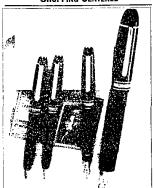
MALLS& MAINSTREETS

SHOPPING CENTERED



Pens with pizzazz: Mont Blanc carries a line of writing instruments inspired by the genius of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, available at the Mont Blane Boutique in the Somerset Collection, Troy, from \$155.

Quaint quills for dads and grads

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN STOT WITES

Max Burns remembers when Cross pens came in black, gray, chrome or gold. Today, the owner of black, gray, chrome or gold. Today, the owner of flumidor. One in Southfield the choices are endless. From laps lazid to brain with lacquer or porcelain overlay, pens are notably in finish but size, shape, weighting tips. While the look of the state of the state of fluming the same of fluming the same of fluming the same of fluming the several of the performance and comfort. If you're buying a pen as a gift for a dad or grad. Homidor One offers a wide selection of brands including Cross, Parker, Montblane, Schaeffer, Waterman, Lamy, Montegrapps, and Aurora. When choosing a pen, consider bow the writer will like the feel of it, the way it writes. Burns said. "You can develop an affection for a pen and there's always a story behind your favorite pen, whether it was a gift, to bought for yourself the day the boss gave you a raise."

To acquaint customers with pens, Humdor Onwill host a Fine Pen Show from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday. June 14. Manufacturers' representatives will be on hand to answer questions about current products as well as solve any parts problems with vintage pens. There will also be display of vintage Parker pens plus drawings for five fine pens.

Notes on nibs

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Here are some factors to consider when choosing a pen as a gift. Is the pen for a man or a woman? What size nib does it have? This is usually a personal preference based on the kind of writing to be done. Will the pen be used primarily for signatures? Generally, a broad nib is used for signatures, a finer point for a lot of writing. You don't want a broad nib because it fills in the vowels. said Sean Riley a pen afficiando.

Ask whether the pen is plastic, metal, acrylic? What kind of guarantee does it hold?

"Lamy is made in Germany. It's a high tech pen that appeals to architects and people in high tech fields. The ball point 4559 has a retractable shirtlip so you won't put it in your pocket with the writing tip exposed. The Duofold by Parker (\$325) is a reproduction of their 1920s pen and is a solid piece of bored acrylic. The Aurora ifrom Italy) has a 14K nib and a large band which most people are looking for in a fine writing instrument so you're not straining to grasp it. You hold it genly in your hand, said Riley. Fountain pens are becoming more popular because they require you to take more time in your writing. The fountain pen brings more character to your writing. It makes it more personal."

Primary considerations when purchasing a fountain pen are the durability of the finish and nib quality. These determine the cost of a fountain pen. Whether the nib is stainless sted or 18 K gold, only a high quality writing pen will gilde across the precious metal creates a tip which is flexible and responsive to an individual's writing at \$25, pen chests for the collector from \$225, and desk sets from \$46 the collector from \$225, and desk sets from \$14, 180, and pencilal metal some and collection of consideration from \$255, and leak sets from \$155, to \$14, 800, a special or the pencilal metal penc

Stores expand to fill all retail niches



All the department stores in town say they welcome your business, but

their price points are the key to where you'll even-tually shop for fashion and family.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO

For a very long time, Detroiters could shop at just three department stores - Jacobson's (if we had a few bucks) or Crowley's and Hudson's (where mom and grandmom had charge accounts).

In 1977, Detroit retailing grew more interesting when Lord & Taylor entered the marketplace at several regional malls. 'Shopping the anchors' then became the status quo for the next 20 years.

But times are changing, In 1994, and much fanfare, Dallas-based Neiman Marcus opened a depart-

Major Labels



ment store in town, followed by other retail legends like Tiffany's and Barney's. Last year, Alabama-based Parisian opened in Livonia, and in August, west-coast retail giant Nordstrom debuts along with Bendel's and 150 other emporiums.

MAJOR RETAIL FACTSHEET

Now, however will we decide where to hiv our socks and shoes? Spokesmen for each retailer say their stores have the best service and value. All insist their prices are competitive - a few will not be undersold. But insiders worry that sheing up the retail pie so finely will cost some their share of whipped cream. "That's nonsense," said Fred Marx whose Farmington Hills marking firm specializes in retail accounts. 'Competition will cause everybody to in. The older players will reinvest in the community, allocating to the stores. The new players will recapture the dollars that have been going out of town to markets like

New York and Chicago. Plus, we'll bring in business from marketa'like Toledo, Flint, Lansing and Wintker. They come for sporting events, how they'll come for shopping.

Marx said Detroit is the fifth largest market area in the country and has been 'under' retailed for years. In his view, the new department stores in town will be a 'positive jolt' to a so-so retail situation.

One wonders if there could-be room for the still clusive retailers like Bloomingdale's, Macy's or Robinsons-May?

"One nevers knows, said a leasing agent who asked to remain anonymous." There are still after malls in town with room fore a enchor."



Boutique business: Patty Brock of Excelsior Couture said the key to her success is knowing what her customers want and providing super service.

Boutique owner builds business sale at a time

By Sesan DEMAGGO
STAP WRITER
On Woodward, just south of Royal Oak, sits Excelsor Couture, small in size but big on service and style.
Owner Patty Brock, former Latin Dance instructor and competitor, enters to the residents of Pleasant Ridge with one-of-a-kind fashions, accessories and gifts, that offer area artists an outlet for their wares.
"I try and buy simple clothing collections that serve as canvasses to dress up or down." Brock explained her motis operandi. "This way my customers get a lot of extra mileage from their clothes. I also only buy one size of each garment so shoppers know they won't see other people wearing the same dress or pantauti. If huy several garments from the same ine, they'll be in different colors or silhoutlete."

ettes."
Unique clothing is one reason to shop at
Excelsior. The other is for that small town
feeling. Folks from the neighborhood stop
in to chat and policemen wave through

in to chat and policemen wave unoughthe windows.

"Having my own business is a dream come true," said Brock whose divorce left her with a young son to raise. "I knew I had to support someone besides myself so I was determined to make it. I got my start working for the Patty Smith boutique in Royal Onk, but the work was only part-time. I had to work three jobs to make my house payment.

"I try and buy simple clothing collections that serve as canvasses to dress up or down ,

Patty Brock

Owner, Excelsior Couture

"When I decided to open my own store, it was seny. My son, Jordan and I drove by this building when AAA insurance moved out and I went after it. In the spring of 1994, we got it and immediately went to work designing the interior and doing all the work ourselves. We use the large front windows to grab Woodward motorists with big, yet simple fashion messages."

The name Excelsior means "upward and onward" according to Brock who said, she used to listen to a radio jock who olkay yelled out the word during his broadcants. It just suits me, she said.

Brock sells collections from BCBG, Johnny Was, KIKO, KANXIO, Basement Clothing and Cut Loose. The look is almost vintage, a three-piece ensemble is about \$150.

almost vintage, a three-piece ensemble is about \$150. Brock and other Pleasant Ridge business owners have formed a loose promotional group to focus attention on their services. "SoRo" stands for south of Royal Oak.

The shop is open daily from 11 a.m. Closed Sundays. Inquiries are welcome at (810) 547-5333.

Monday, June 3

PURPET SHOWS

"Goldilocks and the Three Bears" Monday-Friday 7 p.m. Saturday 11 a.m. 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday 1 and 3. On June 7 and 8 a mall-wide Jaguar Show with

classic and modern models. MendowBrook Village Mall. Walton/University. Rochester Hills.

Selection of art and sculpture for the garden and patio through June 30. Also, advice on adding art to a garden at Objects of Art.
Orchard Lako/Maple. West Bloomfield.
(810) 539-3332.

INDY DRIVER VISITS

Michael Andretti meets and greets fans on Hud-son's main floor on behalf of DK fragrance for men and Newman/Hasa racing team. 1-3 p.m. He'll autograph fragrance purchases. Onkland Mall. 14 Mile/John R. Troy.

Friday, June 7

GARDEN SHOW

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ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Walton/Adams. Rochester Hills. (810) 646-4992.

(810) 846-4992.

FAMEN MOMT
Librarian Menghan Battle hosts shalf-hour
story party. 7 p.m. Center Court.
Westland Wayno/Waren.
(313) 425-5001.

Saturday, June 8

CHILDREN'S MUSICAL

"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" presented by The Children's Entertainment Company 1 and 3 p.m. on stage near Crowley's

Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt

(810) 476-1160. MALL CONCERT

MALL CONCERT
Pianlst Carl Fornstrum performs 1-2:30 p.m.
Free sampling of Coffee Beanery brew during
concert.Also, informal modeling of fashlons from
The Limited, Tolbot's and Northern Reflections.
Laurel Park Place. Six Mile/Newburg, Livonia.
(313):462-1100.

(313)-We-asses
ARTISTS VISIT
Local artist Elaine Biustain demonstrates
painting techniques 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Art
Gallery Boutique which features work of Pontine

Oakland Society of Artists for show and sale. Great Oaks Mall. Livernois/Walton. Rochester

Hi]ls. (810) 651-1579.

RUDO FUN
Beth Jakubowski lends participants in song and
dance, 11 a.m.Borders Children's department.
Also, on June 9 storyteller Celin Goodman for
ages 3-10 at p.m.
30995 Orehard Lake. Farmington Hills.
(810) 737-0110.

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Plymouth Chamber of Commerce aponsors 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) 463-1640.

Sunday, June 9

STORYBOOK SUMDAY

Gene Maxwell from WNIC radio reads a children's classic 1 p.m. Center Court. fergus thr

friendly dinosaur visits.

Fairlane Town center. Michigan/Southfield Fwy.

Dearborn. (313) 593-0572.

Monday, June 10

COLPER VISITS

Meet Payne Stewart as he introduces his sig-nature golf merchandise 10a.m. to noon. t Hud-

Oakland Mail. 14 Mile/John R. Troy. (810) 597-2200