

# Sewing for the bridal party

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Donna Lutz began to take her hobby of sewing seriously when the now svelte and long legged young miss found herself shopping for size 16 clothes.

Then, after a summer course in St. Mary of Royal Oak High School and a six-week tailoring class, more time was devoted to the sewing machine when she began answering requests from friends.

"People, and especially brides, seek out seamstresses because of cost," she said. "They want their wedding gown to be something special but find that the starting price of \$200 is pretty high

for a dress they will wear only one day."

She cited Barbara Miller, a Farmington bride last fall, as paying about \$125 for her gown. The price included pattern, all notions, all trim, material and labor.

"And she got exactly what she wanted," Ms. Lutz said. The practically extends to the wedding party.

On most occasions, the young seamstress said, bridesmaids will be concerned if their gowns can be worn for school dances, or easily altered to a more versatile piece, or be shortened for street wear.



"We can work around that," Ms. Lutz said.

"The biggest wedding party I've ever sewed for was eight bridesmaids and a flower girl. We made fairly plain dresses with pretty fancy capes and all of the skirts were cut so they could be converted to street length with very little trouble."

ONE WEDDING overlaps the next now as the student at Lawrence Institute of Technology keeps responding to her classmates who are planning to be married.

She claims to have the time element down pat as to promising a gown for a given date, but that only if she is sure and familiar with the fabric she is working with.

"My favorite material is qiana," she said, "and I recommend that for brides or bridesmaids. It doesn't ravel so I don't have to worry about seam binding, and it doesn't wrinkle, and it hangs well."

"I try to shop with my clients," she added. "I recommend fabric or advise against it and I am very blase about telling them about what style is or isn't going to work well for them."

As for a basic pattern, "That is a problem whether you have two or eight in the bridal party. You are almost sure to have one big chested girl, one big hipped girl, someone who needs special attention."

MS. LUTZ asks a three to four month lead time when accepting a job to dress four or five women in a wedding party beginning with the first contact and shopping tour.

She tries to buy everything she will need on the first shopping trip and can get a discount at almost any fabric store by buying an entire bolt of material.

She does not believe that price determines quality and is quick to recommend on-sale fabric "as long as you know materials and know what you're buying."

On one occasion she purchased on-sale qiana, that normally sells for about \$6.99 a yard, and outfitted a bridal party that averaged out to \$33 a gown, and that included her cost of labor.

Local classified advertisements are not too heavy from seamstresses looking for work these days.

"I'm not sure why, but I know I don't have to advertise. All of my work comes from word of mouth and maybe the others are all like me."

"The first time I wore a dress to a school dance and told my friends I had made it myself. I was in business without realizing it," she said.

MS. LUTZ does not make her living as a seamstress. In addition to her night classes at Lawrence Institute of Technology, she works in the accounting department at Callae Electric Supply.

"Sewing is recreation as well as relaxation for me," she said.

"Doing bridal parties was just a natural progression as some of my friends got married."

"Putting in a sleeve is still putting in a sleeve. Zippers are still zippers. Trim is still trim."



Donna Lutz models one of her own creations, a two-piece qiana gown which serves as a sample of her work. Matching pink ribbon is threaded through the white lace trim on the jacket and the bodice of the gown. (Photos by Cyd Abatt)

## fashion calendar

Monday, Feb. 19

**Sussex House** — Fashions by Leyton's will be featured each Monday during lunch.

**Saks Fifth Avenue** — Exquisite designs in fascinating prints for spring and summer by Hanae Mori will be modeled in the Regency Room of the Detroit store.

**Saks Fifth Avenue** — Chloe fashions designed by Karl Lagerfeld will be introduced by Paris representative, Nicole Fischel in the Regency Salon of the Somerset store. The Anne Klein Spring and Summer Collection will be modeled informally in the sportswear department on the second floor at 1 p.m. in the Detroit store.

**School of Fashion Design** — A Fashions and Fitting Seminar will be held today from 10 a.m. to noon at the school located at 1978 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Admission is \$5. For information call 338-7558 or 332-5853.

**Lord & Taylor** — Beauty staff will share their expertise in the newest hair styles to compliment you at 9:30 a.m. in the Bird Cage Restaurant of the Twelve Oaks store. Also on Friday at 9:30 a.m. in the Fairlane store.

Tuesday, Feb. 20

**Saks Fifth Avenue** — Anne Klein's Spring and Summer Collection will be informally modeled from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Somerset Mall store.

**Cooper's Arms** — Designer fashions from Janet Varney of Rochester are modeled informally from noon to 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday September through May.

**Somerset Mall** — Sherwin Wine is conducting a 5-week series dealing with the hot spots of the world. The third in the series will deal with "White South Africa." The lectures are held in the main auditorium from 10 a.m. to noon. Fee for individual lecture is \$5. You may register at the door.

**Lord & Taylor** — Audrey Pearl, certified financial planner, will conduct the

first of a three part series on expanding your financial knowledge. Tonight's programs from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. will include a discussion on making inflation work for you with a diagram for financial independence in the Fairlane store. This same program will be presented in the Twelve Oaks store from 7 to 9 p.m. Series is free of charge, but reservations are required. For information call 348-3400.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

**Community House** — Saks Fifth Avenue will be featured in the Coffee & Conversation Series at 1:30 p.m. in the Community House. A fashion show with professional models will give viewers a look at outfits designed for the young working girl and the older matron. Tickets priced at \$3.75 are available at the Community House, 380 S. Bates in Birmingham. Call 644-5832 for further information.

Thursday, Feb. 22

**Somerset Mall** — Maria Zayda Ang will conduct the third in a series of cooking classes exploring the cuisines from Zechuan, Peking and Canton. Class will be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the mall auditorium. You may register for one class at a cost of \$20. Registration forms will be available at the Crown House of Gifts.

**Hudson's** — Linda Giulliana, home economist and Culinary instructor, will teach you the basic techniques to help you get the most from this innovative food processor. Class will be offered from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Oakland Mall store. Call 225-1038 to register. Fee is \$10.

Sunday, Feb. 25

**Somerset Mall Sunday Concert Series** — Susan Ivers Barna, flutist, and Thomas D. Barna, pianist, will entertain from 2 to 4 p.m. in the center mall.



Bridesmaid-to-be Ruth DeMarios tries on her multi-colored sheer cape that was selected to make the colors brighter. Seamstress Donna Lutz suggested the cape to dress up the simple gown chosen by the bride's attendants.



## Saks Fifth Avenue

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Monday, February 19, 1979

and

Tuesday, February 20, 1979

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## Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

### Losing propositions

In today's world, being a loser has a bad connotation. However, if you're on a diet, it's just the reverse. The Continental Gourmet Shop has come up with a delicious way to help you stay slim. Whole onion, salt, egg or plain bagels are run through a commercial slicer to become low cal, paper-thin Bagel Thins. One package (25 cents) contains two sliced bagels or approximately 35 pieces. If you're willing to forego the lox and cream cheese for a less fattening filling, you could turn out to be one of the greatest losers of all time.

Continental Gourmet Shop in The Continental Market, 210 S. Woodward, Birmingham, 642-5236.

### Naturally

There's still more cooking at What's Cookin'. This time it's a series of classes entitled "Nutritious Is Delicious." In keeping with the recent emphasis on healthy eating, Cheryl Israel will teach you how to prepare delicious desserts that use honey or molasses instead of white sugar and whole grains instead of bleached flour. You'll also learn how to make Middle Eastern, Mexican, Chinese and French meals with ingredients that are good for you. The classes (\$40 for the series) will take place 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., March 13 and 17 and April 3 and 10.

What's Cookin'! Applegate Square, Northwestern at Inkster, Southfield, 556-8869.

### Chime in

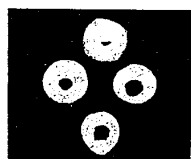
It looks like an oversized contemporary doorknob, but that's not what it is at all. Rather, it's a fascinating clock called The Audocron. A frosted lucite band runs along the side of the knob. When you pinch the heat-sensitive clock on the top and bottom, the band flashes and the clock also chimes, first the hours, then the tens of minutes, then the single minutes. Battery-operated, the clock is available in your choice of a silver (\$175) or gold (\$225) finish.

The Open Crate, Applegate Square, Northwestern at Inkster, Southfield, 556-3565.

### Magnificent seven

The selection is always terrific and the price is right. The Seventh House imports all of their clothing from India and everything is either 100 percent cotton or silk. You'll find tunic tops, hand-embroidered shirts tucked-in and overblouses, wrap around skirts, dresses and slacks in a wide range of solid colors and in those wonderful Indian prints. Prices range from \$4.99 to \$21.99.

The Seventh House in The Continental Market, 210 S. Woodward, Birmingham, 642-7218 412 Main, Rochester, 632-6680.



## Ethan Allen

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