



Ghoulish get-ups: At Fairlane, Halloween Headquarters (a division of Spencer's Gifts) awaits with all you need for spooky celebrations.

Costume fun is for all ages

Halloween is fast approaching. Are you ready for it?

If not - if you're still looking for ways to dress yourself, your little goblins, and your house for the celebration - here are some stores you may wish to haunt.

For Halloween decorations visit:

• **Paterson Carney**, 239 Pierce, Birmingham. Some of its many offerings include fabric and sea grass scarecrows (up to 24 inches tall and \$29.99); terra-cotta votive candle holders shaped like pumpkins and ghosts (\$3.99 each); a variety of figurines, and

SHOPPING CENTERED



• **Blossoms**, 176 W. Maple, Birmingham. The store also has a location in Berkeley.

• **Plain & Fancy** gift shop, 323 Main Street, Rochester has all sorts of unique and whimsical holiday items, including a black "Christmas" tree, decorated with pumpkin lights, fall flowers and Halloween ornaments. Some of the ornaments are made of hand-blown glass. (The tree isn't for sale, but the decorations are.)

A wrought iron, crooked candelabra with a spider-web motif, graveyards made to go with collectible miniature houses; and Halloween flags are just some of the other things you'll find at this store, which also has an enormous selection of Christmas ornaments.

• **sideways**, 505 Forest, Plymouth, has some neat Halloween things, including pumpkins that look like they're made of orange-dyed corn husks; black soaps shaped like witches; brightly colored, wooden trinket boxes with the words "Spells & Potions" printed on them; a Glass Pooh pumpkin-shaped candy dish, featuring Winnie-the-Pooh and Piglet straddling the sides (\$36.95).

If you're searching for a Halloween costume, try:

• **Halloween USA**, which has locations in West 7414 Haggerty, Royal Oak (formerly Van Deus costume shop, 2823 N. Woodward, Livonia (31072 Five Mile Road, and Canton (43675 Ford). According to a salesman at the West Bloomfield store, M&M and X-Men costumes are among the most popular. In addition to costumes for children and adults, Halloween USA sells masks, accessories, decorations and fog machines, \$200 each.

• **Party City**, with locations in Lathrup Village (17655 W. 12 Mile Road, and Livonia (29350 Plymouth. Many schools forbid children from dressing up as superheroes, action figures, or anything scary for Halloween. "That's the feedback we got from customers last year," said Al Janke, manager of the Lathrup Village store. In response to that, Party City is offering a greater selection of school-friendly costumes this year. The most popular costumes? Turbo Rangers, M&Ms, Darth Vader, Batman and Disney characters.

• **House of Costumes**, 845 N. Mill, Plymouth, deals primarily in adult costume rentals. You name it; they probably have it. Most of the costumes are hand made, and prices range from about \$15 to \$160 for a 24-hour rental. For more information, call (313) 451-0255.

Frank's tests new home decor store



By Susan DeMaggio
Editor

When the prototype Frank's 5 Seasons store opens at Hall and Hayes in Clinton Township, Friday, Oct. 24, the 18-year-old Detroit-based nursery and craft store will be testing a new retail idea.

Shoppers sipping complimentary coffee, can stroll through 15,000-square feet of charm where garden and home merchandise is displayed "Santa Barbara-style" amid fountains, skylights, sandstone archways and terra cotta floors, complete with a library and cafe for "dreaming."

If the concept is a hit, the next Frank's 5 Seasons store will be in West Bloomfield on Haggerty at 14 Mile, in time for spring 1998.

"We will never replace all our Frank's Nursery & Crafts stores, but in some markets the Frank's 5 Seasons stores make more sense," said the company's new spokeswoman Chris Morriore. "Recent focus group studies revealed that our customers were looking for home decor merchandise all year long and also wanted information

on products and how to make them work in their own homes. The 5 Seasons stores will offer this and much more."

The 5 Seasons stores are just one of the changes initiated by Frank's new president Ernest Townsend. He joined the company in January from Dolo Foods, and previously was the man behind The Budget Gourmet Company, growing the frozen food firm into a \$250 million business.

Townsend is moving the company's headquarters to Troy at Crooks and Long Lake, relocating 100 employees, while leaving another 100 at the old headquarters/warehouse at 6501 East Nevada in Detroit.

He is expanding shopper services to include a Premier Guest Program, a gift registry, gift wrapping, senior discounts, in-store product demonstrations, parcel pick-up service, complimentary plant repotting, and store staff who are experts in floral design and horticulture. There is even a toll-free Frank's 5 Seasons hotline, 888-777-0092.

Last year, Frank's reported earnings

in excess of \$530 million from 259 stores in 16 states. But that figure has been faltering in recent years, and the company is looking to "capture additional market share in the home decor business while enhancing their position as a leader in nursery products."

The 5 Seasons store (spring, summer, fall, winter - and holiday, in case you're wondering) will also have a 5,000-square foot heated "polyhouse" for live plants, wreaths, Christmas trees and spring scrubs and flowers, leading to outside gardens where shoppers can make purchases from sheltered service booths. Sixteen-percent of Frank's business comes from holidays sales.

Morriore said 5 Seasons' merchandise will be "levelled up," much imported from Europe, and expanded to include stationery, books, tabletop items, fresh flowers, casual furniture, baskets, wrought iron accents, silk and live plants, garden accessories and gourmet foods.

"We're opening with a Tuscan theme in pottery and tabletop, then we'll move into the holidays, and in January it'll be a Maui theme - always changing, always new," she said. "Our displays will provide ideas and inspirations and our stores will have it all for you to carry through."

Frank's faces stiff competition from other home/garden retailers like Pier 1, English Gardens, Michaels, Bordin's

and newcomers Cost Plus World Markets. Department stores like Hudson's and Nordstrom have beefed up their home accents departments, and discounters like Target, Kohl's and Kmart enjoy brisk sales from their seasonal stock.

"But, I think shoppers will find we're going to do it differently at Frank's 5 Seasons," Morriore smiled. "Be sure to check out our walk-in fresh flower cooler, our design centers for custom floral arrangements and gourmet hostess baskets, and our computerized landscape design center."

Grand opening fun

To two customers to the grand opening of the Frank's 5 Seasons store, five weeks of complimentary workshops and special events will be held there through Sunday, Nov. 23.

Highlights include pony rides, live animal petting zoo, carousel rides, pumpkin crafts, a series of entertaining with chef Ron Colasanti of The Mystic Gourmet, tips from master gardeners and home decor experts and a Nov. 8 visit from Detroit Red Wing Darren McCarty, from 4:30-6 p.m.

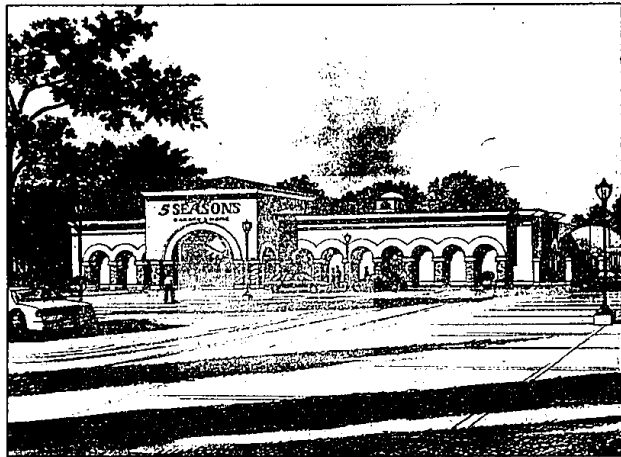
Morriore said Frank's plans to eventually "touch all our stores," hinting that remodels and renovations are on the drawing board.

"Our focus groups have told us what we do well and what we need to do better," she said. "And we're listening."



Something new: (Above) Frank's 5 Seasons stores will offer assorted gourmet food products, sold separately or in customized gift baskets, \$1.30-\$2.92.

(Right) The "Santa Barbara" look provides the decor theme with features like arched windows and entrances, terracotta flooring and water fountains. A library and cafe inside the stores offer places to pause and study the latest design ideas. A "polyhouse" in the rear, shelters greenery, flowers and live, holiday trimmings.



News of special events for shoppers is included in this calendar. Send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o The Observer & Eccentric 805 East Maple, 48009; or fax (248) 644-1314. Deadline: Wednesday 5 p.m. for publication on Sunday.

SUNDAY, OCT. 12

Chili Cook-Off

Downtown Plymouth merchants hosts 2nd annual Chili Cook-Off with Harley Davidson Bike Show, Live Country Entertainment, Line Dancing. 10k run begins at 10 a.m. 50 Beanie Baby raffle. First prize chili cook receives \$500. Proceeds to Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Kellogg Park. Ann Arbor Trail/Main. (313) 455-8838.

MONDAY, OCT. 13

Monday Night Football

Lions corner back Bryant Westbrook signs autographs from 6-8 p.m. in the H-Court area of the mall. Event tickets are \$4 available at Pitch, Hit and Run. Livonia Mall. Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (248) 474-4266.

Photo Exhibit

Monte Nagler's work is on display throughout the mall through Oct. 26. A student of the late Ansel Adams, Nagler is currently a photography teacher and author of two books on the subject.

Meadowbrook Village Mall. Walton/Adams. Rochester Hills. (248) 375-9451.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15

Large sizes seminar

Hudson's hosts a fashion show/reception featuring model Emma Aronson in styles from the Woman's World Collection. 6:30 p.m. Q&A begins at 7 p.m. show begins 7:45 p.m. followed by autographs and shopping. Reservations required for the complimentary event.

Oakland Mall. 14 Mile/John R. Troy. (248) 443-6328.

Blood pressure screening 8-10 a.m. sponsored by the Mall Walkers Club and staff at Emsford General Hospital. Livonia Mall. Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (248) 476-1166.

Precious Gem Seminar

Julia R. Schubert Jewellers hosts one-of-a-kind Precious Gem Trunk Show through Oct. 16 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Seating is limited for a Thursday evening seminar on how to identify quality stones and how to distinguish among them.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Coolidge/Big Beaver. Troy. (248) 649-1122.

Hearing Care Seminar

Homeopathic Hearing Care is topic of free seminar 1:30 p.m. co-sponsored by Personalized Hearing Care and Garden City Hospital's Audiology Department.

35337 West Warren. Westland. (313) 468-7100.

Charished Teddies Event

Always Christmas hosts collectibles show of Cherished Teddies through Oct. 17. Old World Canterbury Village. I-76, exit 482, North Joslyn. Lake Orion. (248) 391-5700.

FRIDAY, OCT. 17

Free concert

The Mercyrates from Mercy High School perform at 7:30 p.m. singing country to rock, Broadway now and then. Get to center court early for the best seats.

Complimentary.

Livonia Mall. Seven Mile. Middlebelt. (248) 476-1160.

Opal Show

P.R. Haig Jewelers hosts an opal show through Oct. 18 featuring the designs of Nagale of Oregon using Australian Opal and inlaid Opal.

436 Main. Rochester. (248) 652-3660.

Fall fashions trunk show

Kathryn Scott hosts a trunk show of the fall collections from Burbucker, CanvasBacks and Brighton Accessories, including suedes, unique sportswear separates and handknit sweaters, through Oct. 19 from 9:30 to 6 p.m. 148 Pierce. Birmingham. (248) 642-3064.

SATURDAY, OCT. 18

Farmers' Market last week

Both downtown Plymouth and Farmington offer fresh produce, bakery goods, flowers and herbs, plus much more through Oct. 25. Hot coffee and cold lemonade in Plymouth's gathering across from Kellogg Park.

Plymouth. Ann Arbor Trail/Main. (313) 453-1610.

Farmington. Grand River East of Farmington.

Haunted House Party

Silly songs and stories of the season 1 and 3 p.m. presented by the Children's Theatre of Michigan. Come early for the best seats.

Twelve Oaks. 12 Mile/Novi. Novi. (248) 348-9438.

Family Fun

Craig Taubman performs kid-friendly rock n' roll songs with adult appeal at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. in the mall's Fountain Court. Free, part of mall's October Saturday's Family Fun/Center series. Series also includes morning breakfast and movie, tap dancing lessons through Oct. 25: 1 p.m. (5-9 year-olds) 2 p.m. (9-14 year-olds) 3 p.m. (all others) on mall's lower level near Hudson's; Arts & Scraps project on lower level near Lord & Taylor Court.

Fairlane Town Center. Michigan/Southfield Fwy. (313) 693-1370.

Wellness breakfast

Nordstrom, Town & Country Magazine and Beaumont Hospital join forces to host "A Morning of Wellness & Style" 8 a.m. Tickets are \$25 per person. Breakfast, a fashion show and panel discussion on the newest breast cancer findings is included. Reservations required.

Somerset Collection North.

Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (248) 816-5100, ext. 1690.

SUNDAY, OCT. 19

Loonette visits

Loonette the Clown and her doll Molly, from the PBS series The Big Comfy Couch, greet fans at 66 WTVS Stores of Knowledge, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Somerset Collection North. The event will be repeated from 10 a.m. to noon at Briarwood Mall in Ann Arbor.

Somerset Collection North.

Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (313) 876-8164.

Fall Toy show

Winross Toy Collector's Club hosts exhibit and sale 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$2. Vendors with antique collectible farm and die-cast toys, model car kits, pinball, action figures, trains, sci-fi, Matchbox and Hot Wheels.

Monaghan K of C Hall. 19801 Farmington. Livonia. (313) 747-7192.

