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Clothing

FROM PAGE 7

"Bridal salons must be ready to cater to all," Trombly said.

Both salons offer an extensive selection for this age group, with women's sizes and a wide choice of necklines and coverage available.

At the Captain's Quarters, Traverse City, the bride and groom are invited to confer with the staff on

what the men will wear, said owner Maurie Allen. In northern Michigan, fashion tends to dictate choices. Classic timeless selections, such as the notch collar, peak lapel and shawl collar remain popular, with variations like longer jackets or slanted pockets increasingly seen.

Vests and ties can be chosen to match or coordinate with the bridesmaids' dresses. Although black is the dominant color, silver, charcoal and platinum go well with most of the girls'

fashions, Allen said. The Captain's Quarters also provides suits for ring bearers, beginning at size three.

Some final words of advice from the experts were:

■ Attend community bridal shows for information.

■ Begin planning early, allowing yourself time to find what you want.

■ The importance of fit is critical. Have measurements taken by a reputable salon and try everything on. Make your decision based on how something looks, not by the number inside.

Personally, I thought I knew what I wanted when I went into To Have and To Hold of Traverse City earlier this year. One of the owners of this new salon showed me a dress from the bridesmaids' collection — where I never would have looked — in indigo, a color I never would have chosen. I knew right away that I had found my dress — and it was even a perfect fit.

Sheila Garrett is a local freelance writer.

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