



Search futile for a 24-hour pharmacy

My husband and I took our 2-year-old daughter to the emergency room about 11 p.m. on a recent Saturday night. She had a high fever that we couldn't bring down.

We left the hospital about three hours later with a very tired - but less feverish - little girl, and a prescription for an antibiotic that we needed to get filled in time for her next dose, which was due at 6 a.m.

We asked a nurse if we could get the prescription filled at the hospital pharmacy. She said she was sorry, but that it was closed.

We asked her if she knew where the nearest 24-hour pharmacy was. Again, she said she was sorry, but that she didn't know.

Oh well, we thought. We're bound to pass one on the way home.

But we didn't. Every drugstore we passed was closed.

When we got home, we put Kathryn to bed and got out the Yellow Pages. There were many pharmacy listings, but none of them said whether or not they were open 24 hours, and the seven or so that we called, were closed.

I decided to get on the Internet, hoping that it would speed up our search. I thought some of the chain pharmacies in our area might have store locator guides and sure enough, they did.

But, as with the Yellow Pages listings, none indicated whether or not they were 24-hour stores.

The Rite Aid site gave a 1-800 number to call for more information. I called it and had to go through its menu several times before a computer voice told me that it was going to connect me to Rite Aid's nearest 24-hour pharmacy.

Pay dirt, I thought.

But the phone just rang and rang. Nobody answered, and I had no idea where that store was or what its outside phone number was - the computer voice never said.

"Six Mile and Newburgh," she said.

"Great," I told her. And then, just to be safe, I said, "You have a 24-hour pharmacy, right?"

"Yes, we do . . . but it's not open tonight," she answered.

"Why not?" I asked, in utter disbelief.

"Well, our pharmacist called in sick and we couldn't get anyone to fill in," she explained.

(Arrghh!)

She told me that the nearest 24-hour pharmacy was on Schaefer in Dearborn. But that's about 40 minutes from my house and by this time, it was 3:30 a.m. and I didn't trust myself to make that big drive because I was so tired.

Needless to say, Kathryn's next dose of medicine was late. I don't want this to happen to any other sick child - or adult, for that matter. So I decided to compile a list of 24-hour pharmacies in Wayne and Oakland counties.

I talked to spokespeople and representatives for Kmart, Kroger, Farmer Jack, Arbor Drugs, F & M, and Meijer, and was surprised to learn that none of them have a 24-hour pharmacy in Detroit. They do have some 24-hour retail stores in the area, but none of them include a 24-hour pharmacy.

To my knowledge, Rite Aid is the only company that has any all-night pharmacies in Detroit. Eleven of its locations are open 24-hours-a-day, 365 days a year.

Three of these locations are in the Observer & Eccentric's coverage area:

- Bloomfield Hills: Woodward at Square Lake Road, (248) 338-7191.
- Livonia: Six Mile Road at Newburgh, (313) 464-7060.
- Southfield: Greenfield at Nine Mile, (248) 667-8350.

Top toys draw shoppers to the checkout



BY BARB PERT TEMPLETON
SPECIAL WRITER

Wish lists are long and supplies often short, but landing a Sing and Snore Ernie, or Talk With Me Barbie, may prove worth the search for many toy shoppers this holiday season.

And if the customers are anything like the ones that greeted Lisa Rowland outside of the Target store in Rochester last week, it's safe to say many are very determined.

"It has just been phenomenal, we had customers lined up halfway around this plaza the day after Thanksgiving," said Rowland, who is the store's Toy Team Leader. "When we opened at 7 a.m. they just all ran towards the toys."

The infamous "Ernie" doll by Tyco retails for \$29.99 and Target has been

hard-pressed to keep any of them on their shelves for more than a few hours.

"We don't have any in stock right now. I wish we did," smiled Rowland. "But also fortunately for us, the merchandise has been flowing in pretty steadily and we can re-stock our shelves every night."

Star Wars action figures and Hot Wheels cars remain popular among the elementary school set but again a stuffed toy is harboring the top spot on many Christmas lists. The Real Bubba Bear by Tyco talks and interacts with the child. The chatty bear, which is dressed in overalls and a big straw hat, retails for \$39.99.

"We had some of the Bubba Bear come in here today and they just flew out of here," said Rowland.

The junior high set are desperate to find certain gifts under their trees this



Friday night fun: The Pressman Toy Co. has reintroduced Careers, a 40-year-old board game of fame, fortune and happiness for a new generation of families. For 2-6 players, ages 8 and up, \$9.99 at Target, Toys R Us and Wal-Mart.

year too. Girls want the "Clueless" head set which is a hands-free phone spun from the popular movie of the same title. It retails for \$24.99.

Teen boys want Game.com by Tiger which costs \$69.99. The toy is a handheld computer game that can also be hooked up to a personal computer. The Talk With Me Barbie, and Barbie CD Rom, are in demand by both adolescent and pre-teen girls. They cost \$79.99 and \$29.99 each at Target, Rowland said.

Toys R Us spokesperson Michael Cullen said the retailer is much too busy this time of year to allow its managers to give media interviews regarding "hot" toys for 1997. Instead the retail chain provided a list of some of the most sought after items: Nintendo 64 and Sony Playstation Systems are at the top of the Electronics list while

Parker Brothers' Star Wars Monopoly and Milton Bradley's Chicken Croquet are the preferred games.

Target stores are experiencing a similar demand for games but their shelves are stocked with more than just the latest board games.

"I'd say the basic games, the oldies but goodies like Battleship and Clue are all selling well, too," Rowland said. And Mail Madness is still popular with girls.

Bob It, an action-packed hand-held verbal command game, is another game that's being purchased at a swift pace by Target customers.

"We just price cut that to \$16.99 and it's really selling fast," said Rowland.

An annual toy study by DURACELL let kids pick their favorite top 10. The full list is available by calling 1-800-Best-Toys.



Win or get wet: The ball speeds toward you, so strike your flippers and send it back to your opponent. Score, and your foe is sprayed with a fine mist of water. Winners must score five points. From Pressman, \$24.99, at Target and Toys R Us.

SUNDAY, DEC. 7

Holiday exhibit open

Through Dec. 31, stroll through Victorian England recreated in 23 animated vignettes portraying the Charles Dickens classic *A Christmas Carol*. The 8th annual holiday exhibit is presented by Hudson's during regular store hours. Group tours are available to classes, clubs. There is no charge for convenience. Critics are calling this year's offering "the best so far!"

Summit Place Mall.

(248) 683-5293.

Holiday Puppet Event

Children's Theatre of Michigan presents *Whose Ear-muffs are these anyway?* at the Pageant Wagon Theater in the Somerset Collection South rotunda, through Dec. 24 at 1:30, 3:30, 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays 1, 3, and 6 p.m. Free.

Santa Claus photos in his three-story castle in Somerset North's Grand Court. Photo operation runs through Dec. 24 with option of Polaroid shot \$10, or roll of 36mm film for \$15, processed at parent's convenience. Appointments with Santa optional. A copy of the book "The Giving Season," available for \$19 at Ritez Camera with \$2 off each sale to Toys For Tots.

The Somerset Collection.

Big Beaver/Coolidge Troy.

(248) 816-6484.

Village Santa

The local skating rink features children at play and forest animals with Santa Photos under a snow-covered pavilion through Dec. 24.

Meadowbrook Village Mall.

Walton/Adams Rochester Hills.

(248) 375-9451.

Dept. 56 Village

Kids can send Santa E-mail messages from a computer station on the upper level, near JC Penney's. Santa visits and photos through Dec. 24. Snow Village by Dept. 56.

Oakland Mall, 14 Mile/John R. Troy.

(248) 585-0000.



A scene from A Christmas Carol at Summit Place Mall.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Carousel Santa

A 36-foot tall holiday carousel imported from Germany in mall's center court amuses visitors waiting for Santa. Laser light shows in the food court, Thursdays/Fridays 6 and 7 p.m. Saturdays/Sundays 1 and 3 p.m. through Dec. 22. The 15-minute show features a can drive for the Michigan Humane Society.

Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia.

(313) 522-4100.

Santa photos

"Wishes Can Come True," theme with giant reindeer and Santa sleigh, photos (\$6.95) through Dec. 24. Annabelle's Wish video and plush toy, \$16.99, to benefit Make A Wish Foundation at Information desk.

Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt.

(248) 476-1160.

Polar Bear Christmas

Digital Image Santa photos through Dec. 24, giant polar bear decoys.

Westland Center, Wayne/Warren.

(313) 425-5001.

Crystal Forest Set

Santa will be in The Crystal Forest along with 136-life like animals designed and created by Ann Arbor artist, Iris Imbrus-Jensen through Dec. 24. Exploration Station offers computer-activities for classrooms and groups.

Twelve Oaks, 12 Mile/Novi.

(248) 348-9411.

Snowflake Express

Santa Claus photos plus an exhibit highlighting the December holiday traditions around the world.

Tri-Towne Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph, Southfield.

(248) 353-4111.

Charlie Brown Christmas

See the Peanuts Gang in various holiday settings with an 18-foot high Snoopy doghouse featuring a 36-foot tree through the roof. Santa photos through Dec. 24. Special computer-animation/lesson field trips available for classrooms.

Lakeside, M-59/Shoemaker, Sterling Heights.

(810) 247-4131.

Northstar Journey

Santa Claus gives kids a free coloring/story book based on the Boy and the Bear's search for the Northstar throughout the mall. Letters to Santa at Polestar Station in Montgomery Ward Court. Trolleys on duty through Dec. 23 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with free board lunches between office buildings and shopping center.

Northland Center.

Nine Mile/Greenfield, Southfield.

(248) 569-6272.

Tree lighting

100 volunteers have been working all week to decorate for the 6 p.m. tree lighting in Kellogg Park. A downtown shopping event is set for Friday Dec. 12 from 7-10 p.m. with activities, entertainment and a canned goods drive.

Ann Arbor Trail/Main, Plymouth.

(313) 455-1453.

THURSDAY, DEC. 11

Toys For Tots Broadcast

Jim Harper and The Breakfast Club from WNIC radio air their program from the mall 6 to 10 a.m. to collect new, unwrapped, Toys For Tots in the Lord & Taylor Court, lower level.

Fairlane Town Center.

Michigan/Hubbard, Dearborn.

(313) 633-1370.

Beauty Makeovers

Givency's Brigitte Schmitt works with customers 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment at Saks Fifth Avenue.

Somerset Collection South.

Big Beaver/Coolidge Troy.

(248) 614-3337.

FRIDAY, DEC. 12

Holiday music series

Carolers and music groups perform Fridays through Dec. 20 from 2-4 p.m. in Lord & Taylor Court. Santa photos in Fountain Court.

Fairlane Town Center.

Michigan/Southfield, Dearborn.

(313) 633-1370.

Santa photos in the park

Santa Claus, poses for children photos Fridays, 5-8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. in Kellogg Park.

Main Street, Plymouth.

(313) 463-1540.

Family fun

Byers Homestead and Country Store open house, noon to 8 p.m. Stroll through blacksmith shop, farm-house, candy store and dress shop refreshments at the farm house.

213 Commerce Road, Historic Commerce Village.

(248) 363-9735.

Artist visits

Native West welcomes Bruce Cantway, 1998 Indian Artist of the Year through Dec. 14, to meet shoppers and sign pieces.

863 Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth.

(313) 455-8338.

SATURDAY, DEC. 13

Summit Place Holiday

"Is it Christmas Yet?" stories and sing-alongs with Children's Theatre of Michigan, Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 21 from 4-8 p.m. "Wrens and Roosters" are the strolling carolers.

Summit Place, Elizabeth Lake/Telegraph.

(248) 682-0123.

Skating champ visits

Meet Tara Lipinski at Nieman Marcus, 3:30-4:30 p.m. to promote the DKNY Children's Collection. Gift with purchase from the line.

Somerset Collection South.

Big Beaver/Coolidge Troy.

(248) 643-3300.

Holiday concert

The Mercyaires perform everything from show tunes to holiday songs 3:30 p.m. west end of the mall. Free.

Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt.

(248) 476-1160.