

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

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SHOPPING CENTERED



Linda Ann Chomin

Game inventors make you think

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
SPECIAL WRITER

Shelley Littman likes to stock the shelves of her Birmingham toy store with games to stimulate the old thought processes. That's why she decided to offer *Adventures in Toys* customers *Tisby*, a board game by local inventor Greg Schindler.

A distant cousin of Scrabble, the game challenges players to create a connected crossword puzzle. For ages 8 and up, *Tisby* can be played by 1-4 players on levels from novice to master. A different set of rules allows it to be played solitaire.

"I like new inventors and try to encourage them to think a little bit differently than mass market toy companies. There's nothing like games to make you think, and good games are hard to come by," said Littman.

The first time Schindler approached Littman with *Tisby*, she applauded the game's concept but was hesitant to carry it because of the packaging. Since the 50-year-old Macomb Township resident developed and produced the game himself, it was back to the drawing board. So far, Schindler's lost one dollar on each game published. He funded the venture with \$4,000 borrowed from his retirement account. But he isn't discouraged because Littman bought the improved version (also available at Wunderground in Royal Oak).

"Shelley was right. It doesn't matter what you put in the box if the label isn't interesting people won't want to play the game," said Schindler who has decided not to quit his day job as a case worker for Wayne County's Family Independence Agency (formerly DSS).

In addition to *Tisby*, *Adventures in Toys* carries nearly 100 other board games including several by Aristoplay, Ltd. The Ann Arbor-based company, specializing in educational children's games, is nationally recognized for making learning fun. While many of the concepts grow from staff brainstorming, Aristoplay also publishes games by local inventors. In *Hives Alive* designed by Julie Fisher of Ypsilanti, players try to capture their opponent's bees by comparing the values of fractions, decimals and negative numbers. A former middle school math teacher, Fisher used the game to motivate her students.

"You can drill them to death with problems and worksheets but the kids really loved this game," said Fisher.

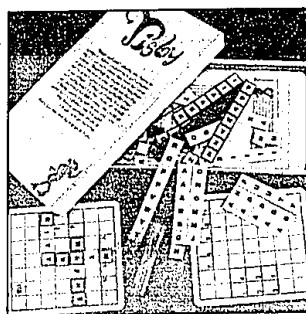
Moneywise Kids, the idea of Karen Godfrey of Ann Arbor, provides youngsters with lessons on how to make change, budget for life's necessities, and still save money.

"One of the more unique aspects of our games is that children can play at more than one age level. The games grow with the child and allow multiple ages to play together," said marketing coordinator Rhonda Foxworth.

Aristoplay games are available at The Teacher's Store in Livonia; Noodle Kidos, die, Troy; Christine's Hallmark, Plymouth; Mermel Gifts & Toys, Farmington Hills; Toy Wonders, West Bloomfield, and Your Toybox, Rochester.

"My two favorites are *Somebody*, an anatomy game, and *Where in the World*, a nifty geography game updated to include non-Soviet countries like Georgia," said Bruce Weiner, owner of Your Toybox. "Aristoplay games are a lot of fun but also educational. They're not predicated on luck. They expect you to do more."

At Toy Wonders of the World in West Bloomfield owner Tom Fields offers 11 different Aristoplay games including *True Math*, *The Play's The Thing* (a dramatic introduction to Shakespeare), and *Pollution Solution*, which tackles the issues of pollution in the '90s.



Tisby - a new game for wordsmiths.

Deck the hair with curls and holly



Holiday headturners are a blast from the past with the return of tendrils, wiglets and waves. It's all about romance and a return to a more elegant age.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
EDITOR

The recent films "Emma" and "Sense and Sensibility" are the inspiration for this season's holiday hair designs as many local salons are discovering.

At Sharp Looks Salon in West Bloomfield, owner Donna Sharp said "big hair just isn't big anymore." "What women want is softness and understated elegance," she said, quoting her clients. It's a return to

the Empire Look of the Napoleonic era, even in fashion where shoppers are finding sleeker, closer-fitting designs than in recent collections. Sharp trained at London's Vidal Sassoon Academy and has been a stylist for more than 20 years. She's watched the hair biz closely over the years, concluding that the current trends may be the most exciting.

She explained that the Empire Look is achieved by pulling the hair back from the face, adding hairpieces that give variations on a sleek pulled back look, or softness with curls. Flowers that match the dress, ribbons or pearl strands are popular adornments.

Because so many busy women sport shorter hair these days, the upswing styles requiring longer hair have brought hairpieces back into vogue. They are attached with either a metal clip that slides in and snaps shut like a barrette, or with a banana clip.

"Twenty-three years ago, a hair-stylist had to wait, set and style the piece. Now, because they're synthetic, they are pre-set and styled. It's just shampoo, shake and go," Sharp explained.

At Salon Kennice Bashir in Birmingham, Kennice Hoffman said her clients are also after the romantic look with upstyles and hairpieces



PHOTOS BY GARY EVAN

Empire looks: The regal beauty of these hair designs by Sharp Looks Salon, West Bloomfield make them a perfect choice for holiday happenings.

and curls.

"We are doing a lot of waves," she said suggesting that the film "Evita" might be having an influence on hairstyles. "We're using the wave irons to add curls in the back and front."

Women with dark hair are interested in adding jewel-toned hairpieces to their holiday styles. It's easy, you just snap them in. But there's no doubt that the look everyone's after is Romantic.

Holiday glamour means snap, sparkle, shine



BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
EDITOR

This year, with the return of cigars and martinis, you can bet social gatherings will be luxurious and elegant.

"There is such a sense of glamour in fashion right now with rich jewel tones and splendid fabrics like velvet, tulle, satin and tapers," said Mariana Keros, Hudson's trend director. "The fashions evoke memories of a bygone era."

She showed off what's new from the Hudson's holiday closet:

For her, the must-haves include:

- Cocktail dresses; velvet oblong scarf; velvet mock turtleneck in jewel tones; long column dress or slip dress; shawl or evening stole; beaded jackets, ballgown skirts, narrow satin pants; tuxedo jackets, strappy evening shoes, gemstone or rhinestone jewelry.

For him, the must-haves include:

- Tuxedo with notched or shawl collar; black suit; dress shirt with curve spread collar; vest; velvet, tapestry or zip-front; solid ties in shiny colors or silver/black combinations; French cuffs and cuff links; beaded collar shirts; bow ties and cummerbunds; dress pants.

Hot accessories:

- Metallic silver or gold shoes the neutral, instead of black;
- Men's shoes in suede, patent or

velvet slip-on styles

- Belts: velvet, satin, chain link with rhinestones or metal buckles
- Hosiery with back seams or metallic shimmer
- Vintage maracas jewelry
- Cigar accessories
- Cheek and eye makeup highlighted with colors of plum and pearl

For kids:

- Dalmatian-mania inspires clothing in key colors red and black; shiny fabrics; faux fur; animal prints; chenille, velvet and velvet separates; vests and blazers for boys; velvet or organza party dresses for girls.

For glamour on a budget Hit or Miss stores have long skirts and mock-neck velvet tops at \$24.99 each. Other holiday separates include black crepe pants, knits with velvet collars and buttons, long gently-fitted jackets, and velvet cigarette pants, all priced under \$40.

Shawls and capes that add panache and warmth over sleeveless gowns and short-sleeved sweaters can be found in a variety of fabrics, colors and trims at Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord and Taylor and Crowley's.

Neiman Marcus suggests topping a skirt or slacks with a festive cardigan by Michael Simon featuring a champagne glass with sparkling beads, \$130.

Look sharp: (Right) "Shimmer" front tunic jacket and pant, \$340; Studio J taffeta skirt, \$130, black top, \$88, black vest, \$66, silk-lined velvet stole, \$115, and Jhane Barnes tuxedo with shawl collar, \$640 - all at Jacobson's.

MONDAY, DEC. 16

Santa Photos

Final days for photos and visits with Santa Claus at area malls. Don't miss some of the more spectacular decor presentations at Twelve Oaks, Somerset Collection North, Livonia Mall, Lakeside, Fairlane, Northland Center and Oakland Mall. At Summit Place in Waterford, tour the 20-minute walk-through exhibit "Wind in the Willows" brought to you by Dayton Hudson Co. Free admission, through Dec. 31.



A scene from Wind in the Willows at Summit Place.

Benefit Promotion

Ongoing Shore The Wealth program to benefit

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Salvation Army - with each sum of \$150 in receipts a blanket will be donated to the shop's name. See Customer Service Desk.

Westland Center, Wayne/Warren.

(313) 425-5001.

Holiday happenings

Month-long Red Cross Blood Drive. Spend \$100 in any mall business and receive a free cookbook through Dec. 24. Drop off non-perishable food items, clothing and toys for local YMCA at Information Booth through Dec. 24.

Wonderland, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia

(313) 622-4100.

TUESDAY, DEC. 17

Holiday concerts

Churchill High School "Choralation" at 7 p.m. On Dec. 18 Clarenceville High School "Choraliers" at 7 p.m. On Dec. 19 Franklin High School "Franklin Singers" at 7 p.m. On Dec. 20 Ladywood High School "Angelic Singers & Orchestra" at 10:30 a.m.

Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt.

(810) 476-1160.

More holiday concerts

Novi Middle School Girl's Choir performs at 6:30 p.m. On Dec. 18 at 6:30 and 7:45 p.m. hear the Walled Lake Western Women's Choirs.

Twelve Oaks, 12 Mile/Novi. Novi.
(810) 348-9438.

THURSDAY, DEC. 19

Local authors sign books

Jon Bucholz and Jane Briggs-Bunting will sign copies of their Christmas book "Whoop for Joy A Christmas Wish," 6-8 p.m. at Waldenbooks. Bunting will offer a solo signing at Waldenbooks, Lakeside, Dec. 21, 2-4 p.m. Somerset Collection South.

Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy.

(810) 628-2986.

FRIDAY, DEC. 20

Mail concerts

Opera Lite Carols from 6-8 p.m. on the lower level in Lord & Taylor Court. On Dec. 21 from 6-7 p.m. it's The Bellissima Bell Choir. Fairlane Town Center.

Michigan Ave./Hubbard, Dearborn.

(313) 593-1370.

SATURDAY, DEC. 21

Christmas characters

Stroll the decorated Oldo World Canterbury Village, shop in the boutiques and Always Christmas Store. Meet "Clyde and Big Red" through Dec. 22.

Jonyln/1-76 Lake Orion.

(810) 391-5700.