

MALLS & MAINSTREETS



Showroom style: The new Tapper's Jewelry store was designed by Jon Greenberg & Associates of Southfield. The store welcomes shoppers with its bright lights and spacious aisles.

Tapper's from page 4B

On opening night, April 13, the new 11,000-square-foot store was filled with well-wishers bearing floral arrangements, plates of cookies, sweet breads and bottles of wine. They've been waiting for the company's big move and their hugs and handshakes left owners Howard and Steven Tapper teary-eyed.

"It's incredible, unbelievable how we've grown this company from most humble beginnings to a successful business employing 60 people," said Howard. "And quite simply, we just based our philosophy on the basic teaching of our Jewish faith — Do nothing to others that you would not want done to yourself. It all grew from there."

In 1977, Howard and his wife Susan, sold their car to help raise the \$35,000 it took to open Tapper's Jewelry on Northwestern Hwy. in Southfield. Howard had worked for other local jewelers through his high school years and after college. But it was his dream to have his own jewelry business.

"My merchandising plan was to have the largest selection of every category I could afford," he explained. "Instead of one pair of \$1,000 earrings, I had a case full of 20 pairs for \$50. Vendors extended me credit. I sold some pieces on consignment. I person-

ally greeted and treated every customer as if they were family."

Six months later his brother Steven joined him. They've worked together ever since. Howard, 46, and Steven, 44, said that earning a good living at what they enjoy most is just icing on the cake of life. The substance comes from relationships with staff and pointing out that 68 other people provide for their families by working at Tapper's.

The move to a larger, more northern location was necessary to position the company for business through the next few decades. Tappers wanted to be closer to their customers and install high-tech service equipment which required more space. They said they have no plans for adding other locations. They just want to be the best they can be at one "destination store."

In the new facility designed by Jon Greenberg & Associates of Southfield, appraisers, technicians, engravers, buyers, designers, computer operators and sales consultants have plenty of space to sell and service watches, gift clocks, necklaces, chains, earrings, pins and of course, diamond and gemstone rings. There is a video corner for children. Merchandise is displayed on white backgrounds by category in well lit cases "so you can see the

quality of what you're getting."

Every employee knows his or her "stuff" and puts customer satisfaction first. Master jeweler and designer James Pierowich works with clients to update and redesign family heirlooms. "We're not just interested in selling expensive items from the showcases," he said. "We appreciate the sentimentality and value of a grandmother's ring or father's watch and we work with customers to redesign dated or damaged jewelry." Pierowich has been with Tapper's since 1986.

Neale Stone has managed Tapper's since 1978. With a broad grin and a friendly handshake, he welcomed longtime customer Janice Melach of West Bloomfield who stopped in to see the new store.

"Wonderful people, wonderful jewelry," she said. "They know you, call you by name, have merchandise ready when they say they will. I trust them. Their jewelry is beautiful and they keep up with the latest trends."

Trusting customers mean repeat sales according to Steve Tapper who said he and Howard have been invited to many customer weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs and other family events. Most customers have become friends and the Tapper's list of friends is impressive.

Helping hands

"Five years ago we hired a Russian immigrant who needed a job. He spoke no English so we charged him with keeping the store clean," Steve said. "He worked and studied hard and eventually became a watch salesman. Judge Bernard Friedman a dear friend, swore him in as an American citizen right in our store. We had a red, white and blue-iced cake and a little party. It happened on the same day this employee won a \$20,000 car from the Radio Watch Company for being the line's top salesman in the country."

Howard and Susan have two children. Steven and his wife, Patti, have three. Family ties run deep at Tapper's whenever Howard's in-laws Stanley and Trudy Berlin stop in to help, and Howard's son reports for duty to get his feet wet in the business.

The brothers lost their parents many years ago, but agree their dad who ran a laundry in Detroit, and their mom who worked as a secretary, would be proud of them.

The new Tapper's Jewelry is at the north end of Orchard Mall in the former Coats Unlimited spot. Coats Unlimited has relocated to the other end of the shopping center.



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Dani Max from page 4B

combination of names, "Danny" after Roth's son, and "Max" a favorite name of Snyder's.

"When we formed Dani Max one was making chic clothing at moderate prices," Snyder explained. "Dowdy print dresses seemed to be all that was out there. I dreamed of dressing women for any situation in classic styles."

Roth said Snyder's signature shawl collar pant suit and coat dresses launched the line and customers came back clamoring for more. A twin-print vested jumpsuit followed as well as many other pant suit and dress designs in mostly crepe and rayon fabrications.

Patricia Geromette of Warren lifted a celery-green tailored pant-

suit from a rack at Hudson's Oakland Mall and held it against her chest in front of a nearby mirror.

"This caught my eye because it's not trendy and I'll be able to wear it for many seasons," she said. "Also the price, \$129, seems to be about right for an outfit as well-made as this seems to be."

Sales associate Lis Johnson said the store can keep a Dani Max \$39 butter-colored sleeveless shift with matching jacket in stock. The design is sought by everyone including bridesmaids who hope to get a little extra wear from their dress after the wedding. Also the tunic-like dresses are a favorite with shorter women, according to Johnson, because the style offers a slenderizing, longer silhouette.

Homo matters

Snyder, 39, has a two-year-old daughter. She said it takes every bit of her energy to juggle the demanding careers of fashion designer/entrepreneur, wife, and mother. She reserves the mornings and evenings of her day for time with her toddler.

"I started working right out of high school," said the petite native of Long Island. "I learned the retail clothing industry from the real world in 20 years of holding various jobs from buyer to merchandise manager to designer. I design what I like to wear."

Roth, declined to reveal his age. He has two teenage children. He grew up in the fashion business learning the trade from his father who manufactured women's

dresses under the name Siro. "My dad still sends us advice and suggestions for dresses," he said with a grin.

"And I look at them very carefully," Snyder confirmed.

The Dani Max Co. has a design studio and showroom at 1400 Broadway in New York City. Five collections are created each year. The garments are made in the U.S. Pantaula account for 60-percent of sales.

In the future, Snyder and Roth plan to open in-store Dani Max boutiques and a better suit company. Working on her collection for fall, Snyder said women will see more classic styles in colors like eggplant, hunter green, chocolate, slate and moss.

RETAIL DETAILS

Retail Details features the latest news briefs from mall and Main Street shopping centers. Mail submissions to: Retail Details, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax them to: (810) 644-1314.

CRAFT MALL OPENS

The former Ray's Interiors showroom in downtown Farmington will open as a craft and antique mall "Craftique," on May 2. Owners Dennis and Marva Nagy of Livonia welcome dealers and local crafters who would like to rent space to show their wares. "We plan to eventually convert the entire 14,000-square foot store

over to merchandise display," said Dennis Nagy. He also owns Heartland Mortgage Company in Livonia. "The mall is patterned after the year-round craft centers in Dallas, Texas and was three-years in the planning."

Craftique features crafts of all forms, from floral arrangements to jewelry. Craftique is located at 35300 Slocum. It will be closed Mondays. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Inquiries welcome at (810) 471-7633.

FOR THE NEEDS

Decorator bird houses of all shapes and sizes are available at M. T. Hunter stores, 1000 B.

Woodward in Birmingham and 201 E. Main St. in Northville. Some by R.J. Bird Company, are part of an 18-piece collector series priced from \$40. They are hand-made with cedar shake and sheet copper for indoor or outdoor use.

FRAGRANCE PREMIER

Franco Murano debuts at Saks Fifth Avenue May 7, combining the craftsmanship of Italian glass makers with the expertise of French perfumers. Eau de Murano comes in a series of unique bottles. The collection includes perfume and bath products, with a line of perfumed accessories for the home, plus jewel-

ry and tableware to be introduced later.

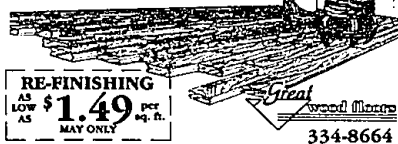
The fragrance is comprised of a fruity top note of black currant and fig which blooms into a subtle middle harmony of rose, violet and jasmine, sustained on a bottom note of wood tones and vanilla.

WOMEN'S LINK ADDED

Designer clothing for women has been added to The Broadway stores on Northwestern Hwy. in Southfield and on Broadway in Detroit. Gianni Versace sun-dresses, suits, casual wear, shoes, purses and belts make up the collection. For more details call Stuart Silbert at (810) 355-9420.

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