

OBSERVER

WORLD of WOMEN

Couple Loses Shop To Fire, Discovers Community's Heart

Out of the ruin of fire and ice, Minerva and Herbert Chaiken have discovered anew the compassion of their customers in Plymouth.

The owners of "Minerva's," the women's and children's apparel shop on Penman that was ravaged by smoke, flames and water ten days ago, have been amazed and touched by the many expressions of concern.

"People have been wonderful—our customers from Northville and Livonia as well as Plymouth," said Minerva Chaiken, now beginning to get over the shock of seeing a 17-year-old business destroyed.

"We've had such nice letters—people even write notes on their statements when they pay their bills. And there were hundreds of telephone calls. The phone rang almost constantly until late that Sunday night."

The theme of most of the letters is that people hope "Minerva's" will again be a member of the Plymouth business community. Though everything is still very unsettled, that is what the Chaikens would like, too.

"We hope to reopen and be with our friends," Minerva said. "We feel that Plymouth is our home."

SHE WAS ESPECIALLY pleased by a letter from a 16-year-old youth, oldest of six boys in a Plymouth family, who wrote:

"I hope more terrible things couldn't have happened to two of the best business people in Plymouth."

"His mother used to get a lot of his clothes from us," Minerva recalled. "Now he's too big. But more recently, he's come in to hold the youngest while his mother shopped for the other boys."

ANOTHER CUSTOMER wrote to express sympathy and said "Plymouth needs such friendly, cooperative merchants as your store represents," and still another wrote:

"There cannot help but be more good waiting for you out of the seeming chaos," Chaiken said the first call to the couple's Livonia home on the fire Jan. 7 was so short that he thought it might be a



PLYMOUTH'S SYMPATHY -- Minerva Chaiken and her husband, Herbert, look over some of the letters from Plymouth residents expressing concern over the loss of their shop, Minerva's in the Plymouth fire Jan. 7.

prank, but he rechecked, learned that there was fire next door and hurried right out to Plymouth.

"The store was filled with smoke when we got there," he said, "but it was several hours later that the flames broke through."

Couple Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. George Krenz, of 11348 Royal Grand, Bedford Township, will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary with a family dinner Jan. 25. They have two children, Karen and Gary.

THE COUPLE had the highest praise for the fire-fighters who battled the flames, and for the other merchants in the area who gave assistance.

Among the losses to be totaled, in fact, were the payments for the last few boxes of Christmas cards and candy sold by the BPW from her shop, because it was convenient that way.

"I'VE WISHED so many times I had taken the time to take that little bit of money to the bank," she said. "But you just never know what's going to happen. Whatever the future brings,

Minerva is sure loss of the small, unpretentious shop on Penman will leave a void. "I won't forget it," she said. "It was home."

Coventry Gardens Sets Tea Jan. 24

The Tot Lot organization of Coventry Gardens, Livonia, will hold its annual Mother's Tea at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, in the home of Mrs. Robert Crist, 15486 Surrey. Mothers of the subdivision who have children between the ages of three and five are invited.

m. m. memos

Mothers in suburbia are fond of saying that when you deliver a baby in the maternity wing of your chosen hospital that's only the beginning.

After that you go right on delivering him here and there and all over town for something like 20 years.

This comforting thought was much with me through the busy holidays as I delivered to school functions and club parties and pajama parties all up and down the subdivisions.

Now, with the arrival of real winter, a shorter sort of delivery route keeps me traveling a lot.

We have the good fortune to live up the hill from an ice skating rink. That ice is just close enough to make it seem silly to have to put on your skates while sitting beside it, and just far enough away so you can't walk up the hill in skates.

So the family car does the delivery work up and down the hill.

The trouble is the timing. Invariably, if the weather seems cold and I allot a short time for skating, everyone wants to stay a bit longer. And if I decide to wait more time between delivery stops, someone's sure to be freezing.

Maybe a flag pole would be the answer—the kids could run up a banner when ready to come home and I could tell with a glance out the window when it's time to start out to get them.

In the meantime, the delivery truck will probably continue its haphazard schedule.

2 Farmington Girls Honored

Two Farmington girls, Linda Sue Hayland, of North Farmington High School, and Catherine Marie Ruyie, of Our Lady of Sorrows, will be honored by the Daughters of the American Revolution Feb. 12.

The Three Flags DAR group, representing Lathrup, Southfield and Farmington, will present Good Citizenship awards to Linda and Catherine and four other high school seniors.

They are chosen by their schools for qualities of dependability, service, leadership and patriotism, and will go on to compete at the state level for U.S. Savings Bonds awards.

The girls and their mothers will be guests of honor at a Patriotic Tea in the home of Mrs. Gordon Webb, Lathrup Village.

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State's '68 Mom Sought

The search for the 1968 Michigan Mother is underway throughout the state.

Mrs. Harold Hunsberger, chairman of the Michigan State Mothers Committee, asked that individuals and organizations to nominate women they consider worthy of the honor.

Mrs. Hunsberger said candidates should be successful mothers and homemakers, as evidenced by the character and achievements of their children, should be church members and active in community service and should embody traits such as courage, cheerfulness, patience, affection and understanding.

Mothers who are divorcees or have children younger than 15 years of age are not eligible, she added.

Nomination blanks may be obtained by writing to the Michigan Mothers Committee, 406 Fifth Street, Traverse City, Mich., 19684.

Plymouth AAUW To Hear Of Art

Joel Isaacson, assistant professor of art history at the University of Michigan, will address the Plymouth Branch of the American Association of University Women at the group's meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 18, at Plymouth Junior High West.

His topic will be "Is Social Change Reflected in the Arts?" He lectured on that theme during the U. of M. sequentennial program last spring.

Dr. Isaacson holds degrees from Brooklyn College, Oberlin College and the University of California.

AAUW hostesses for the meeting will be Mrs. George Purcell and Mrs. William Strick.

Plans Card Party

The Livonia Ladies Auxiliary, 43041, 27555 Cranford, Livonia, will hold a card party and crazy hat show Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 8 p.m. Prizes will be given for the best hat. The Auxiliary building is located between Schoolcraft and Plymouth just west of Inkster.

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