

SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

Take the plunge in new swimwear

I hate shopping for swimwear," moaned Carolyn Marks from behind the dressing room door at Roslyn's Intimate Apparel, 29831 Northwestern Highway in Applegate Square, Southfield. How many times have we all uttered the same lament?

I've never met anyone who enjoys trying on swimwear, especially this time of year — too much pale skin, made pastier by fluorescent lights, the shock of seeing all that which has been deftly covered up during the winter months; and the horror of having to emerge from the confines of the cubicle to fetch the next size or the more flattering style.

Shop owner Roslyn Rock loves the swimsuit shopper's cry of despair because she is sure that her selection and her personal service can result in a smiling, more confident customer. Such was the case with Marks.

Suited to you

After Rock listened to her concerns, Rock showed her suits that would flatter her body type. Never did she have to leave the dressing room or scramble into her clothes, because an attentive salesperson was there to answer questions and exchange sizes.

In less than 20 painless minutes, Marks found the perfect suit. "They (Roslyn's) have the best selection and give so much personal attention," said Marks, of Farmington Hills.

Her sophisticated parrot green draped-front suit by Gortex is stunning in its styling and classic in its attitude. What's new in swimwear for summer?

Look for glamorous retro styles with sculptured bras, plunging sweetheart necklines and wider straps.

Think Esther Williams in an underwire halter top and 50s-style shorts, made to accent every curve. Pictured is a high-waisted, two-piece black retro suit by Baja Blue. It's given a contemporary edge with matching sheer

black pants available at Jacobson's.

Or take to the dunes in a seagull print. With names such as African Dream, Tonga and Igwana, Gortex combines browns and golds with leopard spots, batiks and wooden beads for a hot native look.

Details, details!

Textured fabrics and unusual embellishments are new for '94. Look for iridescent jacquards, mesh panels, crochet, denim and trapezoid detailing. These fabrications are accented with fringe, floral trims, ruffles, lace and beading.

You can't miss with a more traditional nautical suit. Gold braiding and studs decorate Le Blanes designs, while Gortex shows a navy and white asymmetrically striped tank with a bright gold sun beaming from the midsection. And nothing quite like a vibrant printed print. Check out Gideon Oberon's harem-patterned tank with out-out sides, Gortex's blue and green palm frond designs and DeWeese's "Nep-tune," a V-wire, side-shirted tank in box pink, purple, teal and gold at Jacobson's.

Don't forget to complete your swimwear choices with go-anywhere cover-ups. Roslyn's has a line of On-The-Go-Wear that looks great for a stroll along the beach, a trip to the grocery, a casual lunch or after-school errands. More traditional cover-ups are lightweight and easy to pack, like a long crochet knit vest or a three-button black cotton knit eyelid jacket. For glamour, tie on a gauzy, fringed sarong skirt or a sexy pareo.

Just for fun, and to induce a little beach blanket conversation, throw on an oversized "Cathy" cartoon tee from Lowlands 22 Caters in the Bloomfield Plaza Mall, Maple at Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills. Cathy always finds the humor in our worst apprehensions, like squeezing into this summer's swimsuit.

Linda Bachrack is a Birmingham resident. You can leave her column ideas at (810) 953-2047, mailbox 1889 or fax them to her at (313) 644-1314.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Malls & Mainstreets next week:

■ Show Carnival stores are coming to town. They promise to add clowns and contests to your footwear shopping.

■ Bachrack shops for the newest golf gadgets.

Mole Hole team sees profits rise



BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO

After taking a team management course in Traverse City, Ellen Shirmer, owner of The Mole Hole on Woodward in downtown Birmingham, knew her gift shop business could never be the same.

"I came back to my 11-year-old store and staff of 12, inspired," said Shirmer, a resident of Drayton Plains. "The team approach to business is really the way of the '90s. I am convinced of it."

Her staff bubbled over with words of praise for the new Mole Hole, explaining that they're "not just sales people anymore."

"We instantly got new challenges and new responsibilities," said Michaelene Barkume of Royal Oak. "All of us are doing the buying now. We're making group decisions about policy and promotions. We can come up with new ideas and even out-vote the boss. We will get a share of the profits, when there are profits. We're finding out that we have talents inside us and we are really working for ourselves."

Shirmer credits employee Rand Moorhead of Beverly Hills for the

transformation. "He came to us from the West Coast," she said, laughing. "He brought all that California thinking and feeling here. He showed me a tape about team management and how successful the approach was to four very different organizations. I was hooked."

But it wasn't easy for Shirmer to give up her power and authority as boss and owner. "I took a big risk," she said. "It took a new level of trust. Suddenly my salespeople were in my books, in the backroom, ordering merchandise, telling me what they thought. Boy, it took some getting used to!"

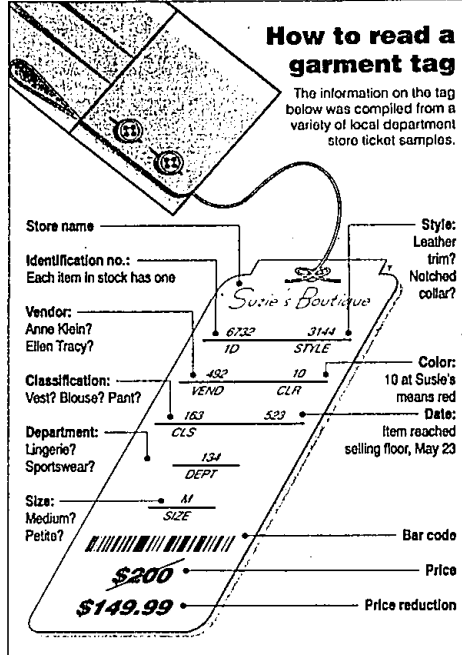
Moorhead picked up the story. "But she's really done a great job of it. Actually, going through the committee process takes more time and more effort to reach a decision about anything, but then it leads to a blossoming of new ideas."

One such idea came from longtime employees Dee Moorhead and Brenda Zebold. The Mole Hole will soon debut a private room in the rear of the store for handling special customer orders.

See MOLE HOLE, 9A

How to read a garment tag

The information on the tag below was compiled from a variety of local department store ticket samples.



Cowboy Trader lassos the west for collectors

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO

If the lone prairie and sagebrush is your style, you'll be back in the saddle again at Robert Ray's new wild west gallery, The Cowboy Trader, in downtown Birmingham.

Ray, a resident of Birmingham, has filled his shop in the Adams Square area of Maple, with Navaho, antique firearms, chaps of all styles, turquoise and silver jewelry, books, rare photos, prints, paintings and rodeo posters — a place Buffalo Bill would be proud to call his own.

"The western art and antique business is growing fast these days," said Ray who is also a devotee of western memorabilia. "I have customers from all over the U.S."

"As people travel to ski in Aspen, Colorado, or Jackson Hole, Wyoming, they fall in love with the western feeling. They come home and want to do a room in western or Indian art. It's a very warm decorating style. These customers need to come see me."

Ray retired from his airline marketing job to pursue his hobby as a full-time business. For the past seven-

al years, he has traded at the giant wild west shows in Cody, Wyoming, making many contacts and friends while acquiring pieces for his gallery. His customers include everyone from the 10-year-old cowboy to local corporation execs to designer Ralph Lauren.

"If someone wanted just one thing to set a western tone to a family room or office, they should buy a Navaho rug," he said. "The rugs add instant color and mood."

The Cowboy Trader also suggests adding a totem pole, steer horns, Indian pottery and a book or two on the Southwest to the room.

Ray recently sold a 1910 saddle made in Pueblo, Colorado, of hand-carved leather to a collector in New York for \$3,000.

"You love this stuff," he said thoughtfully, "because you appreciate the history and adventure behind it. The wild west is a uniquely American heritage and people want to celebrate it."

Ray welcomes inquiries at (810) 647-8833.



Cowboy collectibles: The Cowboy Trader in Birmingham offers an assortment of memorabilia for the collector.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

WONDER WALKERS

Mail walkers monthly meeting, 9 a.m. Eaton Food Court. Tips from health professionals at St. Mary's Hospital. Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia. (313) 522-4100.

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

STOP SMOKING CLINIC

The American Cancer Society hosts "Smart Move Stop Smoking." 10-11 a.m. Lower-level community room. Reservations required. Westland Center, Wayne/Warren. (800) 925-2271.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

28 American artisans representing five states offer works for show and sale throughout the mall until April 17. Regular business hours. Merchandise features stained glass creations, wood crafts, pottery, soft sculpture, floral designs and more. Wonderland Mall, Middlebelt/Plymouth, Livonia. (313) 522-4100.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

ARTFUL GARDENS

Dramatic tabletop presentations, original garden sculpture, lectures and demonstrations. Through April 17, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Shook-Guest Pavilion, Meadow Brook Hall. Extensive garden boutique. Master gardener Jerry Baker speaks at 1 p.m. on April 15. \$6 tickets benefit ROPARD, aiding children with low vision and blindness. Many local merchants participating. Oakland University, Adams/Walton, Rochester Hills. (810) 851-1302.

SPORTSCARD SHOW

Through April 17 during regular mall hours. See, show and sell favorites and collectibles. Tel-Twelve Mall, 17 Mile/Telegraph, Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

OPVA BENEFIT

Fashion show and auction of 100 celebrity-designed jeans jackets to benefit local AIDS service organizations. State Theatre. Tickets \$150, \$75 and \$25. National sponsors are Levi Strauss & Co. and Neil Marcus. Downtown Detroit, 2115 Woodward. (810) 932-2716.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

CRAFTS CONTEST

Open to all artists and crafters over 18 years old. Grand prize is \$100. Through April 17. For more information and registration forms call DM Checks. Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (313) 476-1166.

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

STORYBOOK SUNDAY

Earth Day Special! Chris Edmunds of WHM-FM radio reads to children about conservation concerns. 1 p.m. Center court. Mail restaurants offer 99-cent kids meals, children receive mail discount tokens for book reports submitted. Fairlane Town Center, Michigan/Southfield, Dearborn. (313) 593-1370.

CLASSICS BRUNCH

Noon to 2 p.m. Rotunda stage. Brunch catered by Sebastian's Grill. Local and international musicians perform to benefit Detroit Institute of Arts youth and education programs and Center for Creative Studies music programs. Tickets are \$20 per person. Available at Concorde Desk. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Cookridge, Troy. (810) 643-6300.