

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Monday, Sept. 2, 1996

AS (OF,\*)

## SHOPPING CENTERED



Great glasses: The eyewear shown here is from Marchon's Mickey & Co. collection, available locally at fine optical boutiques.

## Kids' eyewear flatters tiny faces with high style

As you prepare your child for the upcoming school season, a comprehensive eye exam should be the first item on your back-to-school checklist.

Good vision is crucial to a child's learning and development. Children with undiagnosed eye problems sit in classrooms all around the country staring at blurry blackboards or fuzzy pages in books. Often, they do not tell anyone because they believe everyone sees the way they do.

The American Optometric Association recommends that school-age children have their eyes examined annually. A startling 50-percent of reading problems in school-age children occur as a result of undetected vision problems.

According to the Vision Council of America, one-in-four children between the ages of 5 and 12, has a vision problem that may affect educational performance.

### Indications of eye strain

Parents should watch for these signs of possible vision trouble, says Dr. Jack Weber, director of research and development for Marchon Eyewear:

- Excessive rubbing or blinking of eyes
- Covering one eye, then the other, when reading
- Placing head very close to the book to focus on words
- Squinting and complaints of headaches after reading or watching television
- Unequal tracking of moving objects
- Omitting, repeating and miscalling words or confusing similar words
- Evidence of poor eye-hand coordination
- A family history of poor vision or eye disease

### Tips for finding the perfect frames:

If your child needs glasses, the experts at Marchon Eyewear offer these suggestions:

**Frame selection**—Let your child try on several frames, including brand names like Marchon's Mickey & Co., and be satisfied with the final choice. Children can identify with the friendly characters of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Minnie.

**Appearance**—Metal rims are the rage, as is traditional gold and tortoise coloring, for kids 7 and older. In younger kids' frames, an added punch of color is splashed on frames with confetti-like patterns of bold pinks, reds, blues and violets. In fact, a favorite kids' frame by Mickey & Co. is colored *blurple*, a combination of blue and purple.

**Durability**—Kids tend to be hard on their frames. Therefore, well constructed, quality eyeglasses are very important to help keep breakage and adjustments to a minimum. With regard to lenses, nothing is safer for parents of active youngsters than impact-resistant lenses made of polycarbonate material.

**Fit and comfort**—Eyes should be centered with the lens (the optic center) for optimum correction effectiveness. The top of the frame should follow the child's brow line. The frame itself should not rest over the child's cheeks, and the temple should gently curve around the ears without pinching.

**Safety features**—Spring hinges in the temples of children's frames provide an extra measure of comfort and durability, adjustable Unifit bridges gently hug the tender cartilage of young noses, and comfort cables have a rubber tubing that covers the metal ear tip, providing a snug, comfortable fit so eyeglasses won't slip or fall off.

**Flexible shape-retaining frames** made of Flex-on, a titanium-based metal alloy distributed and patented exclusively by Marchon Eyewear, can be twisted or bent, yet automatically spring back to their original shape to withstand rough handling and rough play.

**Proper frame care**—Lenses must be kept clean. Smudged, dirty lenses can distort your child's vision and should be cleaned with a soft cloth to avoid making scratches.

—Metro News Service

## Health superstore opens MedMax promotes well-being

A Southfield company plans to roll out dozens of MedMax stores, aisles full of health care products for aging baby boomers. The prototype opened last week in Westland.

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Statistics show an aging American population entering the 21st century. So it's no wonder retail experts predict new and expanded markets in preventive care and medical supplies.

Leading the way is pharmacist F. Kevin Browett, 41, of Farmington Hills. His Southfield-based company MedMax just opened the area's first superstore specializing in health and care products in Westland.

Later this year, two more MedMax stores will open in Rochester Hills and Taylor. Next year, plans call for additional locations in Farmington and Troy.

Browett is no stranger to the health care industry. He spent 12 years as a pharmacist for Virginia-based People's Drugs, and the next four, as a general merchandising manager responsible for buying \$18

million worth of health care products for K-mart. He said today's consumers are educated about their health, and have the information they need to buy health care items for themselves.

MedMax sells more than 20,000 different health products in 16,000 square feet of space. Shoppers can find merchandise devoted to helping bad backs, sports injuries, mobility, nutrition, maternity patients, and home environments.

There are also prescription medicines, vitamins, power drinks and bars, hand-held weights, exercise balls, wheelchairs, scooters and lift-assisted loungers for sale. Many items make home environments less stressful for patients and caregivers.

Bed, bath and office vignettes display products that might make life easier for arthritic patients like right-angle utensils, suction-bottom bowls, pencil grippers, bath rails,

and door knob extensions. Items such as oven and stove security knobs, cupboard latches and toilet seat locks insure safer home for children or loved-ones with diseases like Alzheimer's or Dementia.

Whether the need is for apparel with velcro closings, shoes designed for diabetes and gout patients, therapeutic massage items, bedding products to aid sleep, a Porta warm mattress for baby, or allergy-free pillows, MedMax stocks it all, and if they don't, the staff carries note cards to pass customer requests on to buyers. By the year 2002, the Southfield-based company hopes to open 200 more stores nationwide.

### Professional Staff

"It's more than a pharmacy," said manager Dave Sichenoder. "What's going to set MedMax apart is the wide variety of items for health and care, plus a staff of true professionals — a registered nurse, sports and nutrition therapist, audiologist, respiratory therapist, and soon-to-come, a dietitian."

"And it's not just a sick store," he continued. "We're also offering our services and products to the fit and healthy. We're going to work with

school athletic directors to prep them on keeping their students injury-free, and we're hosting hospital-sponsored lectures on preventative medicine."

Private rooms are available for mastectomy patients seeking prosthetics, and shoppers needing custom-fitted braces. A computerized body composition analysis measures fat and muscle content, and then tailors nutrition and exercise programs to the individual under the direction of an athletic trainer, not a bad deal for \$40. Another computerized program caters to orthotics for podiatry needs.

A juice bar allows customers to rest and peruse the library of health-care books. A designated area incorporating a variety of surfaces from plush carpeting to ceramic tiles, provides walker patients with a place to try products before purchasing. MedMax is awaiting city approval for a drive-through pharmacy window.

"We've created a clinical setting in a retail environment," said Sichenoder.

MedMax is across from Westland Center, 35600 Central City Pkwy. (313) 458-7100.

## Linda Allard's designs appeal to classic tastes

BY JUDITH DOWNE BERNIE  
SPECIAL WRITER

Linda Allard, designer for Ellen Tracy, is no stranger to receiving compliments for her clothing designs.

But maybe none so unusual as: "Your clothes have been to a ton of fires."

That's because Channel 7 news reporter Mary Conway was one of about 50 women invited to breakfast recently in the Neiman Marcus Cafe as part of a preview of the Ellen Tracy Collections for fall.

"The thing I appreciate is you don't just design clothes for waifs," Conway told Allard, who was breaking fast next to her. Also at the table was Ellen Tracy president, Herb Gallen, who started the firm 47 years ago and who recently has taken two grandsons into the business.

In fact, designer Allard is rather the portrait of the traditional Ellen Tracy customer — a busy professional who wears comfortable classic clothing by day and basic designs in dressy fabrics by night.

"That's a great look for evening," she said, as a model moved through the room in a simple shirt and jeans fabricated in elegant materials.



Allard, though a celebrated New York designer, seemed to fit right in with these customers, most of whom were wearing her clothes. Sporting little make-up, a casual hairstyle and no nail polish (she's both an accomplished cook and gardener), she spoke of the importance of family reunions and gardening "There's something about digging in the earth and getting your fingernails dirty."

Perhaps it's her Midwest background. She hails from Ohio and got her fine arts degree from Kent State University.

"I think I am the woman I'm designing for," she acknowledged. Fall trends, according to Allard, are:

- Intense sweeps of head-to-toe color — at Ellen Tracy in all-out red and aubergines.
- Sleek military inspired looks — the pea-coat, jackets with a dropped yoke, trench styling in three-quarter and full lengths.
- Casual attitude evidenced by zip front jackets, slim jean styled pants, knit dressing.
- Sharp 70's styling in pant suits with peaked lapels and slim pant legs.
- Textural play through leather, slinky knits, vermicelli beading for

evening shine.

Her new designs were definitely appreciated by this audience.

Linda December of Bloomfield Hills wasted no time. "Bought my black leather and I'm out of here," she said.

But most of the Ellen Tracy aficionados took their time. Overheard was, "I want it all!"

"I think they're so youthful this year and smartly tailored," Southfield resident Marcia Edelman said of the fall collection. "I love Ellen Tracy, but now my daughter (Sharon, who accompanied her), can also wear them because they're youthful."

Although Ellen Tracy has come in petite sizes for a number of years, it was four years ago that the Company line, designed for a little younger, less conservative clientele, was added.

And three years ago, the Ellen Tracy line was expanded for women who wear larger sizes.

This fall, look for the new Platinum group (the label reverses the traditional Ellen Tracy label with a platinum background and black letters) that Allard says comprises the favorites women keep asking her to bring back.

"Whenever I make a store appearance customers ask me to repeat certain classic styles that they've found they can't live without."

Allard says. "So we've taken our most popular classics and developed an adjunct collection that women will be able to find year round."

The Platinum group includes long

and short skirts, single and double breasted jackets, pants and the trench coat in navy, black and khaki and in a variety of materials.



**Sleek trio: Red knit separates include from left, the maxi coat with funnelneck sweater and slim jean, the pea coat over a slim skirt, and the slim cardigan maxi dress from \$155, all part of Ellen Tracy's fall collection at Neiman Marcus.**

News of special events of interest to shoppers is included in this calendar. Send promotion information to: Mall & Mainstreets, c/o Birmingham Eccentric, 805 East Maple, 48009; or fax (810) 644-1314. The deadline is Wednesday at 5 p.m. for publication on Monday.

### MONDAY, SEPT. 2

#### Be True To Your School

Receipts toward learning materials benefits schools of shoppers' choice. Program in place through Jan. 31, 1997. Available only in Leeds, Sterling Heights, Twelve Oaks, Novi, Briarwood, Ann Arbor and Fairlane Town Center, Dearborn. (810) 345-9438.

#### Puppet Shows

"The Reluctant Dragon" daily through September in the mall's puppet pit, 11 a.m. 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday at 1 and 3 p.m. Meadow Brook Village, Walton/Adams. Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

#### Writing Exhibit

The Montblanc Boutique is hosting a collection of 80 writing instruments that includes rare pens dating from the early 1900s through Sept. 8. Forensic handwriting examiner Richard Kokochak visits on Sept. 7 to analyze handwriting samples.

#### Somerset Collection South

Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy. (810) 637-9885.

### TUESDAY, SEPT. 3

#### Art & Apples Fair

Annual family event throughout downtown district through Sept. 8. Contests, exhibits,

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

refreshments, entertainment and shopping.

Main/University, Rochester.

(810) 656-0066.

#### Family Expo

A must for senior citizens and their families, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Sept. 7. Topics include financial planning, health and fitness, travel. Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph. Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

### SATURDAY, SEPT. 7

#### Art in the Park

22nd annual art fair to benefit Common Ground, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Repeated Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission. Refreshments, continuous live entertainment, silent auction, raffles, work of 168 artists from 31 states presenting baskets, ceramics, drawings, paintings, wearable art, sculpture and wood crafts. Highlights include kids' art area with projects. Shain Park, Merrill/Bates, Birmingham. (810) 456-8150.

#### Train Show/Fall Festival

Annual train extravaganza 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. features new, used, antique and collectible toy and model railroads and accessories. Vintage Lionel trains from the 1940s-50s on display. Railroad artist Paul Adams shows and sells works and T-shirts. Also in nearby downtown Plymouth, the city hosts its annual fair in Kellogg Park through Aug. 8. Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer. (813) 458-2110.

### PBS Characters visit

FAO Swars hosts a family day with characters from PBS shows (Arthur, Huckle Cat and Hilda Hippo, Spiderman and the Incredible Hulk), appearing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Portion of proceeds from toy sales will benefit public broadcasting programs for kids.

Somerset Collection North.

Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy.

(810) 643-4554.

#### Farmer's Market

Both downtown Farmington and Plymouth have small produce, bakery and craft stands from the morning until afternoon each Saturday in the heart of their business districts until late October. (313) 453-1540.

#### Petites Show

Parisian Department Store hosts a fashion/luncheon for all petite customers featuring Liz Claiborne, Karen Kane, Sigrid Olsen and Jones New York collections. 11 a.m. at the Livonia Marriott, attached to the mall. Tickets \$15, reservations required. Open to the public. Guest speaker is petite fit specialist Maryann Greybel. Join her for consultations and dessert, back in the store, after lunch.

Laurel Park, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.

(313) 953-7500.

### MONDAY, SEPT. 9

#### Senior Dance

Senior citizens are invited to enjoy dancing and socializing, beginning at 11 a.m. in the mall's lower level auditorium. Coffee and refreshments served at 12:30 p.m. The event ends at 1 p.m. The next month's dance will be held on Oct. 7. Westland Center, Wayne/Warren. (313) 425-5001.