

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

Eyeing the sun can be expensive

Until now, I assumed that most sunglasses shoppers were alike in their annual quest for the suitable frame. In the past few weeks, the department stores have miraculously transformed walls and display cases into receptacles for hundreds of styles of summer eyewear. (What took up all that space before?)

Anyway, for years I have muddled through pair after pair of sunglasses, staring in those tiny little mirrors and pushing inconveniently-placed price tags away from my nose. I assumed most everyone followed this routine, trying and discarding, becoming increasingly frustrated as each new silhouette began to look just like the last.

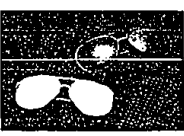
Boy, was I mistaken. There are legions of you to whom sunglasses shopping is hardly routine. You look for much more than a flattering color and shape. You are knowledgeable about ultraviolet rays, blueblockers and photochromes, and moreover, you are brand loyal and specific as to which frame you prefer.

Let me share with my peers, the not-so-savvy sunglasses consumers, some of the knowledge I have gained through researching this column.

About those Revos

It all started with my son Marc, a Michigan State student. He informed me that he planned to spend what amounted to most of his life savings on a pair of Revos sunglasses. "Expensive, but the best," he explained.

So I ventured into SunVision at Twelve Oaks Mall where store manager Stu Cherry gave me a quick seminar on shades. According to Cherry, Revos are hugely popular, but for good reason. Originally designed by NASA, Revos eliminate all UV rays while, at the same time, enhancing clarity of color. "They're the most functional lens made," she said.



They also feature a blue-blocker that cuts through blue light, eliminating fog and haze, and the new polarized lens cuts glare on the water.

The updated styling make them a No. 1 choice for the college set. But they'll set you back a hefty sum, \$160-\$276. We picture the Revo "aviator." In a considerate attempt to comfort me, Cherry added, "but they're made to last a lifetime."

Not everyone covets Revo sunglasses. Smaller, retro-styled classic frames are "in" and many of the manufacturers offer tempting versions. Serengeti's optically ground lenses are photochromic (they darken and lighten), relaxing the eye (\$140). Vuarnet has a loyal following. And Maui Jim glasses are made especially for sensitive eyes (\$89).

A Los Angeles-based vendor, Oliver Peoples, distributes to select retailers including Steven Franklin Optics at The Boardwalk in West Bloomfield. Originally a tool and die company, its frames are vintage-look, very small and very hip. "The clip-ons are most popular," said Franklin.

Then there's the grandfather of classic, the Ray-Ban, handed down by generations of devotees since 1937. The aviator style was developed by Bausch and Lomb for the U.S. Army Corps and today they still exceed exacting requirements for glare protection and optical performance. They're the only choice for Jim Bologna of Grosse Pointe.

Eyeing the cat

Jason Christopoulos prefers the Ray-Ban "Wayfarer," "because they'll never go out of style." And we picture the "cat," another classic copied by numerous manufacturers.

Christopoulos also owns a pair of trendy "M Frame" Oakleys, an ultra-contemporary updated sporting look worn by major league baseball players. Sun Vision stocks the Oakley "Blades" (\$110) and "Razor Blades" (\$100), as well as "Frog Skins," "Mumbos" and the new "Sub-Zeros" for the tennis playing. BMW set (\$40-\$136).

Sue Cherry calls the Oakleys "a cut above." They're the lightest frame on the market and feature a plutonite lens.

Be aware that the most inexpensive frames offer only 60 percent UV protection and no warranty. But if you're looking to make a statement, go for the Mickey Mouse glasses with the flip-up shades (\$19.95) or join Zana Roy at Banana Ananas in Birmingham. "They have the coolest black cat-eyes."

Linda Bachrack is a Birmingham resident. You can leave her column ideas at 853-2047, mailbox 1889.

Nordstrom's news welcomed



After 25 years of cornfields and Christmas trees, the northeast corner lot at Big Beaver and Coolidge in Troy will finally get a permanent tenant. . . and the community couldn't be happier. Hello! Somerset North.

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

When developer Nathan Forbes addressed the Fashion Group of Detroit a few weeks ago, he was asked about the long-brewing plans for Somerset North, a.k.a. Somerset II, a.k.a. the empty lot across the street from the Somerset Collection.

He grinned and said something about 1996, but refused to speculate on a possible tenant, admitting only that that's his specialty — bringing special retailers to the Detroit market.

Then someone let the cat out of the shopping bag. Rumors were published that Nordstrom's is coming — that Hudson's wanted to be close to the new action.

Thursday morning, the retail media applauded enthusiastically when the rumors were confirmed at a press conference and the architectural drawings were on display.

Somerset II will open in the summer of 1996 and will be connected to the Somerset Collection by a climate controlled aerial walkway. There will be three levels of shopping in an architectural style that matches Somerset South. Hudson's will anchor the east end, Nordstrom's the west end. In between, 410,000 square feet of additional retail space are up for rent, as are two restaurants and a performing arts stage.

3,500 new jobs

Groundbreaking will begin next spring. Forbes promised, and more than 3,500 new jobs will be created within the new mall.

Troy Mayor Jeanne Stine received a kiss from developer Maury Cohen after their speeches. Smiles and handshakes criss-crossed the rotunda.

Elsewhere in the mall, sales consultants were discussing the news.

"Lots of new retail positions coming to town," a Saks Fifth Avenue employee said. "This will put us seasoned professionals in a good bargaining position. The skyway will move shoppers through both centers. Hopefully, nearby office workers will be more likely to leave their buildings and shop, walk and eat lunch here."

Her associate wasn't so upbeat. "All these department stores will divide up the shoppers," she said. "If you divide the shoppers, you divide the profits."

Dennis Coury just bought a new home in the tony Somerset North Estates subdivision, where his yard backs up to the proposed new shopping center.

"The windows in my family room look out on a view of the Somerset Collection and Big Beaver Road — my cityscape, I call it," said Coury. "You'd pay big bucks for a place with a view like this in Chicago or New York. I don't want to see another Oakland Mall built on this site."

"I'm trusting the Frankel people to build a center with attention to architectural detail, landscaping and aesthetics," he continued. "If there's going to be a parking structure, I hope they locate it on the east end of the mall, facing other commercial enter-

See SOMERSET, 7A

Designer pins 20 years of faux jewelry

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER



Carolee

As she fingered several of faux jewelry designer Carolee's glittering scatter pins, Leslie Johnston of Birmingham commented, "She designs for one who likes to pile it on, but can't afford to pile it on from Tiffany's."

"That's exactly right," laughed Carolee, in town last week for her 20-year retrospective show at Neiman Marcus in the Somerset Collection.

"I like to take credit for boosting pin sales worldwide from just 1 percent of the jewelry market in 1986 to 30 percent today," Carolee's "outrageous faux jewels" company was founded in 1973 on the kitchen table of Carolee Friedlander's Greenwich, Conn., home. With two toddlers and divorce papers in hand, necessity helped plunge her into the jewelry design business.

"I grew up very poor in New York, in a bedroom, one bath apartment," she said. "I was determined my children would have a lot more."

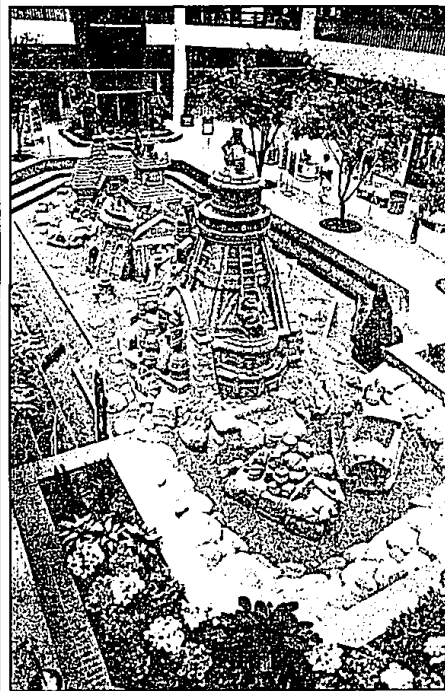
Carolee drew on her background as an architect to design unique pieces of costume jewelry she described as "not boring." Bloomingdale's bought her first creations, and remains her largest client.

"She is a woman with a vision," said Marilyn Connor of Neiman Marcus, host of the metro-Detroit exhibit. "She took the faux jewelry business to new heights and gave it legitimacy with collectors and customers."

Carolee's jewelry is priced from \$30-\$200. Continual innovations and unique marketing developments helped Carolee grow from the kitchen table to a backyard studio to a Fifth Avenue Showroom with 2,000 styles of jewelry, more than 200 employees, and 1,500 retailers in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Japan.

"I envisioned that my pieces would be passed down from mother to daughter, so there is a lifetime guarantee on my jewelry," Carolee ex-

Disney delight



SHARON LEMIERUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Castles in the sand: Mickey's Toon Town, sculpted from 100-plus tons of sand, will remain in the center court of Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi through June. Mall spokeswoman Elaine Kah said customers have requested the extension, hoping to bring out-of-town guests for a visit.

plained. "The materials used are the best in the marketplace and at fashion's forefront. I break into a big smile when I see people wearing my jewelry. It's a great feeling. I love it."

Smart marketing moves catapulted sales. In 1987 Carolee introduced a line of pins copied from the priceless jewels in the Duchess of Windsor's collection. The Duchess's auction, forced her jewelry to the packing block at Sotheby's. Elizabeth Taylor bought the Duchess's famous plume pin for \$623,000, but Carolee made "copies" available for the common folk for much less.

The accompanying advertisement read: "The Duchess had more than she needed, you can too." Women loved it. In 1989, Carolee aligned herself with the Save the Elephants cause, creating a jewelry collection made from faux ivory. Ten percent of the sales went to the Wildlife Conservation International.

Carolee's line of garden bugs led to a liaison with the Federated Garden Clubs of America. Women delighted in buying one, two and three dragon-

flies, ladybugs or beetles and wearing them on their shoulders.

Her current line of seven different colored pearls for jewelry, pairs the perfect pearl hue with a customer's complexion.

"Faux pearls are quite acceptable today, so pile them on," she instructed. "Increased insurance costs and the number of women traveling, make faux pearl jewelry ideal. Brides love the pearl palette idea."

In celebrating her 20th year in business, Carolee introduced the world's first known "limited" collection of costume jewelry. Each piece is presented in a case with a certificate of authenticity. There are 10 pin designs, and just 1,000 of each have been made priced between \$110 to \$150.

The Carolee "art exhibit" will be on display through May 15 in the Neiman Marcus jewelry aisles. A second feature of the exhibit is a free-standing video with Carolee demonstrating "How-to Accessorize."

MONDAY, MAY 10

COOKING SHOWS
Hudson employees prepare dishes from "Potluck for 32,000." Cookbook contains employee recipes representing 62 stores. Cookbook proceeds benefit United Way. 12:30-2 p.m. every day through May 15 in Westfield Plaza.
Twelve Oaks Mall, 12 Mile/Novi, 344-6800.

TUESDAY, MAY 11

LUNCH FASHIONS
Every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., fashions modeled from Unique Accessories in downtown Plymouth.
Coco Cafe, Ann Arbor Trail/Harvey, 453-3310.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

WALKERS MEET
9:30 a.m. Coffee, Guest speaker, Community room. All walkers welcome.
Westland Mall, Wayne/Warren, 425-5001.

DIA TRIPS
Each Wednesday in May shoppers can ride Detroit Art Institute Museum Shop and Shuttle from Somerset Collection and Twelve Oaks Mall to DIA. Shuttle leaves malls at 11 a.m. and 12:40 a.m. Leaves DIA for malls at 2:50 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Lunch available in Kresge Court. Decent tours included. Tickets are \$4 for DIA members, \$6 general public. Advance tickets available at DIA Museum Shops. Seating limited. 633-7971.

THURSDAY, MAY 13

HOMES & GARDEN SHOW
Exhibits focus on home security, comfort and leisure. Regular mall hours. Throughout the mall until May 16.
Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt, 476-1166.

FRIDAY, MAY 14

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING TOUR
Through May 16. Cooking and home repair demonstrations throughout the mall. Children's playhouse, IBM computer center, sweepstakes to win family van.
Westland Mall, Wayne/Warren, 425-5001.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

FASHION SHOW
1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Presented by John Casablancia Modeling School. Free to shoppers.
Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt, 476-1166.

RAINBOW BENEFIT
Hudson's and Bass Shoe Company present "Summer in the City," noon to 3 p.m. Woman's Shoe Dept. Entertainment, informal modeling, hotdogs and refreshments. Proceeds to Rainbow Connection, wishes for terminally ill children.
Westland Mall, Wayne/Warren, 458-5400.

F&M SEMINARS
Through May 23 at various F&M stores, health and beauty workshops. Henry Ford Health System offers free health checks at some locations. Topics include: allergies, preparing for pregnancy, kids and drugs, healthy diets. Call for schedule of events. 758-1400.

SUNDAY, MAY 16

STORYBOOK SUNDAY
WHIC radio's Steve Gannon reads "The Stinky Cheese Man" 1 p.m. Center court. Kids can join new reading club to earn points for fancy packs and bookmarks. Purchase receipts over \$50 earn foam reading mats, suitable for celebrity reader autographs. 99-cent kids meals for children under 12.
Fairlane Mall, Southfield/Michigan, 593-0572.

JAZZ CONCERT
Ron English Quartet. 1-2:30 p.m. North court. Free. Informal modeling of fashions from Ganto's, Eleganza and Russel's Tuxedo's.
Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile/Newburgh, 462-1100.