

Life

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2007
SECTION B

Fashion Week Wrap



Fall fashion goes for polsih

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK— Sunny-yet-crisp autumn days help with the transition of the seasons. Come this fall, so will a slim pencil skirt worn with a cocooning fur-trimmed sweater.

That's an outfit that bridges the gap between the voluminous looks designers have been pushing for the past few years and the sleek and slim ones we seem to be headed toward.

Style watchers also saw a renewed interest in polished and chic clothes on the runways of New York Fashion Week, which finished up Friday after more than 100 previews.

This fall, look out for architectural shapes, tailored suiting, fur trim, cropped jackets and long coats with swing. Mix textures and fabrics, and traditional daytime pieces (a tweed skirt suit, for example) with a nighttime separate (beaded or metallic top), and vice versa.

As for colors, you'll see black and brown, with pops of purple, cobalt blue, dark yellow and blue, and lots of gray.

"Gray—I don't know when that became a color, but it did and it's a very important one," said Candy Pratts Price, executive fashion editor at Style.com.

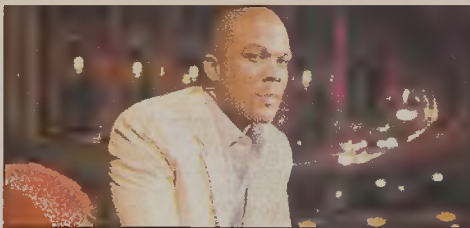
"I noticed, especially after leaving Ralph Lauren, that the American fashion you're seeing is quite defined. There's a sense of grooming and polish, almost patrician," Pratts Price said. "It's not about rock 'n' roll or grunge and it's not about a sequined gown, either. ... It's a fall that looks like fall. You don't wonder, 'Where am I supposed to wear this?'"

Pratts Price already has picked out a few things for her personal shopping list, which will be posted for the world to see as a lookbook on the Style.com Web site:

- A long and lean pantsuit from Marc Jacobs, and possibly a long and lean tunic, too.

Please see FALL/3B

Playwright Tyler Perry breaks new ground with feature-length motion picture. And he keeps it clean, too.



More at-risk women are beating pregnancy odds

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILWAUKEE—High-risk pregnancies are on the rise in the United States and may be more common now than at any other time since modern obstetric care became available.

Why? More fortysomething moms are having babies, and epidemics of diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure are causing pregnancy and birth complications.

But in this otherwise troubling trend is also some good news: A small but growing number of women are

successfully having children despite life-threatening conditions that once made a safe pregnancy almost inconceivable.

Exact numbers are not available, but doctors say that tens of thousands of organ transplant recipients, breast cancer survivors, women with heart defects, and even women with the AIDS virus have decided to risk childbearing in the last several years.

Not all of these stories have happy endings, and many people worry that some of these women will not

Please see MORE/3B

PERSONALIZED ROMANCE

Want to star in your own novel?

Publisher giving you the chance to do just that

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Ever wanted to star in your own romance novel? One publisher is giving you the chance to do just that.

Book By You says it sells thousands of personalized romance novels each year with titles such as "ER Fever" and "Pirates of Desire," where the reader is the star. It's not Bronte, but customers are going crazy for the novels that make them the main characters.

"I just wanted something unique and different," said Kym Sprague, who bought a book for her boyfriend of three years. "I thought it was pretty neat."

Customers answer 20 to 30 questions about themselves and their beloved, ranging from body type to pet names. Then the details are woven into one of the company's eight pre-formatted novels.

Please see EVER/3B



Jones, Smith plan to tie the knot

Mr. and Mrs. James Jones of Charlotte announce the engagement of their daughter Pearl S. Jones to Shawn E. Smith, son of Bernard and Elizabeth Smith of Kings Mountain.

The couple will wed on July 7 at Friendship Baptist Church in Charlotte.

The bride-to-be is the owner of an accounting and real estate company in Charlotte and her future husband is a district conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and owner of a poultry farm.

Sun or snow, the love of the grill has become a year-round passion

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kevin Taylor's grill gear includes all the basics—spatula, tongs, charcoal. And of course, snow shovel and snowmobile suit.

Taylor is unwilling to let inclement—even downright freezing—weather get between him and his grill. It's a year-round passion. "Why would you want to be limited to grilling a couple months a year? I can't even fathom a steak or hamburger without a grill," says Taylor, a 51-year-old nurse from Fort Wayne, Ind. "It takes 15 minutes. You can grill in any weather for 15 minutes."

Or even for 20 hours — like the day Taylor donned a snowmobile suit to make his smoked pork butts, a recipe that calls for a lot of time

carefully tending the coals.

"My family thinks I'm crazy," he says.

From December to February, about a quarter of American households grills at least once every two weeks, says Harry Balzer, a food analyst for market researcher NPD Group. That's up from 18 percent in 2000. Summer grilling still dominates, but it's not growing. Balzer says half of all homes grill in summer, a number that hasn't changed for 10 years.

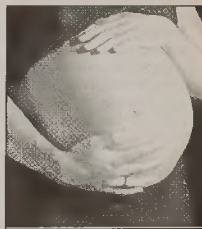
"There's a machismo that separates the men from the boys," says Steven Raichlen, who has written several books on barbecue. "When it snows, what do you shovel first? The path to your garage or the path to your grill?"

The key to winter grilling is controlling temperature, and the right equipment is key.

Smaller grills will have trouble maintaining the temperature. But larger stainless steel models generally are doubled valued, which helps retain heat, says Tim Kuhn, marketing manager with Ontario-based grill manufacturer Vermont Castings.

He also said that though many people prefer charcoal, in winter gas often is better.

"Gas lets you better maintain a temperature," he says. "A lot of people love charcoal, and your food tastes great with charcoal, but you tend to have to go out more often to maintain the temperature and refill the charcoal."



Are you planning a pregnancy?

According to the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, two out of every three pregnancies in our community are unplanned. The best way to increase your chances of having a healthy baby is to be healthy before you even become pregnant. There are several things you should know and think about as you decide whether you want to have a child. Even if you do not plan to become pregnant now or in the near future, improving your health can help you today and help your future baby down the road. Here are some simple things you can do before conceiving that will improve your chances of having a healthier baby. Many critical stages of fetal development occur even before you know you are pregnant, so it is important to make healthy changes early.

1. Take folic acid every day. All women who are able to become pregnant should take a multivitamin every day. The vitamin should include 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid, a certain kind of B vitamin. Women should also consume food rich in folic acid, such as orange juice, green leafy vegetables, beans, and whole grain products.

Folic acid can prevent neural tube defects, birth defects that affect brain and spinal cord development. Taking folic acid at least one month before you get pregnant and during the first few weeks of pregnancy can prevent nearly 70 percent of these birth defects.

2. Adopt a healthy lifestyle. Simple behavioral changes can reduce the risk of ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), low birth weight, birth defects, and preterm labor.

- Diet and nutrition Eat healthy food and have a well balanced diet. Follow the "Strive for Five" plan: Eat five servings of fruit and vegetables each day.

- Exercise Being physically active 30 minutes a day five times a week is recommended.

- Stop smoking and avoid secondhand smoke Smoking and breathing in second hand smoke can harm you and your pregnancy. Smoking can make it harder for you to get pregnant and increases your risk of problems during pregnancy. Second hand smoke can actually cause preterm labor. There are resources available to help expectant moms quit smoking. You can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get help from a quit coach.

- Do not drink alcohol There is no safe level of drinking during pregnancy, so it is best to STOP drinking before you become pregnant. Drinking alcohol (beer, wine, liquor, wine coolers, etc.) increases the risk of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).

- Do not use illegal drugs Women who continue drug use during pregnancy have up to six times the normal risk of having a low birth weight baby.

- Reduce stress Too much stress is not good for you or your pregnancy and can contribute to preterm labor. Reduce stress as much as possible during your pregnancy.

- Other things to avoid Be careful of hazardous chemicals

Please see ARE/2B

