

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1993

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACH

New tools to revive art of letter writing

In our impatience to finish everyday tasks, we have neglected certain rituals that are actually gratifying. One of those is the art of correspondence. When is the last time you sat down and jotted a quick note to a friend? Note writing is all too rare today, and so it's especially appreciated.

Alexandra Stoddard in her best-selling book, "Living A Beautiful Life," demonstrates techniques for turning dull routines into pleasing rituals. She suggests stimulating the senses to make work fun. For example, she describes the glossy red notebook and broad-tip fountain pen that she uses to transform the task of writing into an enjoyable exercise.

"When you actually sit down at a place you've designed as your writing table, with paper, pen and stamps all set up to dash off a note, this ritual can be effortless and pleasurable. . .," writes Stoddard. She heightens her enjoyment of the experience by collecting bottles of ink in different colors and sealing her letters with wax. She often sprays her stationery with her favorite scent.

A variety of notepapers can make letter writing more fun, and a personal space, outfitted with all of the requisite supplies, will make corresponding more efficient. The Paper Place in Appleton

Square on Northwestern Highway, Southfield, offers a vast array of stationery and accessories. Their selection includes the designer paper and picture in a colorful tulip motif beribboned in lavender (30 cents/sheet and 35 cents/envelope). To add some real pizzazz, choose circular gold foil and tulip stickers to create charming seals for your envelopes. The knowledgeable staff at The Paper Place will help you coordinate your own custom paper and seal designs.

You may not be aware that when Tiffany & Co. opened in 1837, it was a purveyor of fine paper goods. Today, Tiffany's in the Somerset Collection still stocks exquisite cards and papers, all bearing original designs and the Tiffany watermark. The bordered notecards (\$40) share Tiffany china patterns such as Audubon, Black Shoulders and Coeur Fleur and engraved cards can be ordered in a myriad of unusual monogram styles.

Once you have beautiful paper on which to pen your thoughts, you may want to add some desktop luxuries. Nolman Marcus displays vintage antique silver letter openers, Victorian pencils on ribbon, ornate magnifying glasses and crystal inkwells in his gift department.

Renee Losh of Birmingham treasures her embossed stationery from Neiman's and uses it to correspond with overseas friends. "A letter goes beyond a phone call," she says. "It's more cherished when it's written down."

Preferring a pad of lined paper to fancier notecards, "because I write long," Cheryl Crandall of Pontiac echoes Losh's sentiments. "You can save a note and reread it over and over. The thoughts vanish and are forgotten in a phone call."

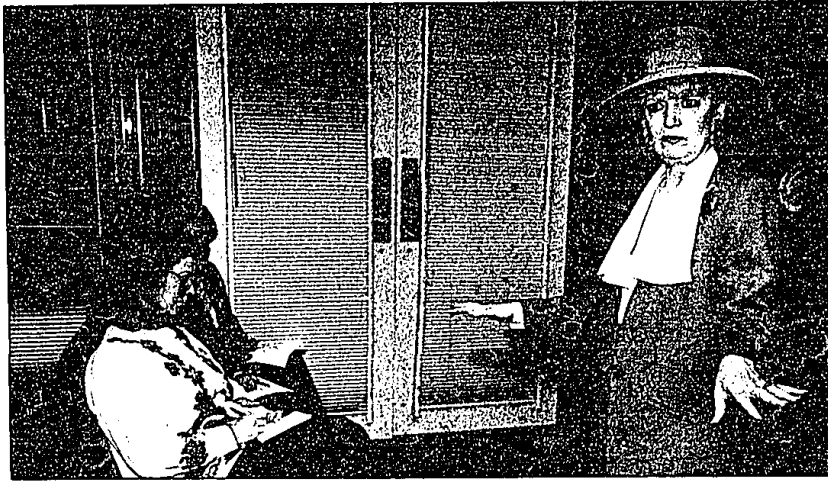
Though writing your words down for friends is a meaningful ritual, keeping a personal journal is equally rewarding. "A conversation with myself"

wrote Whitman in describing his commonplace book. According to Stoddard, the details of the blank book you use are important. The more pleasing the book, the more likely you will sit at the table and enjoy it. A leather-bound diary may seem extravagant but the one we picture is a work-of-art.

This hand-crafted Italian leather journal from the Riki Schaffer Gallery, 6997 Orchard Lake Road in The Boatwalk, features handmade paper and wax seals, ribbon page markers and an intricate papier-mache countenance on the front cover (\$450). Too beautiful to scribble your daydreams in? It would make a gorgeous guest book for a wedding or special occasion party.

To ensure your return to the lost art of correspondence — the perfect writing instrument. Rodic-France is the only manufacturer in the world to produce oblong ink pens, the preferred material of the industry. This finest of pens is available exclusively at the Riki Schaffer Gallery in fountain and ballpoint styles (\$200).

Linda Bachrach is a Birmingham resident. To leave her your column ideas, please dial 953-2047, Ext. 1859 from a touch-tone phone.



Hats are back! Peg Treacy demonstrates how adding a hat to an outfit turns a look into "a class act."

Image expert tells how to dress stylishly



The best dressers don't wear fragrance to the office, never wear boots with zippers, and often don a hat. Image consultant Peg Treacy shares tips to help folks comb their malls and mainstreets to look like a million by spending wisely.

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

"You've got to think of yourself as a unique product and package yourself accordingly," Peg Treacy of Churchill Associates told a roomful of concerned consumers at the Community House in Birmingham last week.

"There are several rules of dressing that when followed never let you down. Of course when you break them, no one's going to come out and arrest you, but you won't have the edge that fashion practitioners have."

For the past 16 years as president of her Birmingham-based image consulting firm, Treacy has helped bankers, corporate leaders and would-be politicians polish their look and strengthen their image. Simple rules

help prevent shoppers from wasting money on garments that don't work, hairstyles that turn people off, and accessories that would be better left in the drawer.

She evaluates clothing purchases by cost per wearing, reminding shoppers that a "cheap" garment usually means poor fit, poor construction, and ends up as the most expensive item in a closet because it's not worn regularly.

"Better to buy quality," she said. "It looks better, fits better and you'll feel better in it and wear it often, thus making it an economical purchase."

When making cuts in a wardrobe budget eliminate purchases of colored hosiery, white or red shoes, patterned pieces and perfume.

"You don't really need these items," she pointed out. "Money spent on them could better be applied to a pair of quality shoes in a neutral color or good quality solid color blazer. Americans seem to think that having more is better than having quality and they'd rather have their closets full than stocked with quality garments."

"There's nothing wrong with being seen in the same thing twice," she argued. "Where did we ever get the idea that it's a fashion taboo? Europeans don't share our views. They choose quality over quantity everytime. And when you can't afford quality there are tricks to make it look like you can."

"Quality boots never have zippers," Treacy advised. "So don't buy boots that do. They look cheap. Avoid shiny fabrics. They always look inexpensive. To upgrade a garment, change the buttons to a higher quality, replace a same-fabric tie-belt with one that's leather, and buy tasteful, fun pieces of jewelry instead of faddish,

dangly, cheap-looking pieces. You don't need to have expensive jewelry, just well-designed pieces."

Perfume, much to the audience's surprise, is actually a detriment to a classy package, Treacy said.

"Co-workers do not like fragrance in the office," she said. "Some can be too heavy and induce sneezing, headaches and allergies in those nearby. Better not to wear fragrance to the office at all."

Treacy said "everything's better with a hat," and advised female shoppers to include a chapeau or two in their wardrobe budget.

"Men love women to wear hats," she said with a laugh. "Wear a hat to a restaurant and you'll get the best table. You make the place look like a class act."

Treacy ended with a reminder that to look good on the outside a person needs to look good on the inside as well. She suggested compiling a list of your 10 best attributes and reviewing them monthly each morning before you get dressed.

Mardi Gras in Detroit suburbs brings New Orleans party north

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Hosting an authentic New Orleans-style Mardi Gras party in a suburban Detroit home is no quick trick.

However local malls and mainstreet merchants are anxious to oblige those determined to give it a try on Tuesday, Feb. 23.

The traditional Mardi Gras decorations in purple (for justice), green (for faith) and gold (for power) are available at stores like the 1/4 Off Card Shop, Parti Giant in Rochester, The Paper Party Place in Farmington, and Party Parade in Canton.

Record shops can provide cassettes of Dixieland jazz. No party is complete without renditions of *When The Saints Go Marching In*, *Tiger Rag*, *Handa Wanda*, and *St. Louis Blues*.

According to Gary Bice of Bloomfield Hills, a Prudential stock broker, former resident of New Orleans, and Mardi Gras aficionado, a crawfish boil will top off the event.

"I usually buy crawfish at Superior Fish in Royal Oak or Fishers Market in Birmingham where it can be ordered," he said. "Add the crawfish to a boiling pot of water and drop in a

package of Zatarain's mix. Eat 'em New Orleans style — break 'em in half, pinch the tails and suck the heads. It's wonderful food especially when fresh. I also prepare a jambalaya, that's poor man's stew, with rice, chicken, sausage and peppers."

Traditional King Cakes, a coffee cake made with danish dough and topped with multi-colored sugars, can be shipped next day delivery from Gambino's Bakery in New Orleans for \$19.95 by dialing Account Annex 1-800-322-2368. A small, plastic baby is baked into one slice, determining the "king" of the party and the next person to serve a King Cake.

Jo Rivers, marketing director for the New Orleans School of Cooking in Louisiana said hosts should not forget to toss their guests a few doubloons and plastic beads like those thrown from Mardi Gras floats.

"Oh how we love those beads," she said with a laugh. "We fight for them. Scream for them. Beg for them. Some bare themselves for them. The next day, of course, at home looking at them, you ask yourself, Why did I fight for these things?"



DAN DEAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

It's Mardi Gras time! Wendy and Gary Bice of Bloomfield Hills set their dining room table with purple, green and gold supplies purchased from the 1/4 Off Card Shop.

MONDAY, FEB. 15

PUPPET SHOWS

Monday through Friday throughout the month. "Cinderella" 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. 1, 3 and 7 p.m. No 7 p.m. performance on Sunday. *Headbook Village Mail, Wavon/Adams 375-9484*

FRENCH FESTIVAL

Through Feb. 21. Week-long festivities include dining, entertainment and cultural events. Call for detailed schedule. *825-Gordon, Southfield/Hubbard 441-2100.*

TUESDAY, FEB. 16

ELLERSEE AND FASHIONS

Tickets are on sale for Hudson's annual dinner and spring fashion show Tuesday, Feb. 23, 5 p.m. Key-

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

note speaker Linda Ellerbee will discuss "Challenging the Future." Interpreted for the hearing impaired. Tickets are \$25 per person, redeemable in merchandise. Limitations apply. *Grand Manor, Farmington/Oakwood 443-6334.*

SATURDAY, FEB. 20

SPELLING BEE

Grades 1 through 6 invited to participate. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Co-sponsored by World Book Encyclopedia. Crowley's stage. Registration forms available at mall management office. *Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt 475-1166.*

CONCERTS

"Music for the Soul" to celebrate Black History

Month. 2-6 p.m. Food court area. Free. Holy Ghost & Fire and Blessed Hearts perform. *Northland Mall, Eight Mile/Greenfield 563-6272.*

SUNDAY, FEB. 21

CLASSICS AND RESTAURANTS

Brunch in rotunda. Live classical concert on stage. Co-sponsored by WQRC. Brunch catered by Zatarain's Grill. Tickets \$20 per person. Available at concierge desk. *Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Cookidge 643-6300.*

MONDAY, FEB. 22

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Body fat analysis and healthy heart information. 10-11 a.m. Co-sponsored by Bonstard General Hospital. Free. *Jacobson's Court area, Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh 462-1100.*