

Putting your best face forward



ED NAKFOR

Each morning, I make some pretty tough calls even before our first jolt of caffeine and well in advance of playing back voice mail: Tie or no tie, loafers or lace-ups, shave or not to shave?

Let's face it (pardon the pun, please), while women bemoan their daily beauty regimen, us guys have it pretty easy, save for the few minutes we spend scraping our faces with a sharp steel blade.

But come the weekend, I take a pass on this drudgery. I have a pretty heavy beard.

In fact, my five o'clock shadow shows up before lunch. And if headed out after work, I must take another pass with the shaver lest I look like a fugitive. So any opportunity to leave the electric razor in its case is most welcome.

I've always favored electric. I'm not glued to the mirror, can take a call without making a mess of the phone, fix a cup of coffee or check e-mail.

Even though I may not get the closest of shaves, I appreciate the freedom and convenience of those hand-held, purring blades.

So when this died-in-wool electric "shaver" found himself looking in the mirror, disposable Bic at the ready thanks to a malfunctioning Braun, you can bet the subsequent battle scars — and there were many — matched the intensity of the fight for a clean, close shave.

However, just about the time I replaced my shaver's broken foil, I got the hang of swiping with a blade and understanding the subtleties of my face.

Plus, I became fascinated with the vast array of pre- and post-shaving products at both chain stores and specialty shops. Indeed, there's definitely something for everyone. Correction: for every face.

Lori Karbal, owner of her eponymous Birmingham beauty and pampering shop, doesn't forget men's grooming needs. And while gals stop by to chat and see what's new, the menfolk find plenty for themselves.

From pre-shave washes and beard lubricants to after-shave healing balms, the selection includes familiar faces and those with more of a cult-like following like Kiehl's, and The Art of Shaving.

Also in the mix are the uber-masculine Jack Black for Men and Anthony Logistics for Men. The latter was developed by Oakland County's Anthony Sosnick, who donates a portion of proceeds from the sale

of each product to prostate cancer treatment and research programs.

Later, while at Target looking for a replacement foil for my shaver, I took a quick inventory of the store's shaving selections for men, from the ubiquitous Gillette lineup to new entries from Nivea. There's even the formerly hard-to-find British brand King of Shaves.

Naturally though, being partial to electric, I checked in with Mike Bauby, owner of the Shaver Shop in Pontiac. After all, who better to know how to handle a moving blade than Bauby, whose family has been repairing and selling electric shavers for 30 years?

"People are married to one or the other," he says of the electric versus blade conundrum, adding that he favors Norelco.

His tips for a great electric shave are pretty basic, such as shaving with the grain of the hair, cleaning the blade regularly and replacing it, along with the foil, at least once a year.

Plus, he says to make sure the face is dry, which on muggy days can be difficult. In that case, Bauby gives a nod to Remington's scent-free powder stick to quickly dry up excess moisture.

Good advice, but how can I prevent the occasional nicks that I get around my Adam's apple? Unfortunately, Bauby goes silent except to say he can't remember the last time he cut himself.

Fine for him, but I'm still left holding the bandage. So I sought the help of Dr. Lori Haddad of Birmingham Dermatology. She ultimately delivered a litany of pros and cons that pretty much make the great shave debate a moot point.

For example, electric shavers, because of the added friction they create, cause more razor bumps, irritation and redness, and thus, more ingrown hairs.

But, if you use a blade and don't dry it completely before storing it, or leave it in the shower, it becomes a breeding ground for fungus, even the virus that causes warts, which ultimately would be removed by freezing with liquid nitrogen — ouch!

That being said, Haddad advises softening the hairs as a way to prevent some of these side effects, telling her male clients to use gels, such as Afta Shaving Gel, rather than creams, as the latter can take longer to prep hairs. She also encourages using only after-shave moisturizers free of both alcohol and oil.

As for after-shave colognes, thumbs down, as many are alcohol-based and simply cause more irritation.

Ed Nakfor of Birmingham is a free-lance writer and marketing specialist. If you have a question about style or fashion for Ed, contact

Chasing toys XBox tough to get in local stores

By NICOLE STAFFORD
STAFF WRITER
nastafford@oe.homecomm.net

Without fail, there's a must-have, hard-to-get children's gift that makes parents scramble during the holiday shopping season.

This year, the latest in video game systems, Microsoft's Xbox and Nintendo's GameCube, are causing all the fuss. Both were launched — that is, made available to the public — in mid-November and feature realistic graphics that are at times difficult to distinguish from the real thing on a television set.

A handful of weeks since the launch of Xbox, as well as before Christmas, Sam Goody at Northland Center in Southfield has received a second shipment of four systems from Microsoft.

The game system is particularly popular and seems to be selling out more rapidly than GameCube in stores throughout suburban Detroit. Sam Goody in Southfield sold out of the units a few days after the launch and has been fielding phone and in-person requests — approximately 40 per day — from anxious parents ever since.

"They've been coming in the last couple weeks and we were out," said the store's manager, Darrell Peterson.

At the moment, the four units sit on a shelf in wait of parents who want to nab the gift for a son or daughter.

"If this was the weekend, they definitely would be gone. It's just that we haven't had the normal adult flow of traffic yet. They're still at work," said Peterson. "Once the word gets out, those will be gone."

With only four units to sell, selling out is easy to do, thus the difficulty many parents have trying to get their hands on the toy. Peterson does have a healthy supply of GameCube systems and a



STAFF PHOTO BY JIM JACOBOWITZ

full stock of last year's hit PlayStation II.

But substitutes don't fly in the realm of video game systems for Christmas, said Peterson.

Many children with an Xbox on their Christmas list already have another game system and are looking to upgrade. Others are looking for a particular system because of the games they run. The Xbox runs more sports games, while the GameCube is heavy on Mario Bros. games.

Not to mention, the children, not the parents, are calling the shots.

"The kids have pretty much clued their parents into all that. Their job is to go out and buy it," said Peterson.

And parents don't tend to question their children's requests and choices.

"There's no 'Can you explain to me why I should buy it?' or 'What's so good about it?' It's, more or less, 'If you've got it, I want it,'" said Peterson.

Likewise, parents don't question the practicality of finding and buying such gifts, said Julie Krakowiak, hard lines team leader at Target in Troy, which also

Best game in town: Jermaine Vann of Detroit plays football on the Microsoft Xbox, this holiday's must-have toy, at Sam Goody at Northland Center in Southfield.

has been selling out of the Xbox shortly after receiving a shipment.

"The night before the Xbox came out, I closed (the store). And when I came out, I went out and saw two of our guests waiting in line. They asked: 'So, do you think we're crazy?' So I asked, 'Why are you doing this?' And they said, 'Because I have a 9-year-old,'" recalled Krakowiak.

"I think parents are doing it because it's what their kids want. It's the hottest computer game system. It's all the rage."

The question is which came first: the craze or cries for the product?

No doubt high demand and short supply help create hype and popularity.

"But there's also the simple fact that (the Xbox and GameCube) are new systems," said Peterson at Sam Goody. "It was the same way with PlayStation II last year."

And though both new systems' improved graphics and resolution were highly touted, youths and parents alike seem impressed by the technology.

"It's lived up to the expectations," said Peterson. "It has lived up to the hype."

www.observeanddecentric.com

Marv Klemic, editor

Mklemic@oe.homecomm.net



www.HomeTownLife.com

INTERNET ADDRESS DIRECTORY

ACCOUNTING

Bovitz & Co. CPA P.C. — www.bovitzcpa.com

ACUPUNCTURE

Carl J. Samadji, M.D. — www.americanacupuncture.com

ADHD HELP

ADHD (Attention Deficit) — www.adhdoutreach.com

APARTMENT

Can Be Investments — www.can-be.com

ARCHITECTS

URS Greiner-Woodward Clyde — www.urscorp.com

ART AND ANTIQUES

The Detroit Institute of Arts — www.dia.org

ART MUSEUMS

Alax Paving Industries — www.alaxpaving.com

ASPHALT/CONCRETE PAVING

S&J Asphalt Paving — www.sjaspalt.com

ASSOCIATIONS

ASIM - Detroit — www.asim-detroit.com

ASPHALT PAVING ASSOCIATION

of Southeastern Michigan — www.asimichigan.com

AUTO RACING

Suburban Newspapers — www.suburbannews.org

ATTORNEYS

Nichols & Eberth, PC — www.michiganattorney.com

AUDIO VISUAL SERVICES

AVS Audio — www.avsaudio.com

AUTOMOTIVE

Auto Extend Warranty — www.autoextendwarranty.com

BAKING/COOKING

"Mfy" Misa - Chelsea Milling Company — www.jfymix.com

BOOKS

Apostolate Communications — www.apostolate.com

BUSINESS NEWS

Insider Business Journal — www.insiderbiz.com

COMPUTER

Handware/Programming/Software Support — www.les-inet.com

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce — www.aacomm.com

FINANCE

Birmingham/Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce — www.bbcm.com

FLORIDA

Garden City Chamber of Commerce — www.gardencity.org

Northville Chamber of Commerce — www.northville.org

Redford Chamber of Commerce — www.redfordchamber.com

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center — www.stvincent.org

CHILD SAFETY ITEMS

Krifasale — www.krifasale.com

CLASSIFIED ADS

AdVillage — www.advillage.com

COMMUNITIES

HomeTown Newspapers — www.hometownnews.com

COMMUNITY NEWS

Observer & Eccentric Newspapers — www.observeanddecentric.com

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Beverly Hills Police — www.beverlyhillspolice.com

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

Logis, Inc. — www.logis-usa.com

CREDIT BUREAUS

Ann Arbor Credit Bureau — www.a2cb.com

CRATES

London Lane Farms — www.londonlanefarms.com

DENTISTS

Family Dentistry — www.familydentist-ahard.com

EDUCATION

Oakland Schools — www.oakland.k12.mi.us

ELECTRICAL SUPPLY

Progress Electric — www.pe-co.com

ELECTRONIC SERVICE AND REPAIR

ABL Electronic Service, Inc. — www.ablerv.com

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Advantage Staffing — www.astaff.com

EMPLOYMENT PRESENTATION SERVICES

HR ONE, INC. — www.hroneinc.com

EYE CARE/LASER SURGERY

Greenberg Eye Center — www.greenbergye.com

FINANCE

Michigan Eyecare Institute — www.michiganyecare.com

FLORIDA

Fairlane Investment Advisors, Inc. — www.fairlane.com

FLOORING

Danide Hardwood Flooring Company — www.danidefloors.com

FOOD PRESERVATION

Savino Sorbet — www.sorbet.com

GALLERIES

Cowboy Trader Gallery — www.cowboytradergallery.com

GOVERNMENT

Livestock County Human Services — www.livestock.org

GRAVEL

D&J Gravel — www.djgravel.com

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Accord Remodeling 1, Inc. — www.accordremodeling.com

HYDRAULIC AND PNEUMATIC CYLINDERS

Hennells — www.hennells.com

HYPOPHYSIS

Premier Hypnosis Center — www.premierhypnosis.net

IDENTIFICATION & LAMINATION

Identification Lamination Products — www.identlam.com

INSURANCE

J.J. O'Connor & Assoc., Inc. — www.oconnorinsur.com

INVENTIONS/PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT/PATENTS

Martec Products International — www.martecprod.com

MANUFACTURER'S REPRESENTATIVES

Electronic Resources — www.esrnet.com

MEDICAL SAVINGS PROGRAMS

Grand Canyon Care ERS Representative — www.ourhealthcarecosts.com

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Innovative Laboratory Acrylics — www.innovativelaboratoryacrylics.com

MORTGAGE COMPANIES

Spectrum Mortgage — www.spectrummortgage.com

MUSIC MEMORABILIA

Classic Audio Repro — www.classicaudiorepro.com

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

Dawn VanAmberg, Independent Distributor — www.dawnvanberg.com

PARKS & RECREATION

Huron-Clinton Metroparks — www.metroparks.com

PARTY SUPPLIES

1-800-PARTYShop — www.1800partyshop.com

REAL ESTATE

American Classic Realty — www.americanclassicrealty.com

REAL ESTATE

AMP Building — www.ampbuilding.com

Moore Development — www.mooredev.com

Quality Real Estate — www.qualityrealestate.com

Real Estate One — www.realestateone.com

Sellers First Choice — www.sellerschoice.com

Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors — www.wwoar.com

REAL ESTATE AGENTS

Susan Doyle — www.susandoyle.com

Fred Glaysher — www.fredglaysher.net

Bob Taylor — www.bobtaylor.com

REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL

BBRSOAR Appraisers Committee — www.bbbsoar.com

REAL ESTATE EDUCATION

Real Estate Alumni of Michigan — www.reamadvantage.org

RELOCATION

Conquest Corporation — www.conquestcorp.com

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Asghar Alami, M.D. — www.gynocd.com

RESTAURANTS

Albans Restaurant — www.albans.com

RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Presbyterian Villages of Michigan — www.pvm.org

Woodhaven Retirement Community — www.woodhaven-retirement.com

SHOPPING

Birmingham Principal Shopping