

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

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SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

See what's in store at unusual new shops

To help you ring in the new year with style, I would like to introduce you to some new shops that have opened recently in our local malls and along our mainstreets. Most of you have probably already discovered these merchants during the holiday shopping season. I think they are excellent additions to our retail community, so join me in welcoming them.

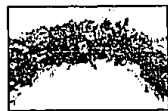
I received a phone call from David Feldman who said I should check out in The Cards in Laurel Park Place. "A lot of neat stuff," he said in describing this one-of-a-kind card shop. Funny that when I visited this emporium owned by sisters Sandy Nagy and Mary Ann Colohan and their husbands, I heard another customer voicing the exact same words. "What neat stuff," she said.

In addition to the usual greeting cards, In The Cards offers an array of unusual gift items including the hand-blown Silvestri perfume bottle pictured here (\$31.95).

Tinted in swirls of purple and plum, the colors complement its elegant shape. A display case holds a variety of these graceful decanters. The Whimsical World of Pocket Dragons by Land of Legends includes this irresistible little ceramic collectible titled Scales of Injustice (\$39.95). This expressive green dragon overindulged during the holidays, like the rest of us, and is chagrined by his weight gain. See the entire quaint collection.

In The Cards also sells the popular mystery puzzles, unusual pottery, a complete selection of Gayle's Chocolates and the most colorful fish magnets (\$3.95) you've ever seen. "We had a great Christmas," said Nagy. "The demand was tremendous, and we learned a lot for next year." For instance, they'll buy more gift wrap, so they don't run out early.

That's some swag



This gorgeous crescent swag that can truly be appreciated only if seen in person is representative of the elegant creations found at Paterson Curvey Florist in

Birmingham. Picture this swag in shades of pink and green, adorned with roses and hyacinths and accented with eucalyptus, ivy and berries. Finished with rose-colored wired ribbon, it's a knock-out (\$129.99, other swags start at \$69.99). Co-owner Jacqueline Curvey opened this location on Oct. 12, consolidating two previous businesses, one in Royal Oak and one on Adams Road. The result is a spacious, full-service florist featuring a huge selection of fresh-cut flowers, as well as custom wreaths, dried arrangements and unusual baskets and vases.

I was particularly charmed by the moss and twig birdhouses and the picturesque mini-terrariums.

Joanne Goodvich of Troy was equally enthralled. "I got in here and lost track of time," she said as she described her favorite purchase—a tin candle holder. She discovered the shop by accident and "I wasn't disappointed," she said. Look to Paterson Curvey to brighten a dreary winter's day. Nothing lifts the spirit more than a fragrant bouquet of fresh blooms.

If you've strolled Lakeside Mall lately you've undoubtedly discovered Michigan's only Abercrombie & Fitch. This 100-year-old retailer features moderately priced casual clothing for men and women.

Clubby look prevails

The genteel, clubby look of the spacious store is achieved with plaid carpeting, dark mahogany furniture and brass chandeliers. It has the air of a chic, yet casual English hunt club. Comfortable classic clothing prevails, including this flannel Big Shirt (\$38) bearing the store's own private label.

Sweatshirts and sweaters, rugby, fleece and cotton shirts round out the rugged outdoor apparel. The store also carries dress shirts and ties and women's wear. Men's fragrances, including the best-selling Woods after-shave and cologne, are available.

Manager Monica Dembeck praised the store's location, saying business has been wonderful and the Lakeside store is ranked fourth or fifth in the entire company right now.

Linda Bachrack lives in Birmingham. You can give her your column ideas by calling 953-2047 from your touch-tone phone.



JOHN STORMEARD/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Calm before the storm: Clearance tables in the sportswear department are organized by (from left) Sandy Bernier of Lake Orion, Charlene Rivard of Rochester Hills and Bernadine Johnson of Clinton Township.

READY, SET, MARKDOWN!

It's pre-inventory sales and clearance time everywhere you shop this month as retailers try to end the year on empty shelves. Preparing a store for a clearance sale is busy work as this crew at Jacobson's explains.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

It was hard to come in early the day after Christmas, but the staff at Jacobson's had a job to do.

Almost every item in the store had to be marked down by hand by hand.

So at 7 a.m. about 60 yawning, eye-rubbing, slipper-footed, coffee-sipping salespeople, department managers and maintenance workers reported for duty.

"The staff works in pairs to get ready to open on clearance," said Norman Kesman, Jacobson's general manager at Great Oaks Mall in Rochester. "One person reduces the ticket price by hand in red ink and another immediately tallies the reduction on a chart. It's a time-consuming process. Most of the people who come in to prepare for the store-wide clearance sale go to home shortly after the store opens, so it's not too bad a job."

Kesman said the Christmas merchandise is marked down 50 percent. A reduction "in the neighborhood of 20 percent" is taken on most regular merchandise.

"The reductions are made by the day after Christmas to take advantage of the captive audience that comes in to make returns and exchanges," Kesman said. "Jacobson's Winter Clearance will last through January."

Four maintenance workers arrived extra-early at 4:30 a.m. to set up cir-

Santa was good to area merchants

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

"Retailers can put their worry beads away and breathe a sigh of relief. The fat man came down the chimney," reported Frederick Marx, president of Marx Layne, marketing and public relations.

"In fact, this retail period is the best in four years," he said. "However, it was easy to top last year's sales figures because they were so soft, 1991 was lackluster, disappointing. Most retailers blamed it on General Motors' layoff announcements."

The week between Christmas and New Year's is gaining clout with retailers as another prime shopping time, he said.

"It used to be a break-even week in retailing but with so many gift certificates being passed out during the holidays gift purchasing continues afterwards," he said.

Charles Creamer, senior vice president of the Michigan Retailers Association, said that 68 percent of the retailers surveyed reported surpassing 1991 sales fig-

ures by double digits before Thanksgiving.

"The MRA represents more than 5,000 independent retailers of varying size.

"Expectations for a healthy holiday retail season were high this year," he said. "And there is no question that in the week after Christmas many businesses do better than during the week before."

Michael Buescher of Laurel Park Place in Livonia said sales all through the year were stronger than last year. He estimated a 30-percent increase in holiday sales over 1991.

At the Fairlane Town Center in Dearborn, general manager Michael Fenley, reported 1992 mall sales were up "in strong single digits" over 1991.

"Holiday sales probably went into a double-digit increase, although actual figures are not yet available," he said. "The after-Christmas phenomenon has been incredible here. On Saturday we saw 100,000 people visit Fairlane. That's a record for us."

cular racks, rectangular clearance tables and square sales signs in every department. They also had to thoroughly clean the store, left ragged by the Christmas Eve rush.

Several people worked steaming hundreds of tablecloths printed Clearance to hang over tables in the center aisles. Others armed with Windex and sheets of paper towels, wiped down glass shelves and cabinets.

"You bet it was hard to get in early this morning," Jill Major of Rochester said. "I went to bed early on Christmas but it was still difficult to wake myself up at 6 a.m. Look, I'm still wearing my slippers! That's how hard it was."

After putting a red slash through the price tags of several dresses in the Misses Dress Department, Diane Simon of Rochester Hills breathed a deep sigh.

"I'm exhausted," she said. "We had company until midnight yesterday, and it was hard to wake up today to take mark-downs. I'm waiting for the day this can all be done by computer."

Kesman said he had no doubt the store would be ready to greet shoppers in full black-and-red Jacobson's clearance-style by noon. And he was right.

"We had time to sit back and catch our breaths before the crowds arrived," he said.

Coffee and doughnuts of appreciation awaited the early bird staff in the employee's cafeteria.

Planning a wedding? Make a day of it

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

To help this year's brides and grooms prepare for their big day, Hudson's will host a day-long Bridal Show and Registry Fair, A Marriage of Style Saturday, Jan. 23, beginning at 10 a.m. in Southfield.

Participants will be treated to a sit-down brunch, a fashion show featur-

ing gowns for either a morning, afternoon or evening ceremony, an address by communications expert Dr. Loreta Malandro on Talking Straight Not Crooked With Your Spouse, and the chance to discuss patterns and prices with manufacturers' representatives from more than 75 companies.

Reservations are required. The \$12.50 ticket is redeemable for \$12.50

off a single item purchase of \$50 or more in the china, crystal, silver, cookware, bath and bedding, small electronics, or intimate apparel shops.

Jill Dittme, co-host of TV-2's Eyewitness Morning show, will emcee the event. All guests will receive a gift, and the chance to win the grand-prize honeymoon trip.

The latest Vera Wang collection will be highlighted throughout the day. Jaclyn Barret-Hirschhaut, editor of *Elegant Bride*, will be on hand to chat with participants.

Guests will be shuttled between the Hudson's Northland store and the Southfield Pavilion.

For tickets and more information call 443-6332.

ON-LINE WIRE (Eastern Standard Time)

The following customer service numbers will come in handy when Christmas, Hanukkah and birthday gifts don't come out like the picture on the box. Customer service representatives can take orders for new pieces, direct callers to stores for items they couldn't find before the holidays, and walk callers through assembly and operation.

FISHER PRICE: 1-800-432-5437 - 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

HASBRO: 1-800-752-9755 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

KENNER: 1-800-327-8264 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

LEGO: 1-800-422-5346 - 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

LIONEL TRAINS: 1-313-949-4100 ext. 1286 or 1409 - 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

LITTLE TYKES: 1-800-321-0183 - 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

MATTEL: 1-800-524-8697 - 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

OHIO ART: 1-419-636-3141 (ask for Replacement Parts) - 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

PLAYSKOOL: 1-800-752-9755 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

TYCO: 1-800-423-5340 - 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Please note: The Malls & Mainstreets Added Attractions calendar will return next week when the sales and clearances die down and the special events and activities return. Stay tuned!