

## \$60 irons

### Sunbeam, GE release new models

**United Press International**  
NEW YORK — Are Americans ready for irons in the \$60-and-up price range? Especially in this era of wash-and-wear fabrics that rarely need pressing?

At least two manufacturers think so. Within the next two months, Sunbeam and General Electric expect their new electronic irons to be arriving in stores at suggested retail prices of about \$67 and about \$60, respectively.

Research shows price is not an issue when safety is involved, said Kevin O'Malley, director of marketing programs for Sunbeam, at a New York demonstration of its new model. The Monitor iron shuts off automatically within 30 seconds if it is tipped over or left in the ironing (sole-plate down) position.

It also shuts off automatically in 10 minutes or less if it is left in the heel rest position, said company president Jim Connors.

GE's Automatic Shut-Off Iron is designed to switch off in 10 to 12 minutes when left in either the down position or tipped over or dropped, says Robert Pollack, the company's marketing manager for garment care.

"An iron takes 40 to 50 minutes to cool down, so even if it shut off in 5 seconds, it still would scorch fabric," Pollack added by telephone from GE's Bridgeport, Conn., plant.

Both brands sense time and temperature and have signal lights

*GE's Automatic Shut-Off Iron is designed to switch off in 10 to 12 minutes when left in either the down position or tipped over or dropped.*

to indicate the iron has reached the desired temperature.

In addition, the Sunbeam has a light indicating the iron is plugged in.

In addition to its light signal, the GE beeps to indicate the desired temperature has been reached. It also beeps if the iron has been stationary for 10 minutes. If the warning is not heeded the iron

shuts off after 2 minutes more.

Pollack said market research showed consumers wanted a signal they could hear if they had left the iron unattended or forgotten.

"The beep is loud enough to be heard in an adjacent room, but it's not as loud as a smoke alarm," Pollack said.

"The need for safety features spans all economic levels," Sunbeam's O'Malley said.

O'Malley said his company's market research indicated 56 percent of the people surveyed said they would buy such an iron and 80 percent said they would buy it even after they were told the price would be more than \$50.

Connors said the Sunbeam Monitor also steams at lower temperatures than other irons — in the 250-260 degree F range, compared with 270-280 degrees F.

Both brands are self-cleaning and use ordinary tap water.

Sunbeam shipments to retail stores are scheduled to begin about March 1, and GE in early April.

## 'New Rembrandts' on shirts

**United Press International**  
NEW YORK — Not all art is meant for the museums or home wall hangings. Designer Willi Smith is putting it on that great American institution, the T-shirt.

There will be no reproductions of the Old Masters across American chests, however. Smith is featuring 20 contemporary American artists.

"We have the new Rembrandts," the designer said in an interview. He slipped out of his dark knit sweater and into a T-shirt with a splashy black on white violin, sort of a free form, from the artist Armand Arman.

Said Arman, "I put paint on a violin and smashed it on paper to get the traces of a broken violin. I'm a sculptor basically."

"The first visual art was body painting. Before painting caves, they painted themselves."

"The T-shirt is not haute couture. It's for everybody and makes design come alive."

"Once Picasso made a drawing on the back of a girl. But if T-shirts had been popular then, he would have done it on them."

"If one person walks down the street wearing a T-shirt, one thousand can see it," said the

artist, Les Levine. "Art is liberated from walls and suddenly the streets become a museum."

Smith agreed. "Museums intimidate," he said. "This way we are bringing the artist closer to the people. It's really street art. I want to see us involved more with art in the community."

"We started with T-shirts because it's one of the most popular items of clothing," said Laurie Mallet, president of Smith's WilliWear firm. "Everybody wears them. Our idea was to bring fashion and art together; both are creative fields."

The idea really was born last May when the artist Christo draped Key Biscayne, Fla., with miles of pink fabric. Smith made T-shirts for the workers.

Smith stills sells the Christo shirt, but only with the artist's name, no other art.

Said designer Smith, "For this project, we tried to get a broad spectrum of artists. Most of them we knew."

The range is from the graffiti designs of Tommy Scharf, Keith Haring, Angel Ortiz and Futura 2000 to the temperamental "liquid crystal" design of Ed Schlossberg — that changes

colors as the body temperature rises and falls — to the work of other artists such as Les Levine, Dan Friedman and Jenny Holzer.

All the Ts will be 100 percent cotton and retail at \$37.

"I met some resistance from some of the artists at first," Smith said. "But these people represent our art today. The re-

luctance came from those who didn't see fashion as art."

"The criss-crossing of mass production and art is intriguing," said Alison Sky of SITE, the architectural firm. "Collaboration is what our age is about in terms of art — it's experimental and it could break into something dynamic and original."



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## Mothers-in-law assess roles hoping to get better image

**United Press International**  
One woman said the way to be a good mother-in-law is to keep your purse open and your mouth shut.

Another said she heard that's the way to be a perfect grandmother, especially when it comes to giving tips on how to raise the grandchildren.

No one laughed when the two women addressed the Midlife Fair attended by older females from New York City and suburbs.

That a mother-in-law should be seen and not heard was a survival strategy whose time had come and gone, the women agreed. But sometimes it's still a good idea to keep quiet, they said.

The Midlife Fair was sponsored by the Midlife Institute of Marymount Manhattan College. Participants attended sessions on "Being a Mother-in-Law," "A Son Is a Son 'til He Gets a Wife," "My Daughter's My Daughter All Her Life" and "The Mehutanim Connection."

"The Mehutanim Connection," said Mary Jean Tully, institute director and mother of five adult unmarried children, "describes what happens when son or daughter marries and certain new relatives are acquired: his or her parents-in-law."

"In Yiddish this is called 'Mehutanim.' In practice, it can bring pleasures and problems."

Dr. Jane Porcino, a professor and editor of a newsletter for older women, Hot Flash, said the role of mother-in-law is one that has had a lot of bad publicity and one for which there is no training.

"It's a big problem, especially since with divorce some couples may have as many as five, six, or seven in-laws," she said.

Dr. Porcino, whose one married, grown child lives in Australia, and one about-to-be-married will live in England, said couples living no closer than a three or four-hour drive from their parents successfully establish emotional independence.

An assistant professor at the State University of New York,

Stony Brook, Dr. Porcino is the author of "Growing Older, Getting Better, a Handbook for Women in the Second Half of Life" (Addison-Wesley, \$8.95).

"Try to get to know your daughter-in-law before they are married," she said. "Good in-law adjustment probably begins then."

"Try to see them in different types of situations to broaden your understanding of them. Invite them to share time alone with you, just to get better acquainted (go out to dinner or take a walk on the beach). Establish with him-her what you would like to be called — Jane, Mother Jane, or Mother Jones."

Forget the negative folklore that has built up around the mother-in-law, the sociologist said.

"Approach this new relationship and role with a positive attitude. Make an effort to accept and respect this new person in your family. Remember that many mothers-in-law grow to love their new in-law as deeply as their own children."

She advised against trying to separate or alienate daughter or son from spouse and to remember that this includes homosexual arrangements.

A woman from the audience, confirming that, said one of the unhappiest mothers she knows objected to her daughter's lesbian relationship and, as a result, hasn't seen her grown child for six years.

To be a good in-law, one must recognize that the one who loves her adult child is sincerely concerned about "your grown child's well-being," Dr. Porcino said.

"Be tolerant as you see the couple quite naturally become

involved emotionally with each other," she said. "Don't give advice. Allow the couple lots of time and space to establish their own autonomy as a family."

"Don't drop in unannounced or uninvited. Excessive contact is at the root of many problems; a good rule-of-thumb is to visit or call no more than once a week."

"You must also recognize your own right to set limits in giving financial help, having (or going) regularly for meals, and later on, to baby sit. Do so only when you want to, and feel comfortable doing so."

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