

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 1996

8A(F)



TV shows inspire what we will wear

There's no doubt about it — for better or worse — television fashion influences real-life looks. Fashion-hungry, impressionable audiences soak up the hottest looks they see on the small screen.

Back in the '60s when June Cleaver and Donna Reed vacuumed in shirtdresses, pearls and pumps, so did many real-life moms. When "That Girl" Mario Thomas, sported a flipped do and go-go clothes, so did every mod girl in town.

The Brady Bunch's bell-bottoms and striped tops were copied by kids on college campuses everywhere in the '70s. And Farrah Fawcett's flowing mane was once as hot as the Rachel-do from "Friends" is now.

Today's shows and their stars understand this "power" and try their best to be fashion forward. But some, like Roseanne and Brett Butler from "Grace Under Fire," dress more fashion backward in an attempt to portray real-life working mothers and blue-collar workers in Middle America.

Ellen DeGeneres' "Ellen," and Helen Hunt's Jamie from "Mad About You" clothe themselves in a more sta-girl manner. They sport mainstream Gap-style comfort clothes while hyper-trendy high schoolers and college students yearn for the skimpy styles of Donna, Kelly, and the gang from "Beverly Hills 90210."

A little more fashion friendly is the gang from "Friends." The casually hip twentysomething crowd has viewers pining for Jennifer Aniston's shag and Matt LeBlanc's spiked do. Where do the fabulously chic clothes they hang out in come from? Designer Debra McGuire "builds" 30 percent of the show's garments from fabrics that catch her eye.

McGuire said she tries to stay one step ahead of the competition and has some very fresh and new looks ahead for spring. She also goes to great lengths to ensure the cast fits together with their surroundings, matching the funky atmosphere of their surroundings, matching the funky atmosphere of their surroundings, matching the funky atmosphere of their surroundings.

She color codes the "sixties" according to the room they're in. Quirky character Phoebe (Lisa Kudrow) is the only character who wears patterns and bright colors.

McGuire also clothes Dolly Parton, numerous Emmy award winners, and has her own couture shop in Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Men on television aren't immune to the fashion tug. Kramer, of "Seinfeld," looks like he just strolled out of a thrift shop specializing in vintage wears. The bowling shirts and '60s-era clothes he sports are better than ever. Just wish we could get Jerry out of those Nikes.

Probably no outfit is more fashionably noticed than Heather Locklear's short suit combinations on "Melrose Place." Most likely because they live in Los Angeles, this drama-plagued gang aims for a lighter, more California look than their darker-clothed contemporaries from "Friends." A couple of characters actually play fashion designers on the show, so costume.

With several characters working at the fictional D&D Advertising, the search for professional yet fashionable outfits challenges Wingate, whose current creative outlet is Sydney, played by Laura Leighton. The flame-haired Sydney, appears to be a funky '60s cross between Nancy Sinatra and the "Laugh-In" go-go dancers.

"I've been giving a little more retro for her. It started with a great pair of go-go boots that I found in a thrift store in Hollywood. Laura loved them. Next I came across a vintage leopard outfit. Wingate said, 'With most of the cast needing fairly conservative clothing for D&D, we can have as much fun as we want with Sydney.'"

Wingate creates the looks after reading the scripts. If Jane needs to appear vulnerable or sexy, something soft and light-colored is worn. But when Brooke or Kimberly throw one of their fits, Wingate pulls out red and black — stronger colors to match their moods.

Don't expect, however, to trace down the exact looks from your favorite show. Wingate shops at the coolest boutiques, lately on La Brea Avenue in Los Angeles. She tries to discover new designers who haven't made it yet and give them a chance.

DIGNY and Calvin Klein are also worn regularly on "Melrose Place." Both the and "Friends" McGuire avoid most chain stores and mass-marketed clothes — it's unique they're looking for.

— Lee Littlewood
Copley News

Expert tells retailers: Focus on customer



BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Competition is strong and change is required if retailers are to survive and thrive in 1996.

That's the message from industry expert Barbara Wold to more than 250 Northland, Westland and Eastland Shopping Center merchants gathered for their annual meeting at

the Ritz Carlton in Dearborn last Wednesday.

"With more than 20,000 square feet of retail space for every man, woman and child in the country, the competition is tough," she said. "Every single area of the nation has vacancies in (shopping) centers."

"The most common mistakes retailers are making: not paying attention

to customer service, cutting staff, hiring employees with no product knowledge and no enthusiasm, and using sale signs as marketing tools."

Wold's been advising retailers for more than 20 years. Her client list includes Taubman Properties, The Hahn Company and Edward J. DeBartolo Corp. As one of the nation's leading authorities on retail development, marketing and image, she serves as a consultant for USA Today and is a guest columnist for several international retail publications. She began her retail career 37 years ago as owner of a mini-department store in

southern California.

Wold pointed out that image is most important in retail because a customer assesses a business in 2.5 seconds. If the windows or carpeting is dirty, it's an immediate turnoff.

Next, an enthusiastic staff is essential. Wold reminded retailers that a single salesperson represents the entire establishment. She relayed an incident where during a purchase the salesperson said absolutely nothing, not even thank you. When confronted later about her lack of enthusiasm,

See EXPERT, 9A

Nordstrom promises selection, service

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Once upon a time shoes came in 11 different widths — really! Today, most stores carry only three.

But when Nordstrom comes to Michigan in August, they promise to change all that — women will find 150,000 pairs of shoes in sizes 3AAA to 14EE, and men, footwear in sizes 5AAA to 18EEEE. And that's not all.

Is your right foot a 7 and your left a 8 1/4? Nordstrom will make sure your "pair" has a right 7 and a left 8 1/4. Does your toddler need prescription orthopedic shoes? Nordstrom rents them through the youngster's growth spurts.

Just need a quick shoe shine? Nordstrom offers to spiff 'em up for \$1.50 a pair.

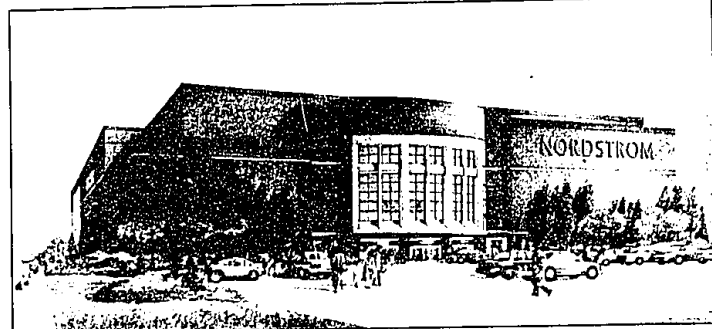
Thinking to yourself, now that's service! Nordstrom will tell you, it's just the way they do business.

Last week the Detroit fashion press attended a luncheon at the Renaissance Club to meet some of the department store's midwest staff, as well as leaders of the local charities who will benefit from a Gala Opening Night Event sponsored by Nordstrom.

Shopping questions lasted through dessert, and spokeswoman Carol Gasper, a veteran of several store openings, had all the answers.

Nordstrom opens to the public for business on Thursday, Aug. 16 at 10 a.m. in the new Somerset North mall at Big Beaver and Coolidge in Troy.

Nordstrom began as a Seattle shoe store in 1901, becoming a department store in 1903 with the purchase of Best Apparel. Nordstrom remains a



Michigan's first: When Nordstrom opens its three-level family fashion and shoe store in August at Somerset North in Troy, an evening of dinner, dancing, and the latest Fall designs will benefit several local charities.

family business with the fourth generation taking the reins in 1995.

The Somerset North store will be Nordstrom's 82nd in 17 states.

Currently, 5,500 Michigan residents have a Nordstrom charge card — 3,000 of the cardholders live in metro-Detroit.

The Troy store's buyers will be based in the area, spending "half their time on the selling floor learning what shoppers want and need."

Sales associates are armed with one simple command, "Use your best judgment to take care of your customer."

Nordstrom has four advertised sales each year: the June and November Half-Yearly Sales for Women, the December Half-Yearly Sale for Men, and in mid-July, a two-week pre-fall sale for men and women with the merchandise marked up afterward. Receipts are NOT required for returns.

While Nordstrom primarily sells family fashions and footwear from

See NORDSTROM, 9A

Moonlight Madness sale is Friday in Farmington

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

At Grand River and Farmington Road sits a kodgepodge of retail and service storefronts that want you to come down and take notice.

To this end, the shop owners and business professionals recently got together to ignite the smoldering Downtown Farmington Business Association, throwing their energies behind a Moonlight Madness Sale to bring out the community in a show of support.

The sale, Friday, March 15, from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. is very special for two reasons," said Bev Brown, owner of the Touch of Romance women's apparel shop. "It combines both retail and service businesses offering sales and information to the public. It also provides people who can't visit the downtown businesses during day-

time hours, a chance to see what we have to offer them. Downtown Farmington has so many neat, little places waiting to be discovered!"

Brown pointed out that downtown Farmington's shopping district pulls customers from Livonia, Redford and Farmington, but is often a bigger market.

"We've sort of been dormant at the DFBA, but now we're revitalized," she said. "Downtown Farmington offers people a business mix of independent local retailers, national chains like T.J. Maxx, Dress Barn and JoAnn Fabrics, and service centers like Cromwell Chiropractic. We also have several great places to dine."

Downtown Farmington has had its ups and downs over the past two years.

See MADNESS, 9A

Retailers are invited to submit news of upcoming events for Added Attractions. The deadline is the Wednesday before publication on Monday. Send facts to: Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax to: (810) 644-1314.

MONDAY, MARCH 11

TASTE OF IRELAND

Week-long celebration with members of the Detroit Gaelic League. Monday 6-8 p.m. George Tatt Bagpipes; Tuesday noon to 3 p.m. Odd Enough Band; Wednesday 6-8 p.m. folk singer Charlie Taylor; Thursday noon to 3 p.m. Odd Enough returns; Friday 6-8 p.m. O'Hara Dance School; Saturday 1 a.m. to 1 p.m. O'Hara Dance School, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Odd Enough. Great Oaks Mall, Livemore/Watton, Rochester Hills. (810) 651-6000.

HEALTH-TO-HEALTH

Free and low-cost health screenings and services in center concourse 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through March 13. Participants must be over age 18. Information books. Livonia Mall, Seven Mills/Middlebrook. (810) 476-1166.

SHOWER FASHION SEMINAR

6-9 p.m. \$20 per person. Presented by Nicole Christ of Nicole's Revival Resale Shop, and Robin Smith of Born To Shop, for Michigan Polynesian Women's Network. Reservations required. Public is invited. Private shopping follows spring wardrobe seminar. Birmingham Community House, Merrill/Bates. (810) 585-0545.

MEET BARBARA WALSH

Through March 17 at Hudson's, Walsh meets fans and offers personal cosmetic consultations 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Appointments suggested. Northland Center, Nine Mills/Greenfield, Southfield. (810) 443-4321.

PUPPET SHOWS

"Wizard of Oz" presented through March. Call the center for show times. Also, a mall art exhibit through March 17, featuring Pontiac Oakland Society of Artists masterpieces. Alameda/Village Mall, Watton/Adams, Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

ST. PAT'S DINNER IDEAS

Jacobson's Store For the Home hosts new ideas for a traditional holiday. 1 p.m. Free. Woodward/Wilma, Birmingham. (810) 644-0902.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

INFORMAL BOOKING

See the latest books from Mimi Maternity and Jos. Bank Clothiers noon-2 p.m. at D. Denison's and Al's American Gals. Laurel Park Place, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 482-1100.

JEWELRY DESIGNER VISITS

Meet David Yurman whose Cable Collection has received world acclaim. Herman Marcus hosts lunch-on benefits for Cilda's Club, metro Detroit 11:30 a.m. Cafe. Third floor. \$30 ticket, \$50 benefactor ticket. Yurman greets customers afterward in the jewelry department 1-3 p.m. Somerset Collection, Big Beaver/Coolidge, Troy. (810) 851-5557.

CHEF VISITS

Meet Elmer Hill-Courtney, creator of Cuisine Gio sauces at Hudson's Marketplaces. Demonstrations and advice. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Repeated at Oakland Mall store in Troy 4-7 p.m.; On March 16 at Summit Store in Waterford 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Lakeside in Sterling Heights 4-7 p.m. Twelve Oaks Mall, 12 Mile/Novi, Novi. (810) 344-6900.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

LARGE SIZES SEMINAR

Jacobson's hosts Liz Dillon, fashion editor of Big Beautiful Women magazine and former model. Dillon shares fashion secrets, discusses slimming wardrobes at 11 a.m. brunch for shoppers at the Birmingham Community House. Afterward, Dillon is available for personal consultations in Jacobson's Clearance Department. To schedule an appointment call Jacobson's at (810) 645-5553.

Maple/Bates, Birmingham.

(810) 644-6914.

EATING RIGHT

Jacquelyn Outright author of "Break the Habit Cookbook" demonstrates low-fat, low calorie recipes at Jacobson's 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free. A similar presentation in the lingerie department at Jacobson's Birmingham store noon to 2 p.m. Great Oaks Mall, Livemore/Watton, Rochester Hills. (810) 651-6000.

RALLY AND DERBY

Westland Therapeutic Recreation Center holds Mall Rally 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Also, Cub Scout Pinewood Derby in center concourse 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Woodward/Wilma, Plymouth/Middlebrook, Livonia. (313) 522-4100.

IRISH MUSIC

Borders hosts Jim Perkins performing Irish folk tunes and telling stories. 11 a.m. Free, family entertainment. Repeated 1 p.m. at Borders in Farmington Hills. Southfield/13 Mile, Birmingham. (810) 644-1515.

ARTISTS RECEPTION

Pontiac Oakland Society of Artists opens The Art Gallery in the mall with a March salute to two members, potter Joen Lightow and floral designer Ruth Allen. Meet them and view their work 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Great Oaks Mall, Watton/Livemore, Rochester Hills. (810) 651-1579.

78TH ANNUAL BUILDERS SHOW

Through March 24, see just about everything new on the market for home, garden and furnishing. 2-10 p.m. Monday-Friday; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturdays; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays. Tickets \$6 Adults, \$4 seniors. Farmer Jack, Detroit Edison and Frank's Nursery & Crafts have discounts. McDonald's offers free coupons for kids. Cobo Conference Center, Jefferson, Detroit. (810) 443-2200, ext. SHOW.

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

SLIMMING FASHIONS SEMINAR

Wardrobe consultant Lynn Potvinoy and Dr. Byron Georgeson discuss being and looking slim. 12-30 p.m. at Lynn Potvinoy boutique. Complimentary. Public welcome. Reservations requested. 320 W. City/Huntington, Royal Oak. (810) 643-5820.