



Sole man:
Suede shoes in all colors are big for fall. Shoppers on a budget can find these from Utility at Target, \$19.99.

School shoes have class

What kinds of back-to-school shoes are popular with the sixth-grade and under set?

"Nike's and Reeboks," said 12-year-old Cara Saam of Livonia, while shopping with mom, Cissy, and brother, Zach, 7, at Perkus Quality Children's Shoes in Livonia recently.

"That's all kids want to wear any more is tennis shoes," her mother said.

OK, but what do kids wear when they dress up?

Saam, whose children go to public school, shook her head. "They don't have dress-up days," she said. "Well, I take that back. There was one day last year, when Cara graduated from the sixth grade. The teachers told the kids they had to dress up for the ceremony."

But even then, some of the boys wore athletic shoes with their dress pants, Cissy and Cara Saam pointed out.

Based on what retailers have told me, that's not surprising. When given the opportunity to choose whatever shoes they want, a lot of kids choose to wear running or basketball shoes, especially those made by Nike and Reebok, and skateboard shoes, particularly those made by Air Walk.

Skateboard shoes kind of look like old-fashioned, flat-soled, lace-up tennis shoes. Only, they have a thicker sole and the rubber trim around the shoe is higher, which is supposed to be good for skateboarding.

They come in canvas or suede, and in a variety of colors, but black is the most popular with boys, retailers say.

Dale Maple, owner of Hansel N' Gretel Shoes & Dancewear in Birmingham explained.

"It (skateboard shoes) started as a West Coast surfer thing about 10 years ago. Then it became part of the grunge look. And now, it's part of a cleaner look for the little guys."

Stephanie Wilhelm, assistant manager of the Footlocker store at Laurel Park Place in Livonia, said Air Walk, Nike and Reebok are extremely popular, with boys as well as girls. Kids want the brand name — and not just on their shoes. If their shoes have the Nike "swoosh" logo, then they want it on their shirts, hats and socks as well, Wilhelm said.

However, there are some kids who aren't into that.

Greg Zivov, one of the owners of Greg Shoes in West Bloomfield said, "Kids are wearing whatever they want to wear. It depends on their individual styles and fashion sense." It also depends on what their schools allow them to wear.

He said he checks to see what types of shoes are allowed at those schools and then stocks at least two or three different variations on each style.

When it comes to non-athletic shoes, this is what's popular, retailers say: Chunky heels, thick "lug" bottoms, T-strap, clogs, and clunky-looking shoes for girls, and oxfords and work boots for boys.

Most people still prefer smooth leather, but nubuck leather, which is softer than suede, is also popular this year, said Tom Welch, owner of Hersey's Shoes in Garden City. The most comfortable and practical school shoes, he said, are those that can be buckled or tied.

He offered this piece of advice to parents, and other retailers I talked to mentioned the same thing:

"Make sure you don't fit your children's feet yourselves. Come to a friendly, high-quality shoe salesman to have them fitted, because if you don't get the right size, you could do permanent damage to their feet."

SHOPPING CENTERED



DONNA MULCAHY



PHOTOS BY JERRY ZOLNERSKY

Couture collections: (Top left) The grand final was a formal thing, with gowns by Wescott and furs by Yves Saint Laurent. (Above) Layers look lovely and work for winter warmth. (Right) W's Bobbi Queen (seated) shares smiles with Douglas Riddle and Beverly Rice of Jacobson's, after the show.

Jacobson's show salutes best of fall



The Jacobson's/W Magazine benefit for VARIETY, the Children's Charity, showcased the retailer's fall collections with labels from Montana, Chanel, Escada, Armani and Missoni. The program drew raves, proving Jacobson's is on track with its audience.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
EDITOR

VARIETY benefactors enthusiastically applauded the couture fashions presented by Jacobson's at Wednesday evening's benefit at the Birmingham store, which also included a video toast to W Magazine's 25 years of fashion reporting.

As the lights dimmed on the store's second level, the tune "People Who Need People Are The Luckiest People In The World" filled the air, and a 10-minute photo essay chronicling two decades of famous fashion faces flashed across the screen.

Bobbi Queen, editor of W Magazine, introduced the program by praising the sophistication and style of the Birmingham-area, telling the audience, "you have a wonderful way of life here, reminding me that New York is not the center of style and fashion as many of us like to think."

Wearing a long black jacket over a black turtleneck, Queen pointed out that in reviewing 25 years of W magazine, everything old is new again — "Look what's back — Halston designs, ultrasuede, bell bottoms, Gucci, Chanel and Burberry's plaid."

She greeted the crowd that at W "We have fun trying to make sense... or non-sense of it all... trying to generate excitement for the designs and the industry."

"And there's not one right solution in fashion and styling," she concluded, "but, many right ways. What's important about fashion, is how you feel about yourself when you get dressed."

Jacobson's was one of just three retailers nationally to host W's anniversary program.

The runway show, choreographed

by Douglas Riddle of Jacobson's, was a combination of the store's collections from both European and American designers. The exquisitely-patterned knits by Missoni and the seductive gowns by John Galiano drew applause.

Glamour is back

"There's a new energy in women's wear," proclaimed Beverly Rice, Jacobson's new merchandising director and 44-year veteran of the retail game. "Glamour is back and we've been so void of it for so many seasons. Looks like designers are not playing it safe or silly. They realize, as we do at Jacobson's, that they must respect the knowledge and sophistication of today's customer who travels the world."

Echoing Rice, patron Marcia Auslander of Farmington Hills, called the fabrics and designs presented, "crisp, sharp, and very wearable."

Blanca Q. Finkle of Bloomfield Hills said they were "very exciting."

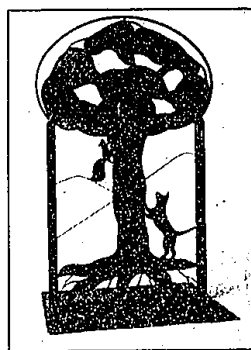
P. Gerald Mills, former CEO at Hudson's who was called out of retirement in 1996 to become Chairman, President and CEO of Jacobson's, told the audience that he thought the specialty retailer "was a gem of a company, with the best people, best merchandise."

"That's why we're here," he said. "The stores are well-appointed and the relationships between the sales associates and customers is exemplary."

Jennie Cascio, executive director for VARIETY, said the evening's 250 guests helped raise \$25,000 for children's charities. Since Jacobson's picked up the tab for the show, music, and food, all proceeds went directly into programs that help disadvantaged children.



Neiman's hosts Humane Society benefit



An auction item, up for bid.

What might turn out to be the social event of the season?

Why the entertainment-packed 120th Anniversary extravaganza for The Michigan Humane Society, Saturday, Sept. 13, at Neiman Marcus at the Somerset Collection South in Troy.

The "PAWS for Celebration" event includes an extraordinary evening of dinner, dancing and entertainment. It will feature the legendary talents of Ed McMahon, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, and a fashion show featuring the latest from the country's top designers including Pam McMahon.

(McMahon's collection of unique couture garments signed with collectible buttons and exquisite fabric combinations, is sold through Neiman Marcus.) The event also includes a live auction of exceptional items including a portrait by the acclaimed Russian artist Sergei Timchenko, and "humane" art works created exclusively by students of the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit.

Guests will delight in a strolling din-

ner and enjoy the cuisine of over 20 Metro-Detroit restaurants and dance to the music of Jerry Fenby.

"For 120 years, the Michigan Humane Society has rescued and provided care and shelter for hundreds of thousands of animals, and has united loving pets with countless Michigan children and families," said Lil Bridgman, co-chair of Paws for Celebration.

"For people who care about animals and desire a wonderful evening of excitement and celebration — Paws for Celebration is a must attend event."

Ticket prices: \$300 for Humane Society Benefactors for all evening festivities including a special cocktail reception and VIP lounge seating for the fashion show, art auction and entertainment extravaganza.

\$175 for Humane Society Patrons for all evening festivities including a special cocktail reception and theater style seating for the fashion show, art auction and entertainment extravaganza.

\$75 for Humane Society Friends for

dinner, dancing and limited seating and standing room for the Frankie Valli show.

Festivities begin at 6 p.m. until midnight for Benefactors and Patrons; 8:30 p.m. until midnight for Friends.

"Paws for Celebration promises to be the largest fund raising event in Michigan Humane Society history," added event co-chair Denise Lutz.

Gary Tiscornia, executive director of the Michigan Humane Society, said the money raised will go toward maintaining the area's three shelters, arranging animal adoptions, paying medical bills for wounded or rescued wildlife, funding cruelty investigations, providing education programs to schools, and arranging pet visitations to nursing homes and hospitals.

The MHS Pet Education Center will also receive funds for its year-end opening and help hot-line.

For more information contact the Michigan Humane Society at (313) 872-3400.