

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, APRIL 5, 1993

11A

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

Furry friends for fussy folks

Remember when you whispered all of your secrets into the well-rubbed ear of your best-loved friend? I'm referring to the lovable, furry friend of your childhood — the floppy-eared bunny or the cuddly bear. That friend, a constant companion, was chosen for his special personality, one that only you could imagine.

Phoebe Phillips of Dallas still cherishes her favorite stuffed friend, "Bunny," and it was he who inspired her to create and design a line of plush toys for other young-at-hearts. Phillips was in Jacobson's stores recently to present her hand-knitted keepsakes.

The animals, all with distinct personalities, are unusual in that they sport soft pink Ultra suede noses, individually designed collars and a trademark suede foot that Phillips signs with her name and the animal's name. There's also room for a dedication to the lucky recipient of this timeless gift.

Phillips' love of literature and poetry is obvious in the creative names she gives to each of the 60-plus animals in the collection. "Rumpus Bear — Rumpus isn't too many honey waffles," thus his pudgy tummy and sweet, round face. "Tucker's Tarry, the nine-life fairy" is the white kitty with eyes of different colors, the good luck cat. "Rumbunzel Rabunny" is the glamorous long-eared white rabbit on whose foot Phillips once inscribed, "Will you marry me?" for an imaginative customer.

The angelic little "Bunn Bunny" would nestle perfectly in an Easter basket or make a delightful newborn gift. Some thoughtful OB-Gyn offices are ordering Bunn Bunnies to deliver to new mothers in the hospital. The doctor signs the suede foot with the date and baby's name.

Though 80 percent of her customers are adults, "kids animate the animals for me," says Phillips. Ashley Mirch, a second-grader at Walnut Lake Elementary School in West Bloomfield, was fascinated by the whimsical furry friends casually draped on tables and chairs at Jacobson's Birmingham store. Her favorite? "Butter Bear Harry, the heart-warming fairy. I love his color and his wings," she said. "You wouldn't want to spill pop on him, he's too special," she added, already sounding as if he was a part of her family.

Rebecca Zorn of Marietta, Mich., was thinking ahead when she fell in love with, and bought, "Forest Bear" for her granddaughter, Bronie Stewart. His foot was signed, "Christmas 1993." The "hunter in the woods" is one of the most popular bears with his shaggy brown fur and collar of autumn leaves. "My daughter collects dolls. Maybe this will be the first of a bear collection," Zorn said.

Before she could leave the enchanting assemblage of creatures, Zorn added "Bunn Ole Coot Laurence" to her purchase. Laurence is the "thinker of the wisest thoughts" and Zorn thought him appropriate for her sister's 60th birthday. She dedicated him "to the child within."

Capturing childhood
"Everyone wants to capture something in childhood. These animals create a warmth," says Phillips. And judging by the reaction one late afternoons at Jacobson's, those sentiments are shared by many. This collection is exclusive to Jacobson's in the Detroit area. A catalog will be available in the store and every animal can be personalized. Prices range from \$60-\$120.

Speaking of bunnies, let's not ignore the granddaddy of storybook hares, Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit, who celebrates his 100th birthday this year. Peter's personality, so exquisitely illustrated in Potter's stories, is captured in porcelain figurines by Royal Albert for Royal Doulton.

The most recent introductions to the collection include "Miss Dormouse," "Piglet Catford" and "Christmas Stocking." See these pieces along with Peter, his siblings Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail, and their forest of friends at Hudson's stores in the fine china department. Most are priced at \$29.50.

Linda Bachrack is a Birmingham resident. You can leave her your column ideas at 953-2047, Ext. 1833 from a touchtone phone.



On the left: Casandra Cieslak, 3, sets her own style in this straw hat from The Children's Place at Oakland Mall.



It's really me!: Heidi King of Rochester Hills tries on an Easter bonnet at J.C. Penney.

Stylish hats top off spring fashion

They're banack. But some would argue they've never been gone. Wearing a hat is always in vogue, but especially so at Easter time.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER
There was a time when the well-dressed woman would not leave home without a chic hat and matching gloves; 1940 to 1960 to be exact. Now, here in 1993, designers are suggesting a return to that look. The well-stocked fashion accessory aisles of every department store prove it.

"We've got a bigger and better selection of hats than we ever had before," said Heidi King of Rochester Hills, a department manager at J.C. Penney. "This spring we're featuring hats with polka dots, nautical-looking hats in navy and white, roller hats, and the vintage wide brims, trimmed in florals. The baseball cap look is very strong in casuals."

"Gloves are coming back too. They really complete an outfit. We've got all lengths and many different colors. We sell a lot of gloves for special occasions, proms and weddings." Penney's hats are priced between \$25 and \$45, depending on the style and designer.

New York chapeau designer B. Michael was in town last week to promote his toppers at Jacobson's. "All the designers are showing them," he said, describing the growing national figures in millinery sales. "Hats are a new accessory for a new generation. Thirty-something young people are discovering hats can be an exciting addition to their wardrobe. And for the woman for whom fashion is a law, the woman who takes that extra minute to put the hat on, the selection has never been greater."

Fewer hatmakers
B. Michael bemoaned the fact that the number of hatmaking companies in the United States has dropped from more than 100 to a dozen through the years. A graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology, he designs for the Aldo Hat Corp., previ-

ously designing for Adolfo H. Mr. John and Canadian Hat in Montreal. "I'm more taken with silhouette than trim, drawing on everything in the world, including building contours, for my inspiration for hat designs," he said. B. Michael said hat materials are standard with designers bringing new executions to old favorites. He said anyone can wear a hat. The trick is to find the appropriate hat for an outfit.

Season's color gears shift into neutral

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER
Uh-oh. Something's un-Vogue-ably wrong this season. Spring fashions are usually about color as winter-wear greens and browns get pushed to the back of the closet.

Neutrals, defined in Webster's Dictionary as having little or no decided color are here. In fact, they're everywhere along our malls and main streets. Haute couture designers call it "muted tones of oatmeal." To everyone else it's ivory, cream, butter, banana, eggshell or just plain beige.

"Well at least most everyone can wear it," said Peg Treacy, president of Churchill Associates, an imaging consulting firm in Birmingham. "Neutrals are classics, although very cream of wheat as my dad used to say. That meant you can't get too excited or emotional about it."

Buyer of beige
Donald Foreman, who does most of his shopping at the Livonia Mall, likes beige, too. "I'm no fashion authority," he said. "But I know I buy a lot of beige shirts and jackets and I wear 'em." Treacy has been researching the psychology of color for the past 20 years.

Tel-Twelve mall celebrates 25th anniversary

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER
Play ball. Slide into savings. Sure, the Tigers won the World Series in 1968. But two other events mark that year for Detroiters as well.

In 1968, two major shopping centers opened for business: the Oakland Mall in Troy and the Tel-Twelve Mall in Southfield. Tel-Twelve is celebrating its 25 years in business. Oakland Mall is not.

In fact, it's the '68 Tigers who will appear at Tel-Twelve Mall in a month-long salute to major league baseball. "We're very excited about our anniversary plans," said Tel-Twelve marketing director Janet VanMaldeghem. "Beginning Thursday, April 8, through April 10, a fun-filled hand-

on baseball exhibit will go up in the mall's center court." The Great American Pastime will recreate a baseball park complete with games of skill and sports memorabilia. Fans can test their pitching skill and throw three strikes to win a prize in the big league bullpen hosted by an animatronic replica of legendary announcer Mel Allen.

Co-sponsored by Joe Panian Chevrolet in Southfield, the exhibit also provides the chance for shoppers to be photographed in their favorite teams' uniforms and have a special stat-card made. And they have the chance to win a drawing for a Chevy Camaro Z28. "From Wednesday, April 7, to Sunday, April 11, 1993," says Tel-Twelve.

MONDAY, APRIL 5

EASTER BUNNY VISITS
Through Saturday. Stroll through gardens and cabbage patches at most area malls for a picture with the Easter Bunny. Photo packages from \$6. Call your favorite mall for hours and related events. Westland Mall at Wayne and Warren roads features bunny helper Kelly Harding, trained in sign language for hearing-impaired children from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through April 8.

BAND CASTLES
Mickey Mouse's Toontown sculptures from 100-plus tons of sand. Some tower 16-ft. Center Court. Through April. Mickey's television set plays cartoons. Disney merchandise on display throughout the center.

Twelve Oaks Mall, Twelve Mile/Novi, 342-9432.

BUNNY BREAKFAST
Today at Ruby Tuesday, Wednesday at Big Boy and Friday at A & W, through April 9 at 9 a.m. \$3 per person. Seating on first-come first-serve basis. Call the Crown and Easter Bunny will visit patrons. Contact for complete details. Lakeside Mall, Schoenhof/Hall Road, 247-1590.

ART SHOW
Portico Oakland Artist Society. Multi-media exhibit and sale throughout the mall, through April 10. Mall hours only. Meadowbrook Village Mall, Watton/Adams, 375-9451.

COLORS' CONTEST
Three age groups. Prizes for first-, second- and third-place winners. Through April 9. Entries at management office. Winchester Mall, Rochester/Avon, 652-1152.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

SPORTS BROADCAST
Live radio and television shows from center court. 6 to 10 a.m. WGSX hosts J.J. and Morning Crew with guests ex-Tigers Gates Brown and Willie Horton. At 11 a.m. El Zarri and Denny McLean tape their talk show. Salute to Major League Baseball April 8-10 with displays, photo ops, and contests. Drawing to win a Camaro. Part of mall's month-long 25th Anniversary celebration. Tel-Twelve Mall, Twelve Mile/Telegraph, 353-4111.

THURSDAY, APRIL 8

TREE OF MEMORIES
Benefit for Hospice Services. Through April 10. Barbershop quartet performs 1:30 p.m. Sears Court. Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt, 475-1165.

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

BUNNY BREAKFAST
Co-sponsored by Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce and The Community House in Birmingham. 9 a.m. \$7 per person. Reservations required. Photos. The Community House, Bates/Townsend, 644-1700.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

MALLS CLOSED ON EASTER SUNDAY.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

TABLE SETTING
Second floor. Tiffany's. Through May 15. Features items from private antique collections of Mrs. Paul Borman and Mrs. Richard Kughn mixed with Tiffany pieces. The vignette includes furniture from Henry Ford Museum's America's Life collection. Marks Tiffany's salute to Greenfield Village. Somerset Collection. Big Beaver/Cookidge, 643-6360.

SPRING PEZZAZZ CONTEST
Grand prize is 7-day Royal Caribbean Cruise. Other prizes include Royal Hawaiian Circus tickets. Entries at management office. Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, 422-1100.

HEALTH-O-RAMA
Free and inexpensive health testing for folks over 18 years. Health information booths. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Through April 8. Southland Center, Eureka/Pardee, 374-2900.

HEALTH-O-RAMA
Free and inexpensive health testing for folks over 18 years. Health information booths. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Through April 7. On Saturday, April 10, St. Mary's provides free blood pressure screening 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Screenings repeated Monday, April 12, from 8-10 a.m. Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Alfordbelt, 522-4100.