

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

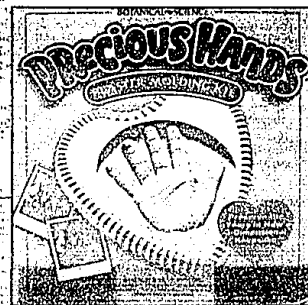
Sunday, May 4, 1997

## Kids are heroes at Hercules event



They came. They played. They shopped.  
Oakland Mall in Troy drew the young crowd to Disney's Hercules Mega Mall Tour April 26-27 to promote the new animated feature film arriving in local theaters June 27. The attraction included 11 interactive activities for kids plus a live stage show. (Below) sisters Emilia Kasanab, 5, and Lauron, 2, of West Bloomfield, enjoy the Baby Pegasus ride. (Below left) John Hilla, 11, of Ferndale scores in the ball toss game.

—PHOTO STORY BY BILL HANSEN



## Delight your mom with neat surprises

BY DONNA MULCAHY  
SPECIAL WRITER

"It's not what you give me on Mother's Day that counts. It's how you treat me all year long."

That's what my mom says every year, when I ask her what she would like for Mother's Day. And whenever she says that, it just makes me want to get her the most expensive present I can buy, to try to make up for all of the awful things I did to her when I was growing up.



DONNA MULCAHY

But then again, I know that the best gifts don't have to cost a lot of money. They just have to come from the heart.

Mother's Day is next Sunday, May 11, so if you need help thinking of something to get your mom (or the mother of your child) then here are some ideas:

• Dirty hand prints on walls are one thing. But when a child's hand print is preserved in plaster or on paper, it can make a wonderful gift.

Botanical Science makes a product called, "Precious Hands Plaster Molding Kit," (pictured above) which produces a 3-D plaster image of a child's hand in a heart-shaped mold. According to the box, it's a 16-minute project for children 12 and under (and adults, too) and adult supervision is required. I found it for \$9.99 at Franks Nursery & Crafts stores.

• Non-toxic, washable ink stamp pads don't cost a lot (Frank's has some for about \$3), but they can be used to make priceless gifts. Place an infant's or child's hand on the ink, then onto a piece of paper, and you have a treasured keepsake. Be sure to write the child's name and date on the paper, too. The ink washes off the skin with soap and water.

• School-age kids can give their moms coupons redeemable for chores and other such things. B. Dalton, Waldenbooks and Hallmark all sell coupon books, but why buy one when you can make your own?

(Just make sure that if you give coupons as a gift, that you're prepared to deliver. When mom tries to redeem the coupon that says you have to clean your room without complaining, don't say, "That coupon's expired." Just do it.)

• Give mom a necklace, pin or bracelet, featuring charms that contain the birthstones of her children. "Crystal Kids" is just one jewelry line that features birthstone charms. Its charms come in the shape of baby shoes, angels, stick people, cats and dogs. The cost for each charm ranges from \$7 to \$12 at JC Penney. Chains, pins and charm holders are sold separately.

• Most everyone has old photos lying about that they haven't had time to put into albums. Buy a pretty album (or more than one) for your mom, and make a date to help her organize her old photos. Bring along a tape recorder, too, to capture the family stories that go along with the photos. Hallmark has very pretty photo albums, starting at \$16.

• Give your mom a memory book to record her family history and yours for future generations. Sometimes, filling out such a book can be a chore. But if you go through the book together, and use a tape recorder instead of writing the answers down then and there, it can be fun.

Two memory books to consider are: "Mom Remembers," by Judith Levy, available at B. Dalton for \$16.99 and "A Mother's Reflections" by Hallmark Cards Inc., available at Hallmark stores for \$12.99.

• Mother's Day week is the busiest week of the year at the Nature Nook floral shop in Westland, said Wilma Darr, a salesperson. She said blooming, potted plants that can be planted outside are big sellers for Mother's Day. Be sure to florists are so busy this time of year, it's best to place delivery orders a week or so ahead of time.

• In my opinion, a T-shirt or sweatshirt from Northern Reflections can't be beat. It's one of my favorite stores, because the clothes there are not only pretty, but they're comfortable and hold up well, too. T-shirts start at about \$16.99.

Remember to get your mom something nice for Mother's Day, but like mine always says, don't forget to treat her well all year through, too!

Donna Mulcahy is a Livonia resident who writes about the newest merchandise available in Malls and Mainstreets shops. You can leave her column ideas and comments c/o (810) 001-2567.

## Retailers back schools to boost sales



By Susan DeMaggio  
Editor

Mall marketers from across Michigan listened carefully as Elaine Kah from Twelve Oaks in Novi described the evolution of the successful Be True To Your School program.

The two-year-old receipts-for-education promotion has produced more than \$520,000 for Michigan schools, brought the participating shopping centers a 10-percent return on their

investment, and captured an Effie Award for excellence from the National Marketing Association.

Kah's presentation was part of a panel discussion hosted by the International Council of Shopping Centers on April 30 at Double Tree Suites in Southfield.

Other speakers offered tips for finding sponsors and business partners, including public relations specialist Susan Haddad, marketing specialist Cindy Ciura, and WXYZ account executive Karen Yurgalite.

Kah said Be True To Your School grew from the Taubman Co. malls (Lakeside, Twelve Oaks, Fairlane and Briarwood) desire to reward loyal shoppers with a contribution to their community. Since education was a high priority with their core shoppers — families — a donation to local schools seemed the perfect plan.

For the program to succeed across metro-Detroit, mall marketers had to insure that dozens of communities were informed about the details and that the project's credibility was well established. Through a partnership with WXYZ-TV (noted for its support of education) emotion-tugging commercials promoting education were broadcast over 46 weeks via 399 mail-paid messages and 650 public service announcements. Radio personalities

Dick Purtan and Jim Harper discussed Be True To Your School on the air, and an additional 1,300 emotional radio spots drove the program's points home.

In its first year, 35 million shoppers stopped at schoolhouse credit booths located throughout the malls to tally their receipts for the school of their choice. Shoppers raised \$250,000 for learning tools like software, videos, reference materials and books.

By the second year of the program, 100 million customer receipts worth about \$7.5 million, netted another \$275,000 for the 3,000 shopper-chosen area schools in the program's database. (The mall contributed \$1 for every \$200 totaled from receipts.)

Be True To Your School was the

largest marketing endeavor ever undertaken by the centers, according to Kah. It captured 60 percent of the marketing dollars the first year and 35-percent the second year.

The Taubman malls will continue the program for a third year beginning in August.

Karen Susalla, marketing director of the Birchwood Mall in Port Huron, attended the session and liked what she heard.

"We are running a similar customer loyalty program, Cash Back for Schools," she said. "But ours is on a much smaller scale because we only have 90 schools. I got some practical ideas from the speakers — they're right on about a community's concern for its schools."

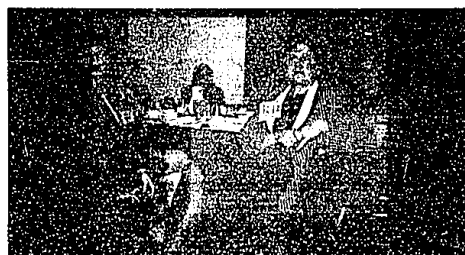


PHOTO BY JERRY ZALUTSKY

Good Ideas: Mall marketers listen as speakers present partnering tips to help them create successful programs.

News of special events for shoppers is included in this calendar. Send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o The Observer & Eccentric 305 East Maple, 48009; or fax (810) 664-1314. Deadline: Wednesday 5 p.m. for publication on Sunday.

### MONDAY, MAY 5

#### Senior citizens dance

Enjoy music, dancing, refreshments, social hour from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Lower level community room. Complimentary. Scheduled for the first Monday of each month.  
Westland Center, Wayne/Warren.  
(313) 426-6001.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

#### Music Fair

Celebrate National Music week with performances through May 10 in mall's center court. Call the music director for complete schedule of local musicians and singers performing.  
Lauri Park, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia.  
Contact: (810) 349-0490.

### FRIDAY, MAY 9

#### Dinosaur Expo Opens

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

"Blast from the Past" features eight moving, roaring dinosaurs in natural setting, plus related activities and classes by Cranbrook Science Center staff for school groups. Now through July 7. A must-see! Co-sponsored by Blue Care Network, Cranbrook, and the mall. Produced by Kokomo Dinosaur of Los Angeles.  
Oakland Mall, 14 Mile/John R. Troy.  
(810) 655-4114.

### SATURDAY, MAY 10

#### Family Fun

As part of Fairlane's Family Fun Central, Mark Thomas and Max the Moose perform at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. at Fountain Court. On May 11 from 1-4 p.m. it's Phil Cole's Quartet with "Jumpin' Big Band" sounds.  
Fairlane Town Center.  
Michigan/Southfield Fwy. Dearborn.  
(313) 693-3330.

### Mother's Day fun

Mall hosts arts and crafts show through May 11. On May 10, kids and moms can enjoy the Toddie C. Bear musical performance at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. in Center Court, plus participate in making a card activity.  
Wonderland, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia.  
(313) 622-4100.

### More Mother's Day fun

Linda Arnold performs on Fountain Stage, plus free gift wrap, free photos of moms and prepaid phone cards with \$200 in mall receipts, through the weekend.  
Lakeside, M-59/Schoenherr, Sterling Heights.  
1-800-334-LKSD.

### Safety Town Program

Kids learn about electrical, fire, vehicle safety and stranger danger through May 11. Program taught by Detroit Edison and local police and fire staff. Noon to 4 p.m. Kids will receive certificate after participating. Safety vehicles parked for tours. Free event.  
Meadowbrook Village Mall.  
Adams/University, Rochester Hills.  
(810) 375-9461.