

File-A-Way Desk Bed from Sligh

Storage aids for the '90s

A desk that turns into a bed, a home office in a cabinet, and computer centers made out of 100-year-old reclaimed wood. These are just some of the things available for people who are looking for home office furniture that's beautiful, practical and out of the ordinary.

Let's start with the File-A-Way Desk Bed.

It was created by the Sligh Furniture Co. of Holland, Mich., three years ago, to help people fit a guest bedroom and a home office in the same living space, said Sue Swain, advertising coordinator for the company. Local distributors of Sligh Furniture include the Scott Shuptrine stores in Troy and Novi, and Walker-Buzzberg Furniture in Plymouth.

The File-A-Way Desk Bed looks like a beautiful, cherry wood desk, with a center drawer above the leg opening, three drawers on either end of it, and a rear, wooden kick panel. But all is not as it seems.

The facing of the center drawer flips down to reveal a pull-out keyboard tray. And although the desk top is 16 inches deep, the side drawers are only 18 inches deep. That's because a full-size hide-a-bed is tucked behind the drawers and kick panel.

When overnight guests come to visit, simply roll the drawer units off to the side (they're on casters), pull down the kick panel and pull out the bed, in the same way that you would pull out a sofa bed. The drawer units then become night stands.

The File-A-Way Desk Bed is \$3,000 and is made of hardwood solids and cherry veneers, with a slightly distressed finish. A matching hutch (called a deck) with lots of storage is also available, for about \$1,400 to \$1,600.

Sligh also makes a Computer Cabinet that's great if you don't have a separate room for an office. When closed, the cabinet looks like an armoire. Its four, bi-fold doors open to reveal a computer desk, hutch and bulletin board.

The desk has a pull-out printer shelf, two pull-out writing shelves, two box drawers, a file drawer and a pull-out keyboard tray.

The hutch has three adjustable shelves, three fixed shelves and two task lights. The Computer Cabinet is also wired for easy computer hook-up and two phone lines.

Made of hardwood solids and veneers, it comes in four different cherry finishes: \$3,400 to \$4,000. Sligh also makes a PocketChair to go with the Computer Cabinet. The top of the chair flips down, allowing the chair to fit under the desk and be enclosed in the cabinet. The chair is sold separately, \$300. Visit Sligh's Web site at sligh.com.

If you'd like to dress up your home office with the simple elegance of antique computer furniture, then visit Watch Hill Antiques & Interiors, at 330 E. Maple Road in Birmingham. Two of its specialties include antique wedding armchairs from Europe, and reproduction furniture (including tables and armoires) made from 100-year-old reclaimed pine wood.

Mia Voparil, owner of the company, says a lot of her customers buy the reproduction tables (which range from 4 feet long to 9 feet long) to use as computer desks. The tables start at \$695. She also sells matching file cabinets, which can be placed next to the tables. Natural and painted finishes are available.

Some of the armoires have been modified to be used as entertainment or computer centers. The computer centers are so popular that they're hard to keep in stock and they cost about \$2,800.

Watch Hill Antiques has a wide selection of antique and reproduction furniture in stock in its shop and nearby warehouse (the warehouse is open by appointment only). Furniture also can be custom ordered. For more information, call (248) 644-7445 or visit its Web site (complete with photos of merchandise) at www.watchhillantiques.com.

SHOPPING CENTERED



DONNA MULCAHY

Owner calls new mall 'great, smart, fun'

When Great Lakes Crossing opens in Auburn Hills on Nov. 12, the state-of-the-art shoppertainment center is expected to become a major tourist attraction and the catalyst for surrounding development.

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
RETAIL EDITOR

Rising from the field along I-75 between Joslyn and Baldwin Roads, is the newest concept in the retail world, a mega "shoppertainment center" where people can go to shop, dine, see a movie, or just hang-out with their children at themed amusement centers.

The \$200 million, 1.4 million square-foot Great Lakes Crossing opens in Auburn Hills in 255 days, offering the Midwest a Las Vegas-style retail/entertainment complex owned and operated by the Bloomfield Hills based Taubman Co., which recently opened a similar center in Arizona.

Other developers are eyeing the site for ancillary businesses like fast food restaurants, hotels and strip centers. Great Lakes Crossing is essentially a single-level "racetrack" around which four categories of merchandise are presented — the outlet stores, the superstores, entertainment venues and restaurants, according to planners.

At a on-site press conference Tuesday, president Robert Taubman announced the center of the mall to name 160 more, once the leases are signed.

Do in the loop

"Visitors will be able to enjoy a walk around the entire center or shorten their paths by utilizing a cut through corridor in the center of the oval," he explained. "The themed districts will add logic to the shopping trip. The mall's finishes, furniture and appointments are inspired by the unique visual appeal of Northern Michigan and the state's flower, the apple blossom, will be a feature of the signage."



Photo by STEVE GARNICK

Sharing a dream: Robert Taubman discusses the amenities at Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills including shopping at 'upscale' outlet stores with 20 to 70 percent off regular priced merchandise and many new-to-Michigan names.

Taubman said Great Lakes Crossing is expected to be a major tourist attraction, employ 8,000 area residents, and generate \$20 million for the city of Auburn Hills.

An employment call was recently sent out to community colleges in the area, as well as local high schools.

"The reason for this center is the extraordinarily strong regional economy," he said. "We expect 30-percent of the business to come from visitors who live more than 40 miles away. It's a new leisure experience. It will be a visit that is great, smart and fun."

When asked whether Great Lakes Crossing would do for Baldwin Road

what another Taubman Center, Lakeside in Sterling Heights, did for M-59, Taubman's response was guarded. "The growth along that corridor was haphazard," he told reporters. "But, in many instances, where we've put a shopping center, much growth has occurred."

He said special attention was given to ingress/egress at Great Lakes Crossing so the already clogged I-75 freeway running alongside it would not be affected by the addition of a "major tourist attraction."

"Great Lakes Crossing is bookended by two entrances at Joslyn and Baldwin roads, plus, wider, well-placed

magazine roads will move traffic along the ring roads inside the complex."

Sign of the times

Taubman said the genesis of Great Lakes Crossing came in the mid-1980s when outlet centers first debuted as warehouse-style strip centers, placed about 30 miles outside of heavily populated areas. The concept has so evolved that Great Lakes Crossing will become the prototype for outlet centers of the 21st century, adding service amenities, entertainment, and an air of sophistication to the value shopping experience.

Great Lakes Crossing Merchants

Outlet stores:

- Off 5th, a Saks Fifth Avenue clearance center
- Last Call, a Neiman Marcus clearance center
- JC Penney Outlet

Superstores:

- Bed Bath & Beyond
- Oshman's SuperSports, equipment/apparel for 75 sports, test areas
- Burlington Coat Factory
- Group USA Clothing Co., women's off-price clothing
- Marshall's
- TJ Maxx
- FYE, For Your Entertainment, multi-media products
- Finish Line, sport footwear

Entertainment:

- Game Works, high-tech indoor playground ala Stephen Spielberg
- Jeopardy, amusement park/family restaurant
- Star Theatre, 25-screen, 5,200 stadium-style seats

Food:

- Rainforest Cafe, 325-seat, themed eatery, safari special effects
- Wolfgang Puck Cafe, California cuisine, lounge, bar, patio
- Great Lakes Food Court, 1,000 seats

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

Puppet show
Performed daily at 7 p.m. Saturdays 11, 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday at 1 and 3 p.m.

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

Home & Garden program
The Somerset Collection hosts a home and garden style and fashion program through April 11. Shoppers will enjoy garden displays, stage performances and daily gardening lectures. Sale of playhouses to benefit Habitat for Humanity begins April 1. On Wednesdays from noon to 2 p.m., see informal modeling of spring fashions in the North Grand Court and South Rotunda. A Cabaret jazz series takes off each Thursday night beginning at 7 p.m. Throughout the month, special presentations about Australia, times, dates on mainline Evening style line.

Todays at 1 p.m. Arranging Fresh Cut Flowers by Tim Hourigan from The Flower Co. At 3 p.m. **Sculptures to Accent Your Garden** by Anthony Bellomo from Black Forest Building Co.

Event hotline: (248) 816-6484.
Safety exhibits
Sponsored by the Red Cross for families. Hands-on safety activities to prevent accident prevention to kick-off Red Cross month. Noon to 5 p.m. **Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph. Southfield. (248) 353-4111.**

MONDAY, MARCH 2

Senior Citizen Dance

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Join others for music, exercise, dance and talk, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Refreshments served. Lower Level Community Room. Newcomers welcome. Westland Center Wayne/Warren. (313) 426-5001.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Walkers Meeting
Somerset Collection's Walkabout Club hosts registered dietitian Lynn Beddigan to discuss "The Importance of Eating Right and Exercising for a Healthy Lifestyle." 8-8:45 a.m. Coffee and bagels while supplies last from 7:30 a.m.

Somerset Collection.
Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (248) 643-6368.

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Bridge Night
Hudson's hosts fashion event for men 6-8 p.m. First Floor. Light entertainment, refreshments, informal modeling of spring lines. View recordings of runway shows from Wilk Rodriguez, Ted Baker, Jhane Barnes, Guy Laroche, Moschino, DKNY, Mondo and more.

Somerset Collection North.
Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (248) 816-4000.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Family Fun central
Reach For The Stars Model Search for boys and girls 4-10. Winners will be featured in an upcoming April mall show. Entertainment by costumed characters song/dance review. 4 and 6 p.m. in the Fountain Court.

Fairlane Town Center.
Michigan/Southfield Fwy. Dearborn.

(313) 593-3370.

Prom fashion show

Hudson's hosts annual seminar/show featuring hair, make-up and dress styles for spring proms and special events, 1 p.m. both at Somerset Collection North and Oakland Mall, in Troy. New Attitudes Department. Free. All welcome to attend. (248) 443-4774.

Home decor Open House

The Silk Worm features manufacturers representatives with spring merchandise lines, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Repeated March 8 from noon to 4 p.m.) Aromatherapy sprays, candles, urns, silk products, dried wreaths and hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.

400 Main. Downtown Rochester.
(248) 651-1900.

Arthur visits

PBS character Arthur greets children from 2-4 p.m. at Waterbooks.

30200 Plymouth. Livonia
(734) 251-7811.

Beauty consultations

Saks Fifth Avenue hosts Givenchy facial event with specialists from the cosmetic line. Call for personal appointments. Beginning March 8-14, *Simply Beautiful* spring promotion features gift with any \$75 cosmetic or fragrance purchase throughout the lower level department.

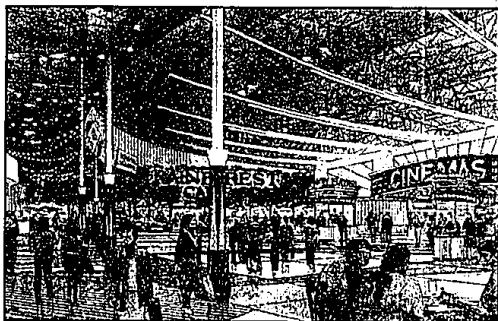
Somerset Collection South.
Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (248) 614-3337.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Health expo

Sponsored by the American Heart Association, noon to 4 p.m. Registered dietitians offer personal consultations, body fat analysis, blood pressure screenings, and host a recipe contest with prizes.

Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile/Telegraph.
(248) 353-4111.



Shopping break: Perks at Great Lakes Crossing include: valet parking, family restrooms, a picnic-themed kid's play area, well-placed rest spots, coffee cappuccino carts and a food court with 12 kitchens.