

## News from the world of retail ...

### Phantom giveaway

Art Van Furniture is giving away tickets to the *Phantom of the Opera* for the May 21 performance. One winner will be selected at each Art Van Metro Detroit location on May 13. Register at any Art Van.

### For Mother's Day

If your mom's special day is worth more than a dozen roses, Tiffany & Co. is offering Petal diamond ring, \$17,000, and matching Petal diamond earrings for \$6,800. Both are set in platinum.

For a more modest mom, The Limited Edition Parfum Falcon retails for \$350; its floral blend of Damascena Rose, Indian Jasmine, Iris and Ylang Ylang. Plus it's adorned with a stunning sterling silver stopper.

### More for mom

Wonderland Mall will host a Mother's Day Arts & Crafts Show May 11 through May 13. The show will feature more than a dozen different vendors featuring hundreds of themes. The show takes place in the food court area during regular mall hours.

Wonderland Mall is located in Livonia at Plymouth and Middlebelt roads.

### Net news

Web surfers visiting hudsons.com or daytons.com will be directly linked to marshallfields.com.

Marshall Field's updated site is one of the first steps in the changeover of Dayton's and Hudson's to the Marshall Field's name.

Marshall Field's officials say they have enhanced the site's online presence at marshallfields.com included in the site, of course, is its gift registry — after all, Field's introduced the concept of bridal registry in the 1890s. The site also offers more merchandise. Online users can also order gift wrapping and shipping services.

Dayton's Marshall Field's and Hudson's is part of the Target Corporation and boasts annual revenues of more than \$3 billion.

### Detroit's own

Dr. Isaiah "Ike" McKinnon will be at Border's to sign copies of his book *Stand Still (Sleeping Bear Press)*. Word has it he might even sing a song or two from his days as a "Blue Pigs" member. See Ike on May 17 at 7 p.m. at the Auburn Hills store on Baldwin road; the store on S. Rochester Road in Rochester on May 24 at 7 p.m., and at the Oakland Mall store June 24 at 7 p.m.

Standing Tall is Ike's story of years as a police chief. It begins with hardships of racism, brutality and continues into reconciliation, love and guidance.

### The good and bad

While many Michigan retailers projected a rise in summer sales, most also believe the economic slump will linger.

Sixty-one percent of retailers expect second quarter sales to top last year's numbers, according to the monthly Michigan Retail Index Survey. It's the highest level of optimism since September.

However, when questioned if they expect the current downturn to be short or long — at least 67 percent said "long."

### Mickey Mouse skills

The Disney Key to Excellence is coming to Novi. Business leaders are invited to a leadership and management seminar through a half-day program presented by Disney Institute and sponsored by the Michigan Retailers Association.

It will be held May 29 from 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Novi Hilton, 21111 Haggerty Road in Novi.

**Leadership, Disney Style** examines the elements of employee selection, training, communication and care of Disney's corporate culture. The goal is to let retail business people adapt Disney's leadership style. Cost for MRA members is \$150, non-members, \$175. Call 1-800-368-3699 for details.

— By Lana Mini, Eccentric copy editor

## Scented touch

### How to purchase perfume for Mother's Day

BY NICOLE STAFFORD

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**G**ift-giving is a tricky business. Just locating a gift "that'll do" demands more than casual retail browsing.

And while the process overwhelms many at Christmas time, it deceives even the most seasoned of shoppers come Mother's Day. We're talking about one gift here, something sweet, something personal. A little something mom wouldn't buy for herself. How difficult can it be?

Given you have an eye for precisely the sort of thing that tickles mom's heart and the time to find it, no problem. Short of that, you'll either find yourself in the lingerie department in search of another robe or somewhere ritzy forsaking thoughtfulness for extravagance.

Symbolically, Mother's Day gifts are heavy duty: you want to indulge the woman who rarely indulges herself and capture your one-of-a-kind intimacy.

With flowers, you're half way there. Go one step further with perfume — roses or orange blossom or Lily of Valley every day of the year — you've found intimacy and delectance in a bottle.

"Perfume or fragrance is one of the most personal and extravagant things you can give a person," said Laurence Williams, Jacobson's divisional merchandise manager for beauty and fragrance. "The person receiving the gift recognizes what an extravagant, thoughtful item it is."

So popular is the gift of fragrance that Jacobson's sells more perfume during Mother's Day and Christmas than during the rest of the year, said Williams. For most department stores, the same is true. Indeed, the fragrance industry thrives on gift-giving. That and its ability to continuously renew itself with the introduction of new scents each and every season.

### As she likes it

Don't worry which fragrances are new or hot or hip (don't pay attention to those complex fragrance descriptions, either). The first rule of perfume gift-giving is knowing what a particular woman, in this case mom, likes. If you're not sure, look and take note, ask dad or mom's best friend. Make a list of the fragrances that mom loves and wears, including perfume name and type, as well as brand.

Most brands or designers — sometimes referred to as perfume "houses" — manufacture an array of fragrances, each of which is quite different from the next. Don't assume mom will like a perfume because it comes from a house or designer of another fragrance she wears.

Fragrances come in five types or classes based on oil concentration. Concentration is directly connected to the potency and longevity of a fragrance, as well as its price tag.

The greater the concentration, the stronger the scent, the longer it will last and the more expensive it will be. In order of concentration from greatest to lowest, they classes are: Parfum, eau de parfum, eau de toilette, cologne and eau de Cologne.

Ideally, you'll be able to replenish mom's running-on-empty supply of a particular perfume in the same concentration class. Even if the bottle is a quarter full, she'll appreciate the gift, if the fragrance is an all-time favorite or one she wears daily.

Keep in mind that perfume doesn't last forever and starts to lose its character once opened. On average, fragrances last three years from the date they were manufactured. Storing perfume in a cool dry place away from direct sunlight best preserves quality and character.

**To save or not to save**  
If you're replacing a particular bottle of fragrance that mom loves, uses and needs, you'll probably save a few dollars off the retail price by shopping at a discount outlet or on the Internet. In today's marketplace, giving discounted fragrance isn't a taboo. Perfume can be expensive; a discount might allow you to buy a gift you otherwise couldn't afford.

Just make sure you're buying mom exactly what she likes and uses, said Arlene DeAngelo, district manager at The Fragrance Depot, a discount perfume outlet at Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills.

Most discount fragrance retailers have no-return policies, said DeAngelo. At The Fragrance Depot, a final sale unless the customer requests permission for exchange be written on the sales receipt.

When shopping at a discount outlet, it's also a good idea to ask how long a fragrance has been on the shelf or check its manufacture date. Beware of retailers, whether an outlet or perfumery, that carry fragrances manu-



**Light choice:** Fragrance is a personal, yet extravagant, gift. If you don't know what your gift recipient's favorite scent is, purchase a light fragrance like *Allure* by Chanel.

factured more than two or three years ago.

If, on the other hand, you're looking for a discontinued fragrance — perhaps one of mom's old favorites — you may have no choice in the matter. Furthermore, fragrance outlets and small, independent perfumeries, as well as some perfume web sites, are the best bet when it comes to finding discontinued, rare or unusual scents. Department stores limit offerings and have to make space for the steady and seasonal stream of new fragrances. And while outlets offer savings of up to 40 percent off department store prices, they only stock what they're able to purchase at a discount. Outlets also sell tester bottles of perfume at an additional discount, so make sure you're getting the "gift-packaged" version when buying for mom.

**Thrill of a new scent**  
"Obviously, if you know what she wears and needs, it makes the process much easier," said Williams. "If you don't, it's still not a huge risk." The safest route is to buy a fragrance that mom already has but in a different concentration category. Many, if not most, women, like to have perfumes of varying potency on hand for different occasions. Generally speaking, perfume, though perfect for evening wear, is too strong; for the office or grocery shopping, Eau de toilette, on the other hand, is light enough to wear day-to-day.

"Most fragrance people are willing to try something new," added Williams.

Her formula for success: Bring a list



**The whole deal:** Mom isn't often likely to overindulge herself, but you can with a gift set in her favorite fragrance. Chanel's gift sets for Mother's Day run \$58.50-75 at local department stores.

### Buying tips

■ If you don't have a specific fragrance in mind, make a list of those you know she likes and uses; bring the list to the perfume counter and ask for recommendations.

■ If you want to surprise her with a brand new fragrance or one that's new to her, choose one from the same scent category. ■ Don't worry about those complicated fragrance descriptions or a fragrance's "notes." You're only concerned with its dominant scent characteristics.

■ Fragrances are categorized by strength of concentration, or the amount of oil they contain. The greater the concentration, the stronger the scent, the longer it lasts and the more expensive it will be. Parfum has the greatest concentration. Eau de parfum is next followed by eau de toilette and cologne. Eau de Cologne is the least concentrated.

### Popular Internet sites for perfume

- [www.fragranceset.com](http://www.fragranceset.com)
- [www.perfumania.com](http://www.perfumania.com)
- [www.fragrancezone.com](http://www.fragrancezone.com) (wholesale prices)
- [www.fragranceswish.com](http://www.fragranceswish.com)

of mom's favorite perfumes to the fragrance counter and ask for a recommendation.

Most women are drawn to perfume from one scent category, such as floral, citrus, sweet or spicy. Women also tend to prefer a certain strength of fragrance, a characteristic separate from potency and oil concentration.

Ask for suggestions based on scent category and strength. When in doubt err on the side of a lighter fragrance. Current best-selling perfumes include: DKNY in the citrus category; Angel by Thierry Mugler and Lolita Lempiak both from the sweet category; Chanel No. 5 in the floral category; and Rush by Gucci and Poison by Christian Dior both from the spicy category.

Lost in an olfactory haze at the perfume counter? Plug the nose and pick out a pretty perfume bottle.

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

### THURSDAY, MAY 10

#### KNITTING TRUNK SHOW

The Knitting Room, 251 East Merrill Street in Birmingham, hosts a Classic Elite Yarns trunk show through May 21, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. For details, call (248) 540-3623.

### SAURDAY, MAY 12

#### COSMETICS TRENDS SHOW

Nordstrom, the Somerset Collection in Troy, explores trends in makeup, skin care, fragrance and fashion with host Debbi Hartley, the retailer's national beauty director. Guests include: Tiny, owner and creator of Tony & Tina Cosmetics, the vice president of Estee Lauder and makeup artists from several cosmetics makers, including Chanel, Lancôme, Philosophy, Procosmetics, L'Oréal, Paul Dorf and Philosophy. Book an appointment with a makeup artist or enjoy free samples. Ticket reservations are \$15 and include continental breakfast

at 8:30 a.m. Appointments are available 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. For reserve a spot, call (248) 818-5100, ext. 1690.

#### WEDDING GOWN FUND-RAISER

Making Memories Breast Cancer Foundation, a Portland-based organization dedicated to fulfilling wishes for metastatic breast cancer patients, received more than 6,000 wedding gowns from around the world from designers, manufacturers and individuals for its Second Annual National Fund-raiser. The foundation will stage its first metro Detroit wedding gown sale at the Westin Southfield-Detroit.

Proceeds from the two-day events from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and May 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. will benefit the organization's *Dream Fulfillment Fund* to grant.

A drawing will also be held with top prize being a \$12,000 wedding reception at the hotel. The drawing is open only to those who purchase a gown. Several gowns included in the show, for sale, were worn in the movie *The Bachelor*, donated by New Line Home Video.

Gowns will be available at discount rates. Free parking for the event will be available at the Town Center Parking Garage behind the Westin. The Westin is located at Evergreen and the Lodge Freeway in Southfield. For more information, visit [www.makingmemories.org](http://www.makingmemories.org) or call 503-252-3955.

**Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. By fax, (248) 644-1314. E-mail, nstafford@oe.homedm.com. Deadline for publication is two weeks in advance.**

### SUNDAY, MAY 6

#### MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

Tel-Twelve Mall in Southfield kicks off a week of daily musical performances featuring local school and community groups in center court. Event is free and co-sponsored by the Birmingham Musicale National Federation of Music Clubs. For a performance schedule, call mall customer service at (248) 353-4111.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 9

#### PROJECT HEALTHY LIVING

Livonia Mall hosts Botetford Hospital and Project Healthy Living through May 10, featuring free and low-cost health screenings, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For further information, call (248) 476-1160.