

Shop early for popular holiday jewelry gifts

THE JEWELRY LADY



DENISE RODGERS

Not your mother's bobby-pin

Have you noticed all the jeweled hair butterflies and flowers bouncing in the hair of young jewelry lovers?

The look, popular through the summer, will continue to hold weight as we approach the holiday season. You'll notice hair jewelry on display in area department stores and accessory shops.

And, in reverse of the way things usually work, fine jewelry manufacturers are picking up on the trend and starting to create jewelry for the hair.

Those companies also are starting to promote hair jewelry. For example, Cameron Diaz wore a diamond-set clip in her short blond hair at the Oscars. Bride's magazine recently featured a model wearing jeweled butterfly hair clips.

In Michigan, we're generally not as quick to pick up on the latest fashion trends, but this is definitely one to watch and embrace.

Always wanted to be a jewelry designer?

Now you can design your own engagement ring courtesy of the Internet and jewelry maker De Beers.

Log on to De Beers' web site at www.diamondsforever.com, and click on the "Design Your Own Engagement Ring" feature.

Once there, you'll be able to choose a diamond size and shape and select a precious metal, yellow gold, white gold or platinum.

How about a few more diamonds on the side? Just name the shape, and like magic they appear on the screen.

After you've completed your design, you can make a print to give to your local jeweler, e-mail the design to yourself or anyone else in your address file who might benefit from the information.

While your design choices are limited to a simple band and side diamonds, the possibilities become much more exciting when you choose the "Browse Similar Designs" option. At that location, you'll be able to look at more unusual and asymmetrical ring configurations.

De Beers plans to promote the site on Nov. 5 with a commercial called "Click," so keep an eye out for it.

In the commercial, a woman clicks on her computer mouse and a "real" engagement ring materializes on her finger, as a voice says "design the perfect diamond engagement ring in just minutes. You'll have the rest of your life to design the perfect husband."

Now that would be an interesting web site.

But seriously, if you're serious about designing an engagement ring, rather than treating the De Beers site like the free video game that it is, you will still need to interact with a person to get what you want.

The De Beers site will direct you to your local jeweler and is linked to the Jewelers of America web site, which lists local affiliated jewelers. While these are a fine bunch of stores, don't limit yourself to that list. Many reputable local stores were not on the list.

Something white.

Wrap up white for the Y2K holiday season

— and shop early.

Jewelry fashion experts predict the present infatuation with white, as in white gold, silver or platinum will continue. Check out these metals as holiday gifts, but do so early. Otherwise, what your loved one wants might be out of stock.

PricewaterhouseCoopers predicts a 5.5 percent increase in general retail sales from last year's holiday shopping season. The same PricewaterhouseCoopers report predicts consumers will procrastinate at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy and receive a beauty gift through Nov. 21, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Cosmetics & Fragrance, first floor. For an appointment, call (248) 614-3367.

South Sea pearls might be another smart holiday gift. While citrus shades, like lime and orange, will inform spring fashion, the neutral gray of South Sea pearls will continue to be a fashion keeper according to the experts.

Send your questions to *The Jewelry Lady* by e-mail, rogers@nich.com, fax, (248) 629-9293 or mail, c/o the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, Mich. 48009.



Waiting: Lisa Schrader, of Northville, waits for the Duchess of York's autograph.

Shoppers are thrilled to meet Fergie, buy china

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
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When Lisa Schrader, of Northville, learned Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, would be autographing Wedgwood china at Hudson's, she knew she'd be there.

She knew she'd drop a few bucks on Wedgwood china, too.

"Obviously, the duchess is signing thousands of pieces" said Schrader, who was standing in line with a Wedgwood vase and platter she purchased for \$330, putting in her 30-minute wait for the former princess' autograph. "I just feel this is something to have. How much and how often can you have something like this."

The duchess appeared at Hudson's at the Somerset Collection in Troy on Thursday to promote England's Wedgwood china and talk about setting tables.



Flowers: Mike Senkow and his mother, Mary, both from Windsor, wait to give Fergie flowers.

the way the Brits do.

Like most in-store celebrity appearances, the event generated lots of excitement and lots of sales.

Schrader's sister, Debbie Olive, of Farmington, also spent a few dollars to get Fergie's signature, \$118 on a Wedgwood teapot. Olive collects and uses teapots, but admits that, "no, I wouldn't have just come for Wedgwood."

Southfield resident Barbara Pichette also came with her sister. Although Pichette didn't plan on buying anything, she found herself in the back of the autograph line with three platters for Fergie's signature, one for herself, another for her sister and the third for a holiday gift.

"It's a collector's item," said Pichette. "It's kind of neat to get something like that. ... Even though she's not royalty anymore, this is probably as close as we're ever going to get at Somerset mall."

Schrader, Olive and Pichette definitely weren't alone, though.

ROYAL WARES



Royal words: Sarah, Duchess of York, talks to an audience of about 500 people at Hudson's at the Somerset Collection in Troy on Thursday. Fergie visited the store to promote Wedgwood china and sign pieces of the china purchased by customers.

The line of patrons waiting for Fergie's signature extended more than 100 people for over an hour. Many fans stood in line over 30 minutes to meet the duchess. Hudson's staff passed out punch, coffee and pastries to those waiting in line.

Smart Fergie fans purchased Wedgwood china — about 60 pieces were sold in advance of the event — from Hudson's last week.

At the duchess' speaking event, a lesson about how to set a table with Wedgwood china, there were about 150 more individuals than the 400

who had made reservations, said Michelle Goldstein, spokesperson for Wedgwood.

Most, if not all, came to catch a glimpse of Fergie, rather than learn about setting a proper table, a reality with which the duchess seemed more than in touch. Ferguson made lots of jokes, had a man from the audience stand on a Wedgwood tea cup and told her fans to "be your own style, be original, be yourself" when it comes to setting the table.

Birmingham-based rug retailer Hagopian among businesses honored for community involvement

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
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Business as usual it wasn't for many Michigan retailers last week.

Community involvement, rather than boosting sales, took center stage at the Michigan Retailers Association's retailer of the year luncheon held Wednesday at the Detroit Institute of the Arts.

Three retailers, including Birmingham-based Hagopian Family of Companies, which operates Hagopian World of Rugs in downtown Birmingham, received the group's 1999 Michigan Retailer of the Year award.

"We're extremely honored. We work hard in our business, and we work hard in our community, and I'm glad it shows," said Edgar Hagopian, chairman of the company, which operates two other rug showrooms, one in Oak Park and another in Novi.

In Hagopian's mind, community involvement ought to be business as usual. "It's very important. Every business, every person, has an obligation to the com-

munity because man is such a social being," said Hagopian.

Larry Meyer, Michigan Retailers Association CEO couldn't agree more. "For business, public service is important. I think good companies have giving back to the community as part of their culture."

Since such good deeds are often overlooked, the association has a responsibility to draw attention to them, added Meyer. "All of us in our busy lives go to these stores to buy things, and I think we have a tendency to take (things) for granted."

The award program, founded in 1998 and sponsored by the association, The Detroit News and Michigan Radio Network, honors businesses in three sales categories, under \$2 million, \$2-20 million and more than \$20 million.

Rogers Department Store in Grand Rapids was honored as retailer of the year in the large business category. Sunnyslope Floral & Gift in Grandville was selected for the award in the small business category. Hagopian's company annually holds a design scholarship competition for students at Detroit's Center for Creative Studies. In addition to providing student

scholarships through the program, the retailer transforms the first-place student design into a rug for exhibition and sale.

About 600 students have participated in the competition and thousands of dollars in scholarship money has been awarded since the competition's inception in 1989.

Hagopian also sponsors an interior design competition for Michigan universities, holds a Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings concert series in their Birmingham store and regularly contributes to many charitable organizations.

Hagopian said his father, who founded the family's rug business in 1939 after emigrating to the United States from Turkey, instilled a strong belief in giving back to community in him. Hagopian's father, an Armenian, left Turkey in 1921 during a period of genocide against Armenians in the country.

"America was a haven for my father," said Hagopian. "As a result of America offering the opportunities it did to him ... I really do feel strongly that I have to give back to the community and the country."

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Meet clothing designer Ron Leal and view his spring collection at Jacobson's in downtown Birmingham, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Collection Sportswear.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE SEMINAR: Master gardener and writer Nancy Siering shares ideas for decorative holiday centerpieces and tips for caring for poinsettias at Art's Van Furniture, 8300 Wayne Road in Westland, 8:30-9 p.m. For information, call (734) 425-9600.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

MAKE YOUR OWN SWAROVSKI JEWELRY: Parisian, Laurel Park Place in Livonia, hosts a Swarovski Crystal Studio event, at which customers create their own jewelry using Swarovski jewelry pieces and crystals, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through Nov. 19.

For additional information, call (734) 959-7500.

SHIPWRECK TREASURE SHOW

Turner Fine Jewelers, 64 S. Main Street in downtown Clarkston, hosts the Lost Golden Treasures exhibit of sunken treasure with shipwreck recovery expert Andy Matroci through Nov. 21, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. on Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday and noon-6 p.m. on Sunday. For additional information about the exhibit and related events, call (248) 625-2511.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

MICHAEL BOWMAN APPEARS: Meet jewelry designer Michael Dawkins at Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Designer Jewelry, first floor.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

STORYTELLING: Wonderland Mall in Livonia hosts Auntie Poo's Story Time for children, 2-3:30 p.m., Food Court. For additional information, call (734) 522-4100.

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax: (248) 644-1314. Information must be received by 5 p.m. Monday for publication the following Sunday.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Gift with Vint

Visit the Clinique counter and enjoy a make-up consultation at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy and receive a beauty gift through Nov. 21, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Cosmetics & Fragrance, first floor. For an appointment, call (248) 614-3367.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15

HERRERA SPINOFF COLLECTION

View Carolina Herrera's special order collection for spring through Nov. 16 at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Designer & Balcon, second floor. To make a personal appointment, call (248) 614-3367.

DECEMBER APPEARANCE