

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, MAY 20, 1996

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SHOPPING CENTERED



Matching suits: For mother and daughter from Look & Sea, \$75. Available at Dun Thomas Sporthaus in the Bloomfield Plaza.

Find the swimsuit that's best for you

BY LINDA CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Every woman I know dreads shopping for a swimsuit. Most of today's skimpy styles fail to take into account the fact that real women have thighs.

In Carol Bross' 10 years of creating custom swimwear, she has yet to encounter a woman with a body built to fit a production swimsuit. At Beach Bound Ltd. in Birmingham, designers find solutions for problems such as long torsos, big thighs, small bosoms, and hips widened from child-bearing, not to mention bulges in all the wrong places.

By appointment only, clients in search of a flattering suit try on different styles to discover their best. Measurements are taken, then the suit is cut to fit them. Bross' shop offers more than 150 materials in a range of solid colors and patterns. Prices range from \$70-\$150. Plan on waiting a week for a suit.

If you need swimwear in a hurry, Different Strokes in Livonia has hundreds of competitive and fashionable swimsuits for every member of the family. According to manager Jan Layrs, although the majority of suits made by Speedo, Tyr and Nike were designed for racing and diving competitions, many customers buy them for comfort and durability. The legs are not cut as high as the ones on fashionable suits.

"Competitive swimsuits fit a lot nicer and they're very stylish," said Layrs who advised shoppers to "buy a suit that's comfortable on you."

People who swim a lot for therapy, or are in water aerobics, buy competitive suits because they're looking for nylon or terylene/polyester, rather than lycra. These last longer in the chlorine.

Rinsing a swimsuit in clear water and hanging it to dry immediately after use will ensure a longer life for a suit. "A lot of people tend to throw them in a beach bag and that's the worst thing you can do," Layrs insisted.

Look for fashionable swimwear by Raisins, Point Conception, Radio Fiji and Lellani (cut for mature women) in brights and neon colors this season, also materials in splashy patterns or dappled with daisies. A Radio Fiji two piece suit in magenta with orange piping is \$66. Prices for swimsuits from Different Strokes, \$38 to \$70.

In need of a little lift? Swimwear by Wonderbra provides engineering elements for dramatic cleavage with its push-up plunge bra. Introduced last year, the Wonderbra Swimwear collection boasts five figure enhancing styles for 1996 which incorporate new design elements including tummy control, fuller cut bottoms and specially selected Italian fabrics. Sizing is by bra cup. Price range from \$75-\$90. Wonderbra Swimwear is available at JC Penney, Lord & Taylor or directly by calling 1-800-654-6122.

For the less endowed, Hudson's carries a wide array of bust enhancement suits. Some have full pads, removable half pads, underwires and foam pads. Swimwear by Robby Len promises to extend the life of suits with chlorine resistant materials, and solve long torso problems with special fitting designs. Women's swimwear is priced from \$25 to \$60.

Here are a few tips from the experts at Hudson's to help deal with problem areas:

"To minimize a midriff or tummy, fool the eye with fabric or styling that pulls the eye away from the trouble spot. Look for wraps or shirring in one piece suits, a high waist on bikinis.

"Hide hips by avoiding tight belts and elastic that bind and create bulges. Choose styles to avoid strong horizontal lines with higher cut sides, side shirring or tied sides.

"Enhance the contours of a small bustline with dramatic textures, small ruffles, gathers, and print materials. Textured swimwear, in general, provides surface interest and camouflages certain parts of the body.

"To flatter a full bosom look for details (shirring, draping) to pull the eye away from the bustline. Be sure to pay special attention to support, comfort, and coverage.

"Women with longer torsos (the measurement from bustline to hip bone) require a suit designed to insure proper coverage. See you at the beach.

Oakland Mall stays 'easy'



In the shadow of the soon-to-open Somerset Collection, Oakland Mall hopes to renew its position as "everybody's favorite mall."

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

While lesser shopping centers might fret and frown about a new mega mall like Somerset Collection opening just three miles away, the Oakland Mall in Troy sees it as an opportunity.

Mall manager Joy Powell, celebrating her third year at the center, called Somerset a "lucky chance for Oakland Mall."

"We are very different malls," she pointed out. "We're the comfortable, casual, fun and friendly place for families to shop. Our new advertising campaign says it best: At the Oakland Mall, shop as you are."

"Sure, curious shoppers will want to check out Somerset when it opens in August, but our customers will return. We're the real mall for real people. We're taking advantage of all the publicity around Somerset as the chance for us to say who we are and what we're all about."

To remind shoppers what Oakland Mall is all about, the mall's landmark sign, visible from I-75, is being replaced with what is expected to be the largest internally illuminated sign in Michigan - if not the Midwest. The "freeway sign" will rise

more than 75-feet high, and the mall's other sign at John R and 14 Mile, will be more than 45-feet tall. The new signs carry a \$200,000 price tag.

"We're planning a September pylon lighting ceremony that will be out of this world," Powell laughed. "Stay tuned. It will be so bright you'll need shades."

By November, an all-new holiday program will be the center of attention - gone is the Sesame Street Christmas of years past. The Oakland Mall holiday, according to Powell, "is an exciting new concept featuring all the warm 'n' fuzzies of holidays we remember as children."

Powell described a 1995 Scarborough report that named the Oakland Mall, "Michigan's Favorite," based on the volume of shoppers each year. "We get the most traffic of all the state's shopping centers," she said.

All retail space within the Oakland Mall is accounted for with the signing of three new leases: Bath & Body Works, Nineties Nails and Perfumaria.

The recent establishment of two mall clubs (Club Tread for walkers, The Giggle Gang for children,) helped the center develop a frequent shopper base with more than 10,000 names.

Two exciting promotions are on the way - Disney's pre-Hunchback traveling exhibit May 31-June 2 and The Big Apple Performing Arts Circus, June 7-18.

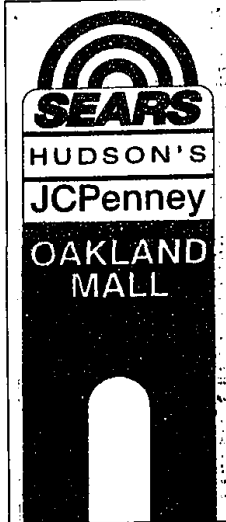
"We'd like to have more of such high-caliber family entertainment," Powell said. "It's just the kind of community fun Oakland Mall believes in."

Powell said the mall restaurants (Bruschetta's, Coney Island, Hudson's, Ruby Tuesday and Big Boy's) are among the most successful tenants at the center. Other bestsellers include the children's apparel shops and home stores seeing sales up 5 percent over last year's.

Oakland Mall opened in July 1988 and was expanded in 1979, adding 52 stores, plus JC Penney. The mall is owned by Oakland Mall Limited with Jay Kogan, partner and Douglas Mossman, an associate.

There are 140 stores at the center employing approximately 6,900 area residents.

"We are really thrilled over the new sign project," Powell said. "We're calling it a sign of the times. So many shoppers tell us the sign means 'home' to them. On the way up or down I-75, when they see our sign, they know they're almost home."



Sign on: Oakland Mall is building a new banner - supported by a steel-clad base more than 75-feet-high.



Esther Williams dives into new career

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Surveys reveal that 80-percent of the women who buy bathing suits never get them wet.

"That's because they're not wearing an Esther Williams suit," the ex-actress/Olympic swimmer said during a phone conversation from her home in Beverly Hills. "I believe in containment and support. My suits are created for women with bosoms and bottoms who enjoy the water. And I am a big believer in enjoying the water."

She planned on creating a swim wear line of her own "when they were done with me." But, because she lent her name to a New Jersey-based pool company in 1958, it wasn't until 1989, when she won a lawsuit reclaiming the right to use her name, that she was free to manufacture bathing suits with an Esther Williams label.

"And that's thanks to Yanna White's brilliant lawyer who specialized in 'intellectual property defense,'" Williams explained. "I was born Esther Jane Williams and that name

belongs to me. I just had to break the gridlock."

Williams' collection offers 96 different swimsuit styles in sizes to 20. They are designed in California and manufactured in Vermont, priced about \$59 each. Williams will be the guest of Hudson's on Wednesday, May 23 from noon to 2 p.m.

In the swim wear department of the Oakland Mall store in Troy.

She'll also make an 8:50 a.m. appearance on Eyewitness Morning on WJBK that day.

"When I met the fans who grew up watching my movies, there are always two things that they want to know," Williams said gaily.

"Yes, I still swim everyday, and secondly, my secret to success is staying busy and productive throughout life."

I'm not a lady who lunches. I'm not a charity committee gal. I have three children, three grandchildren, and I still have my businesses and my tours with Turner Classic Movies to keep me going strong."

Williams said swimming is the best exercise for strengthening the heart and relieving arthritis. She works out against a current machine in her pool, daily. She said she is most proud of the years she spent teaching the blind



Fun and fit: Williams still enjoys a full life. She swims laps daily against a current machine and divides her time between two businesses - swimwear and pools.

to swim, "and the moments people come up to me and say, 'I learned to swim because of you.'"

"Williams said she enjoys watching her old movies because she "likes the gal I played." She was warm, capable, and cared about the feelings of others. I would want her for a daughter."

Monday, May 20

HEALTH/FASHION

Understanding Medical Insurance, 8-10 a.m. in Jacobson's Court Area, a program for mall walkers. Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 462-1100.

ARTSCAPE EXHIBIT

Selection of art and sculpture for the garden and patio through June 30. Also, advice on adding art to a garden. Objects of Art, Orchard Lake/Maple, West Bloomfield. (810) 639-3332.

Tuesday, May 21

ART DEMONSTRATION

The Art Gallery II presents Jo Cigna Burke working with paper collages, 1-5 p.m. Repeated May 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Summit Place Mall, Telegraph/Elizabeth Lake, Waterford. (810) 683-8142.

X FILES PHOTOM

X Files fans are invited to this discussion group with drawings for X Files merchandise, 7:30 p.m. Free coffee. Borders Books, 30995 Orchard Lake, Farmington Hills. (810) 737-0110.

Wednesday, May 22

SOMERSET LECTURE

The monthly meeting of CREW (Commercial Real Estate Women) presents Rebecca Maccardini of Forbes/Cohen Properties discussing the impact of the Somerset Collection, 6:30 p.m. mall's Community Room. \$15 members, \$20 non-members, \$25 at the door. Reservations suggested. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy. (313) 769-8520.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Thursday, May 23

COSMETIC CONSULTATIONS

Clarine professionals at Saks Fifth Avenue offer complimentary mini-facials and makeovers. Appointments suggested through May 25. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy. (810) 614-3363.

CELEBRITY VISITS

Actress Esther Williams visits Hudson's to promote her line of glamorous swimwear. Informal modeling of her collection, noon to 2 p.m. Oakland Mall, 14 Mile/John R. Troy. (810) 697-2200.

Friday, May 24

FOLK CONCERT

Folk singer and guitarist Dan Hazlett performs 8-10 p.m. at Border's Books, 30995 Orchard Lake, Farmington Hills. (810) 737-0110.

FORMAL MODELING

Fashions informally presented noon to 2 p.m. at D. Dennison and Allie's American Grille. See clothing from Joe A. Bank and Mimi Maternity, Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 462-1100.

SPORTS COLLECTIBLES SHOW

Through May 27, family fun for collectors of cards, coins and sports memorabilia, during regular mall hours. Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia. (313) 522-4100.

POPE CONCERT

The legendary Motown music makers The Contours, appear with mall's new pope orchestra performing Motown classics, 8 p.m. Celebrated jazz keyboardist Brad Hatfield of the Boston Pops will be guest conductor at 6 and 8 p.m. concerts. More concerts set for May 25 at 6 p.m. and May 26 at 2 and 5 p.m. All concerts are in Center Court. They're free and open to the public. Fairlane Town Center, Michigan/Southfield Freeway, Dearborn. (313) 593-1370.

Saturday, May 25

HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Downtown Rochester celebrates its annual Heritage Festival with special events, entertainment and food through May 26. Main/University, Rochester. (810) 656-0060.

ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR

Through May 27, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Stroll the Olde World Canterbury Village and browse through hundreds of items for show and sale. Traditional folk music by Inkaterpuy. Admission and parking is free. King's Castle Restaurant, pen. Canterbury Village, Joelyn Road, Lake Orion. (810) 391-9882.

FARMER'S MARKET

Plymouth Chamber of Commerce sponsors stalls with produce, flowers, cheeses, breads, crafts from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. through Oct. 19. Kellogg Park, Ann Arbor Trail/Penniman. (313) 453-1540.

Memorial Day, Monday, May 27

HOLIDAY HOURS

Most malls open limited hours, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.