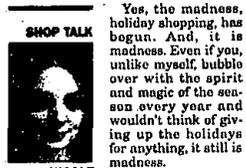


# Malls & Mainstreets

## Don't buy into the madness of the holidays



**SHOP TALK**  
NICOLE STAFFORD

Yes, the madness, holiday shopping, has begun. And, it is madness. Even if you, unlike myself, bubble over with the spirit and magic of the season every year and wouldn't think of giving up the holidays for anything, it still is madness.

"That's because the joyful, giving and celebratory spirit of the holidays never fails to mutate into a wrath of 'I ought, I should, I have to, I better, I need ...' and so forth.

I think you know what I'm talking about. That moment in December when gold-colored cocktail napkins won't do because you need cocktail napkins with gold wreaths. Otherwise, your holiday napkins won't match your holiday china.

You've also decided you ought to purchase a dozen or so holiday-scented candles. They, too, should be gold.

While you're out shopping, which you seem to be doing every day, you realize you ought to buy your boss' dog a Christmas present. Everybody else in the office does.

Hey, maybe you should buy the next-door neighbor's kid's dog, a pat toy, too.

Another should-do is the holiday newsletter. All your friends are keeping you up-to-date on their lives, thus you should, too. At the very least, you should write something more than "Season's Greetings" on the 150 cards you have to buy, address and send in the next few weeks.

Other common "ought-to's" include: baking and decorating cookies for Santa (even though the kids are grown and don't believe anymore); buying co-workers token holiday gifts; impulsively getting into the spirit by purchasing a red sweater to wear to the annual Christmas Eve party down the street; making jars of relish to give to each and every host at each and every party you attend; and endeavoring on projects inspired by Martha Stewart.

Before you know it, your to-do list is impossibly long, painful to consider, a constant reminder of your inadequacy as a cheerful, holiday giver.

And, as a proponent of having fun whenever you can, this saddens me.

There are many "ought-to's" in this world. That the holidays ought to be fun is one of the few I support.

However, unless you're willing to give up your list of "ought-to's" in favor of a list of "I-can't" or "I'll-try's," you'll feel like you're on the clock during the next month, rather than doing nice, thoughtful things for family and friends on your own time.

I'm certainly not recommending you rebel against the holidays by refusing to buy gifts or decorate the house. Hey, you even can bake a few cookies and buy holiday candles, if you'd like. Go ahead, buy a bone for the boss' dog.

The point is: do whatever you want, but do what you can and want to do, as opposed to what you should and ought to do.

If you reasonably can and sincerely want to spend an entire afternoon driving all over town to find cocktail napkins with gold wreaths, by all means, do it. Otherwise, buy a set that will suffice. Pick them up at the Hallmark store when you're buying cards and wrapping paper. It's called one-stop shopping.

Another thing: there's no such thing as the perfect gift. The perfect gift is a myth. Besides, family members and friends who are worthy of elevated stress levels induced by shopping actually care about you and your well-being, thus, would prefer you didn't work so hard on their behalf.

One more thing, keep in mind you probably don't need any particular pieces of merchandise to make your holiday celebration a good one. On the other hand, retailers measure the success of their holiday season based on how much you and I buy. They need, out you. Happy shopping.

**Before you know it, your to-do list is impossibly long ... a constant reminder of your inadequacy as a cheerful, holiday giver.**

## It's a tradition

### Shoppers flock to malls after Thanksgiving feast



Always and forever: Sisters Tina and Jackie Lock, at left, with their aunt, Linda Innes from Indiana, have a tradition of coming to Oakland Mall in Troy after Thanksgiving dinner at grandma's house. The trio rose from bed at 4 a.m. Friday morning, so they could stop by a few other stores before heading to the mall for bargains, giveaways and people watching.

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
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Holiday giveaways.  
Merchandise discounts.  
An opportunity to finish holiday shopping early.

There's a plethora of reasons so many shoppers head to local malls and downtown retail districts to shop the day after Thanksgiving.

But abiding tradition is probably their strongest motivation.

In a day of rampant commercialism, a sea of merchandise to choose from and long waits at computer registers, shopping rituals and mere tradition help keep shopping enjoyable.

"It's the religious shopping day of the year," said Troy resident Debbie Jankubowski, who, along with daughter Nicole, woke at 6 a.m. Friday morning to join hundreds of other shoppers at Oakland Mall in Troy.

"You take off work and just shop. It kind of sets the mood for the holidays," said Jankubowski.

But Jankubowski and other shoppers' post-Thanksgiving shopping traditions are more elaborate than just hopping in the car and heading to the mall.

The day before, Jankubowski scans newspaper ads for merchandise bargains and giveaways, makes a list of items she'd like to purchase and jots down a shopping itinerary and ranks her tasks by importance.

Disney's annual Christmas Winnie the Pooh stuffed animal, which Jankubowski purchases

every year, topped her list.

Like Jankubowski, Tina and Jackie Lock, of Utica and their aunt Linda Innes from Indiana, "cruise" newspaper ads on Thanksgiving Day in search of bargains, then develop a shopping plan of action.

The group dragged themselves out of bed at 4 a.m. Friday because, according to tradition, the needed to stop by Target and Meijer before making their way to Oakland Mall.

Once there, they make a beeline to Hudson's where yet another ritual is enacted - a wait in line to purchase a Hudson's holiday Santa Bear.

"We have like a master plan," said Jackie.

In addition to getting a start on their holiday shopping, taking advantage of bargains and going home with a few freebies, the Lock sisters enjoy paying witness to the frenzy.

"We'll have stories to tell all year long," Tina said of shoppers' behavior, charging store entrances, fighting for merchandise and running down department store aisle ways.

"I think for me it's the tradition of coming and watching these crazy people, and knowing we're one of those crazy people, too," said Jackie, adding, "It's fun ... Not shopping today would be weird, I don't know what I'd do."



PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL  
Search: Diane and Mary Bilek search Westland Shopping Center.



PHOTO BY DONNA McLAUGHLIN  
Fit stop: Debbie and Nicole Jankubowski, of Troy, rest after a morning shopping at the mall.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

**LAGNIAPPE FESTIVAL**  
Celebrate Lagniappe, "a little something extra" on Monday, Nov. 29 in downtown Rochester. Activities include horse-drawn carriage rides, tree-lighting ceremony, caroling and a visit from Santa and reindeer. Also, merchants will give small gifts to their customers. 6-8:30 p.m. For more information, call (248) 656-0066.

**SHIMMER WITH SANTA**  
Santa comes to The Community House, 880 South

Bates in downtown Birmingham, to visit with children over breakfast, 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 4. Photos with Santa are available. For additional information, call (248) 644-6882.

**HOLIDAY MAGIC**  
Absolutely Baffling Magic presents Rudolph the Reindeer and 85 minutes of magic tricks for children of all ages on Saturday, Dec. 4 at the Westland Shopping Center. Show starts at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., West Court near the J.C. Penney entrance.

**ROCHESTER'S MOONLIGHT MADNESS**  
Merchants in downtown Rochester hold a moonlight madness sale for the holidays, 7-11 p.m. Friday, Dec. 8, with a variety of sales and discounts from participating retailers. Charity gift wrapping services and downtown Rochester gift certificates will be available in the Third Street Atrium.

**SANTA ARRIVES AT NORTHLAND CENTER**  
Santa sets up shop at Southfield's Northland Center to visit with children for photographs during the mall's extended holiday hours through Dec. 24. For a mall schedule, call (248) 569-6272.

**SANTA COMES TO PLYMOUTH**  
Santa visits with children in downtown Plymouth every weekend through Christmas, 5-6 p.m. on Friday and noon-5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Kellogg Park band shell.

**TREE OF LIFE**  
Volunteers from the Livonia Angela Hospice accept donations for their Tree of Life through Dec. 31 at Laurel Park Place in Livonia. Hang a paper ornament on the tree as a tribute to a loved one, in Jacobson's Court. For additional information, call (248) 464-7810.

**HOLIDAY KINGDOM & BREAKFASTS**  
A majestic three-story castle comes to life for children waiting to visit Santa at the Somerset Collection through Dec. 24. The Children's Theatre of Michigan acts as the castle's royal family, jesters and jugglers and will continuously entertain Santa's guests in the North Grand Court area. Also, private breakfasts with the royal family and Santa Claus are scheduled at 8:30 a.m. on both December 4 and 11. Tickets are priced at \$10 per person. For information, call (248) 643-6360.

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax: (248) 644-1314. Information must be received by 5 p.m. Monday for publication the following Sunday.

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30**

**SPRING BREAKER SHIRAZ PINK**  
Lynn Portnoy women's clothes, 29260 Franklin Road in Southfield, offers a sneak peak of New York designers' Spring 2000 collections, including pieces by Yohji. Shop for holiday gifts, millennium attire or sign up for a chance to win two tickets to New York City, 6-8 p.m. Call to make a reservation, (248) 858-8900.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2**

**SHIMMER WITH SANTA**  
Most jewelry designer Stephen Dusek and view his

### ADDED ATTRACTIONS

latest pieces at Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, 1-4 p.m., Designer Jewelry, first floor.

**LAGOS JEWELRY SHOW**  
View a collection of Lagos jewelry at Jacobson's at Laurel Park Place in Livonia, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Fine Jewelry department.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2**

**SPRING & HOLIDAY ATTRACTIONS**  
View the spring collection of Joan Vass, USA or purchase pre-spring and holiday attire at Sally's Design women's clothing store, the Orchard Mall in West Bloomfield through Dec. 6. For store hours, call (248) 696-0886

**ART & JEWELRY FESTIVAL**

Native West, 863 W. Ann Arbor Trail in downtown Plymouth, holds its 10th annual Holiday Art and Jewelry Festival featuring pieces by some of the finest Native American artists in the nation through Dec. 6. For store hours, call (734) 465-8888.

**BIEDERMANN ORNAMENT SHOW**  
Jacobson's hosts Carl Biedermann and a show of his collectible, limited-edition ornaments at their Birmingham store. Biedermann and his ornament collection also visit Jacobson's Laurel Park Place store in Livonia on Dec. 3. Both events, 3-7 p.m., Stationary department.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3**

**ANTHONY JEWELRY SHOW**  
P.R. Haig Jewelers, 436 Main Street in downtown Rochester, hosts Bernard Cohen's collection of antique and period jewelry with a visit from Mr. Cohen through Dec. 5. Store hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday and noon-5 p.m. on Sunday.