

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Monday, Oct. 14, 1996

A10(OF)

## SHOPPING CENTERED

**Dazzling gift:**  
These earrings from  
Yankee  
Designs in  
Franklin,  
took a Best  
of Show  
award from  
the Michigan  
Jewelers Assn.

## Don't forget Sweetest Day!

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Call me romantic, but I've always thought Sweetest Day was a good excuse for giving candy, flowers and sentimental cards to express your sentiments. Sydney Bogg Fine Candies in Bloomfield Hills, Rochester Hills, Royal Oak, and Detroit, and French's Flowers & Gifts in Livonia, offer dozens of ideas for saying "I think you're special," on Saturday, Oct. 19.

"I like to think of Sweetest Day as a mini Valentines Day but it's more of a fun thing. Customers put their money into the candy instead of the fancy red boxes. We're best known for our turtles (tons of chocolate poured over whole pecans floating amidst real whipped cream) so they're really popular as gifts," said Sydney Bogg owner Judy McGuire who has watched the holiday grow over the last 19 years.

"Sweetest Day has become a very big holiday but it's more personal now. It's pretty much for the immediate family or someone who has been nice to you, also the elderly and shut-ins. Men seem to be my biggest customers. They really enjoy picking out candy for the family."

"She said Jelly Bells are still very popular (\$6 per pound) and chocolate-covered gummi bears (\$7 per pound) are great for people on diets because they last so long. McGuire is a registered dietitian. Her company recently won an award from the 600-member Retail Confectioners International in Illinois.

"We also sell a lot of ginger especially now that there is New Age medical proof that ginger helps settle your stomach. Chocolate-covered ginger is a British tradition," McGuire is also bringing back favorite Sydney Bogg chocolate recipes from 60 years ago like butterballs (\$7.50 for 1/2 pound).

For a sweetie who's a diabetic, or on a sugar-restricted diet, there are Sydney Bogg's sugar-free chocolate-covered cordials, almonds, caramels and cashew patties (\$22 per pound). Why not add a stuffed animal (\$2-\$125) for snuggling?

According to Detroit Sweetest Day Committee chairman John M. Sanders of Sanders Confectionery Products in Troy, the observance originated 70 years ago in Cleveland. A man thought the city's orphans and underprivileged felt neglected so with the help of family and friends he began distributing small gifts to them on the third Saturday in October. Over the years, the holiday became an occasion for remembering others with a kind act or small gift.

"Sweetest Day is almost becoming as big as Valentines Day but it's only celebrated in the Midwest. We call it the Fall Valentines Day but the roses don't go sky-high like on Feb. 14," said Leigh Pistolesi, owner of French's Flowers & Gifts.

"My Sweetest Day customers are primarily men and the few women who aren't afraid to send flowers. It's a big cash and carry holiday, not a lot of sending of flowers, a lot of instant cash and carry, guys on their way home."

Overwhelmingly the choice for the day is roses, the newest and hottest seller being the long-stemmed Oceania with a large, pink-peach colored flower. Last year, French's sold 1,500 roses on Sweetest Day.

"We sell a lot of red roses (\$35-\$40 a dozen) and bouquets of cut flowers (\$5.95-\$12.95). We have problems keeping the Oceania in stock. It is a long lasting rose," said Pistolesi who plans to give her husband a single rose; her mother and grandmother, a dozen each.



**Kids stuff:** A new addition to Twelve Oaks mall features foam structures in a padded play area where little ones can crawl around jumbo crayons, rulers and blobs of spilled glue. Fun? Just ask Alexandra Arnold, 2½ of Wixom and Tom Berry, 3½ of South Lyon.

## Twelve Oaks mall completes a \$7 million renovation task

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

Twelve Oaks in Novi celebrates its 20th anniversary next year with a three-phase project designed to update the regional center for state-of-the-art customer service.

The initial phase was completed in August, after seven months of work. The \$7 million remodel included a padded toddler playground, unisex family restroom, barrier-free entrances and elevators, an expanded customer service center, canopied valet station, and new

lighting and mall signage.

Remaining phases will be geared to giving the 1977 mall a 1997 appearance.

McFee said the center is completely leased and room for even holiday gift wrap stations will be hard to come by this year. Twelve Oaks has set sales records with many of its stores, including anchors Hudson's and Sears. Until the Somerset Collection North opened in August, Twelve Oaks held many exclusive-to-Michigan leases.

"We noticed a drop in our business in August when Somerset opened,"

McFee admitted. "But now our traffic is back up. It's right where we expect it to be."

McFee said a Warner Bros. Studio Store is coming to the center in November, and the mall's award-winning Crystal Forest exhibit will again delight holiday shoppers.

"Twelve Oaks is well recognized within the community as a place where families gather to shop, eat and enjoy special activities and entertainment throughout the year," McFee said. "So when we began planning renovations, it seemed natural to maintain our family focus by adding family-centered conveniences and attractions."

Twelve Oaks is the third of the three local Taubman shopping malls to install a giant toddler play area. Lakeside and Fairlane malls have already enjoyed the gleeful giggles of children and the appreciative notes from parents for building the fanciful play area.

"We watch the kids run and tumble around the play area, then fall asleep in the strollers," McFee laughed. "Now mom can shop in peace."

McFee, father of two elementary-age daughters, is especially proud of the mall's new family restrooms on the lower wing near Lord & Taylor.

"When I took my girls out when they were small, I couldn't go into the restrooms with them and it was such a hassle," he recalled.

Twelve Oaks also updated its wood-and-bar banisters throughout the center with contemporary glass-and-steel handrails. The upper level columns have been wrapped in stainless steel.

## N'land manager moves to Novi mall

**Management  
changes are  
under way at  
the area's  
biggest malls.**

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

After nine eventful years as general manager of the Northland Center in Southfield, Catherine O'Malley is leaving the mall to manage operations at the Twelve Oaks mall in Novi.

O'Malley said she was recruited for the job by the mall's owner, The Taubman Co.

"They certainly offered me an opportunity to continue to grow with the project," she said. "And it was time to leave Northland for a new challenge."

O'Malley's successor at Northland is yet to be determined.

For the past few months, Twelve Oaks has been under the direction of Miles McFee who now moves to the corporate leasing department at Taubman headquarters in Bloomfield Hills. McFee came to Twelve Oaks in June from the Fairlane Town Center after long-time Twelve Oaks manager Phil Marasco was transferred to the east coast.

As manager of Fairlane, McFee saw the mall through the controversial Saturday night closings plan in May, which drew criticism from some merchants and community members, but which the mall has retained. Prior to his stint as manager of Fairlane, McFee was general manager at the Lakeside mall in Sterling Heights.

O'Malley has been lauded for leading Northland mall through a rough time - winning back the support of Detroit shoppers, improving safety issues, providing opportunities for independent retailers, and last year, taking the 30-year-old shopping center through a multi-million dollar remodeling which culminated in a spectacular family holiday program.

She sits on the board of a dozen community and civic organizations including Goodwill Industries, Providence Hospital, and the Boys and Girls Clubs which she said she will continue to serve.

"It's a good time to leave Northland," she said. "We've made some successful turnovers. It's in good hands. It's enjoying a high position."

The Northland Center is owned by Equitable Real Estate Investment Management and managed by Compass Retail Inc.

A native Detroit, O'Malley attended Cass Tech High School and Wayne State University.



Catherine O'Malley

## The Perfect Gift

Do you remember the best holiday gift you ever received? Was it a pair of ice-skates when you were 10? The four-slice toaster the year your fourth child was born? The framed finger painting from your 5-year-old grandson?

The Eccentric Newspapers wish to publish readers' recollections of their very best gifts ever and what made them so. In a special gift guide on Dec. 12, 1996.

Just jot down your memories, 150 words or less, and mail them to: Susan DeMaggio, c/o The Birmingham Eccentric, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.

Be sure to include your name and phone number in case there are questions. Stories selected will be based on the gift's uniqueness and impact on your life. Published stories will win for their author, a special gift from the newspaper.

So... Now do you remember the best holiday gift you ever received?

Deadline for stories is Friday, Nov. 8 at 5 p.m.



**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, OCT. 24

#### Jail & Bail

March of Dimes annual fund raiser through Oct. 18. Get revenge on snoring husband or forgetful co-worker! Have them "arrested," and forced to raise bail, pledges for the charity. Event is also scheduled for Wonderland Mall at Plymouth/Middlebelt in Livonia. (813) 622-4100. Tel-Twelve Mall. 12 Mile/Telegraph. Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

### WEDNESDAY, OCT. 16

#### Children's Event

Dr. Zap (Kevin St. Onge) combines science and magic for kids, 7 p.m. at Borders Books. 13 Mile/Southfield. Birmingham. (810) 644-1515.

### THURSDAY, OCT. 17

#### Charity Shopping Day

Liz Clairborne and Elisabeth stores donate 10-percent of today's sales to benefit the fight against domestic violence at First Step in Canton. A representative from the agency will be in the store at 8 p.m. for questions. Special com-

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

memorative merchandise available. Somerset Collection South. Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (810) 643-3777.

### SATURDAY, OCT. 19

#### Oprah's Trainer Appearance

Bob Greene, the personal trainer to Oprah Winfrey and others, will lead mall walkers in stretching exercises and a walk through the mall. Merchants will offer a fashion show of the latest workout attire. 9 a.m. Autograph session. Oakland Mall. 14 Mile/John R. Troy. (810) 656-6000.

#### Little Ricki visits

Meet Keith Thibodeaux who played Little Ricki on the "I Love Lucy" show, in town to sign his book, "Life After Lucy," 4-6 p.m. at Decades nostalgia gift shop. (He's the last surviving member of the cast.) 110 W. Fourth. Royal Oak. (810) 648-9289.

#### Mall Concert

Johnny Trudell's Jazz Band performs 1-2:30 p.m. Free samples from the Coffee Beanery. Informal modeling of latest looks from Russell's Tuxedos, Talbots and Winkelman's. Laurel Park. Six Mile/Newburgh. Livonia. (813) 693-1100.

#### Limoges Boxes Trunk Show

Collectors and art lovers can meet Francois

Soichet, owner of Limoges Imports of France, 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. He'll sign boxes and answer questions about the classic porcelain boxes. LaBelle Provence. 185 W. Maple. Birmingham. (810) 540-3876.

#### Karate Kick-off

All star Karate Center hosts a special event with demonstrations and contests. 1-2:30 p.m. Wonderland. Plymouth/Middlebelt. Livonia. (813) 522-4100.

#### Jewelry designers visit

Engagement and wedding ring designers visit Tapper's 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Meet Paul Klecka, Gottlieb & Sons, Goldman and Diana reps. Orchard Mall. Maple/Orchard Lake. West Bloomfield. (810) 932-7700.

### SUNDAY, OCT. 20

#### Kids Program

"Are You My Monster?" 1 and 3 p.m. presented by Children's Theatre of Michigan. Twelve Oaks. 12 Mile/Novi. 1-800-362-1211.

#### Children's Education Expo

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Lawrence Technological University. Free. Showcasing schools, educational software, preschools, tutor services. DIA booth hosts kids puppet craft, state police safety exhibit, internet demos. 24567 Northwestern Highway. Southfield. (810) 352-0990.



**Sweet treats:** Let them eat cake, like these from Sweet Dreams Bakery in the Bloomfield Plaza - sure to win you at least a big hug on Sweetest Day!