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It's a fashion flashback for fall student styles

By **NANCY SUNDSTROM**
Special to the Record-Eagle

“Back to school” usually means heading off to your favorite stores, shopping centers and malls in search of “must-have” items for that well-dressed student.

This year, look for clothes that make a “fashion flashback” statement, such as peasant blouses and shirts with three-quarter-length and puffed sleeves, crocheted scarves, vintage jewelry and fur-trimmed coats and jackets.

Teens, particularly young women between the ages of 12 and 18, are especially partial to a sense of style that favors their parents’ era, say area clothing store managers and owners. Be it suede-laced pants or fringed purses, the look can be found everywhere from national chain stores to small boutiques.

Rachel Peplinski, manager of Lima Bean in Suttons Bay, said that in anticipation of the back-to-school rush, the store has stocked a lot of items in linen and rayon, in natural colors like sand and sage. Brighter shades such as lime, electric blue and salmon also are plentiful.

“The peasant look in tops has been very strong, with ties

around the back and on the sleeves, scoop necks and other kinds of asymmetrical lines that make for a unique, funky look that can be dressy or casual, depending on what you’re putting it with,” said Peplinski. “Overall, there’s a great sense of fun in styles this year.”

In terms of accessories, popular items at Lima Bean include shoes from the high-quality made-in-Israel line, Naot, that range in price from \$80-\$180 and feature cork insoles and natural fabric. Shoes from Arteffects have turquoise beading, which Peplinski says continues to be popular in jewelry pieces, especially when combined with sterling silver.

Another store catering to the younger female buyer is Wings in downtown Traverse City. Owner Laurie Loomis, whose other store is Raven’s Child, located next door, predicts that her top sellers for the fall season will be tops with bell sleeves or three-quarter sleeves with ruffles, made from everything from sweater knits to sheer fabrics.

“There’s a very girly look these days, as opposed to the more edgy styles of the past few years,” said Loomis. “There’s more trim, like fur, jewels and beads, on both pants and tops, and definitely more color than in



Wet Seal assistant manager Monique Grignon, left, and manager Maribel Coughran show a little attitude with this year’s fall fashions. On Grignon: peasant shirt with lace trim, \$32; turquoise necklace \$19.50; whisper washed jeans by Doll House, \$39.50. On Coughran: striped pants \$39.50; necklace with stone pendant \$8.00; peasant tank top, \$14.50; and suede booties, \$29.

past. All that black is taking a back seat to reds, oranges, violets and even prints like paisley, which have a real 1960s flair. I’ve been surprised at how quickly all of these things are selling.”

Loomis says that accessories of all sorts are strong sellers, especially leather tie belts with fringe and big “o” rings, crocheted scarves, and purses made out of tapestry or printed fabrics with drawstrings.

Pete Strom of Strom’s Career Apparel in downtown Traverse City is the only “non big-box distributor” of school uniforms in the area. He’s seen a number of changes in the approach to uniforms over the years, two of the most notable being the recent updating of fabrics —polyester and cotton blends now are all the rage — and a move from the darker, starker colors of navy and black with white, to warmer shades such as burgundy, grey and khaki.

“We’re seeing a lot of new items, such as a polar fleece vest for Grand Traverse Academy and things like skorts, jumpers, and embroidered sweaters,” said Strom. “A lot of schools are using input from the students on their uniform committees and that’s where incorporating the Spirit

Wear lines on Fridays from Land’s End for some of the senior high students has come in. What we hear all the time is that most students and parents don’t mind the fact that uniforms save time, money and arguments in terms of what gets worn.”

Taking some of the hassle out of school shopping is also what the folks at Grand Traverse Mall (GTM) had in mind for this year. Phil Whitsel, GTM marketing coordinator, says that the week of Aug. 5-10 has been designed to capitalize on early shopping for students of all ages, from preschoolers to collegeians. For example, each night during the week from 7 to 9 p.m., there is a special program for teens called “Your taste, your style, your night of shopping.” Free snack

samples will be given away, the music will be cranked, shoppers can register for two \$500 shopping sprees and there will be goodie bags with coupons and trinkets, while supplies last. And there are Gift With Purchase opportunities for amounts spent of \$25, \$50 and \$100.

“Our stores are all geared up, because next to December, this is the month of the year with the highest traffic and highest volume,” said Whitsel. “The back to school season has definitely picked up over the years, so we’ve tried to create an even more fun atmosphere with it.”

Nancy Sundstrom is a local freelance writer.

Project HERO uses humor to send its message

By **SHEILA GARRETT**
Special to the Record-Eagle

Suttons Bay high school students were “clowning” around in school last year. And this year, with the help of area resident and grandmother Laura Johnson, they hope to learn even more about the art.

Their goal is to publicize the aims of Project HERO, the school’s anti-smoking, drinking and drug abuse program, now in its tenth year.

The circus grew out of a mild craze for juggling, in which seven or eight students, relaxing at lunch time outside the media center and practicing their skill, realized they had the beginnings of a show that could be performed in the elementary school to interest younger students in Project HERO.

Jason Stewart, now a senior and coordinator of the No-Use Circus, came up with the concept: “Juggling is life. If you try to juggle too many balls, you’re bound to drop some. Know your limits.”

We can juggle three balls: home life, school life and sports and clubs, quite easily, the students explained. But when balls four and five, drugs and alcohol, are added, no one can do well.

The innovators looked around for

more circus talent. There were students in the high school who already knew how to walk on stilts, and how to ride a unicycle. Hula hoops were produced, weight lifters were recruited and an amazing collection of props was collected, said Kathy Herman, high school media specialist.

The media center was soon overflowing with big clown feet, wildly colored wigs, baggy suits and balloons. A balloon bouquet was sent to every classroom in the elementary school.

“Our biggest goal was to get as many high school students as possible involved in the presentation, to serve as role models that it’s okay to say no,” said Herman.

“We want kids with integrity. Project HERO is open to any high school student who is willing to make the commitment. You don’t have to be a top academic, a sports hero or big time popular. But you must be willing.”

Herman contacted Laura Johnson, whose granddaughter is a Suttons Bay sophomore, for her input. Johnson has worked in the past with 4H children and Sunday school students, helping them to learn the finer points of clowning. She attended a clown school sponsored by the 4H, where professionals taught sponsors and lead-

ers about circus make-up, skits and magic tricks. She has done some clowning herself, appearing in arts festivals and the Leland Fourth of July parade.

Although she was impressed by how much the students had already accomplished by themselves, Johnson gave them some reference materials on clowning and showed them how to use face-shapes to design the clown make-up each performer wanted.

The circus gave four performances, with about half the high school helping out. Audience participation was encouraged; the hockey team sponsored a game helping elementary students to make goals and other students dunked basketballs with the second and third graders.

“The kids really got into it,” said Tyler Rummel, now a graduate, who was one of the ringmasters. “There was a lot of participation and involvement.”

Senior Kira Patterson brought her performing dog, Merlin, and a student in a monkey suit proclaimed the message, “Don’t monkey around with drugs!”

Volunteers dressed as a frog and a dragon urged, “Don’t be froggong around with cigarettes!” and “Don’t be draggin’ on a cigarette.”

See **PROJECT HERO**, Page 2 ►

Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Conley
Jessie Cool models one of the most popular stones this year: turquoise. Bracelet (\$6) and necklaces (\$8-\$10) are from Vanity.



Back To School

Snow Power II Set

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