fun, call the Ohio World Village.
Joan's Road, Lake Orion.
(810) 391-5700.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

BABY PROMOTION

Hudson's hosts infant manufacturer seminars, speakers on infant-related topics. Stories for kids, 1-3 p.m. Children's Department.
Westland, Wayne/Warren.
(313) 456-5400.

LUNCHEON FASHION SHOW

Partisan presents sportswear (through special occasion dressing and lunch, modeled by local graduating seniors and their moms, 12:30 p.m. Public invited. Tickets \$38 per person. Reservations required. Ticket price redeemable on \$150 of merchandise.
Laurel Manor, 30000 Schoolcraft, Livonia.
(313) 953-7500.

BRIDAL FAIR

Hudson's hosts morning brunch with speakers and presentations for brides-to-be. Tickets \$10. Door prizes. Reservations required.
Summit Place, Elizabeth Lake/Telegraph, Waterford.
(810) 443-6334.

STORYBOOK SUNDAY

WHIO radio stars read classic children's stories to kids, 1 p.m. Book reports redeemable for mail discount coupons.
Fairlane Town Center, Michigan/Hubbard, Dearborn.
(313) 593-3545.

MONDAY, APRIL 22

HEALTH INFORMATION

Free blood pressure screenings courtesy of Bofarad General Hospital 8-10 a.m. Jacobson's Court, plus information about the prostate for men.
Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.
(810) 462-1100.

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

SPRING CONCERT

The Livonia Civic Chorus performs selections for spring, 7-7:30 p.m. Center Court, Complimentary.
Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.
(313) 462-1100.