

Professor counsels holiday overeaters

By Sharon Maberry
Staff Writer

The holiday season, a time of sharing with family and friends, often revolves around the sharing of food. Irresistible treats seem to be everywhere and people tend to eat more than usual.

Many people gain a few extra pounds during this time and upon returning to their normal schedules in January, try to shed the extra weight quickly. Some dieters rely solely on appetite suppressants to do the job. But Texas A&M psychologist Dr. Paul Wellman says effective weight loss requires more.

"It took a couple of weeks to put it on and you won't be able to drop it immediately," Wellman says. "You could use appetite suppressants, but they won't work by themselves."

A danger in using appetite suppressants is people often exceed the prescribed dosage in the belief that if a little is good, then a lot must be great, Wellman says. However, overdoses can result in such things as hypertension and cerebral vascular accidents.

For those wishing to lose a few pounds, Wellman advises dietary restriction.

"Sometimes you have no choice," he says. "If you're (A&M) President (William) Mobley, you might have a problem because his job involves a lot of entertaining which usually includes good food. That's part of the problem with the Christmas holidays. Your parents overfeed you."

Wellman also suggests the location of your weight scale can aid in the prevention of overeating.

"During the holidays, you stop getting on the scale," he says. "Put the scale out where you can use it every day, like by your bed or in front of the refrigerator. Then, when you go to the kitchen looking for something to eat, you might decide you don't need that extra snack."

Moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, in conjunction with dietary restriction will increase weight loss, Wellman says.

"A couple of people in my department lost 10 to 15 pounds in a few months by walking a mile or two in the evening," he says.

Doug McMillan, a nationally certified exercise specialist and athletic trainer at A&M, agrees that exercise is an important part of effective weight loss.

"The best advice is a combination of diet and exercise," McMillan says. "If you just diet alone and try to restrict your calories, you become very hungry. However, if you mildly restrict calories and engage in appropriate exercise, you can achieve a deficit without restricting your caloric intake so heavily."

McMillan advises low intensity aerobic exercise such as brisk walking, jogging and cycling.

"If you exercise at low intensities, you can sustain it over a longer period of time," he says. "If you exercise aerobically, your body starts utilizing fats for food."

Walkers can achieve appropriate caloric expenditures by walking 45 to 60 minutes at about four miles per hour, he says. Joggers expend the same energy in 30 to 40 minutes at about six mph. Cycling requires about an hour and a half to two hours because it is a non-weight bearing exercise.

Although swimming is an aerobic exercise, McMillan does not recommend it as a method for weight loss.

"It's tough to lose weight through swimming," he says. "It is non-weight bearing and 90 to 95 percent of the muscular work is in the arm and shoulder girdle. Your arms will be trained aerobically, but there is much less muscle work involved than most people would think."

McMillan offers some general guidelines on dieting:

- Mild caloric restriction.
- Don't snack between meals.
- Don't eat unless you're hungry.
- Eat well-balanced meals.

Sakowitz to re-enter Dallas area

DALLAS (AP) — Houston-based retail chain Sakowitz plans to re-enter the Dallas market less than four years after it left.

"We want to make a major statement by re-entering the Dallas market with focused concentration on a personal service, specialty-oriented, men's and women's fashion store," said Robert T. Sakowitz, grandson of the chain's founder.

The chain has signed a lease for a 33,000-square-foot store previously occupied by Foley's in Highland Park Village, an upscale shopping center, and Sakowitz that could be the start of several stores in the Dallas area.

"Anybody who enters a city would be foolish not to look at the opportunities to expand," Sakowitz said. "Dallas deserves that. We don't see Dallas as a one-store market."

Sakowitz, which once operated

three stores in Dallas and one in Midland, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 1985 as the state's oil bust translated into retail market failures. Now with only four stores in Houston, Sakowitz is hoping its Dallas venture marks the chain's first successful outside expansion since its emergence from bankruptcy.

The company filed its Chapter 11 petition in August 1985 and emerged with its debt reorganized in November 1987. As part of the reorganization, Sakowitz sold part of his equity to a subsidiary of Australia-based L.J. Hooker International.

Although 1988 sales for both Sakowitz and Houston-based Foley's exceeded expectations, the flatness of the retail industry — especially in women's apparel — and flagging sales at its downtown store caused Foley's to reassess its presence in Dallas.

Foley's closed its Highland Park Village location and will close two other Dallas stores, including its downtown facility on Jan. 21. Officials said the Highland Park location made buying difficult because its small size didn't fit in with the rest of the chain's needs.

But Sakowitz said that won't be a problem for his operation.

"We are not a department store; that's not who we are," he told the *Dallas Morning News*.

Despite fierce competition from other tenants of Highland Park Village, like Chanel, Polo, Calvin Klein and other upscale boutiques, Sakowitz said the more-focused retail store will have a good chance of survival. The store itself will have granite and marble walkways, glass and chrome partitions and plush carpeting. Fashion will feature such exclu-

sive men's designer items as Boss suits and Armani ties.

Still, analysts say the structure of the store, the small size of the extra financial burden of opening one store in the market, the prospect risky.

"It's tough for just one store to succeed, especially one so focused on women's apparel where sales the past year and a half have been very shaky," said Dennis Telle, retail industry analyst at E.G. Guerin & Turner in Dallas. "Do you justify carrying all that inventory?"

But Sakowitz said he is confident the venture will be worth it.

"We saw an opportunity, and we took it," he said.

Geologist's invention makes birds sing

MIDLAND (AP) — There's a birdman in town whose heart flies with the birds and particularly, with aerobic hummingbirds, who savor life's sweetness.

Woody Erskine is his name. For 28 years, he has been the spouse of Midge Erskine, an outspoken environmentalist and bird rehabilitator, who, at least in the media, has overshadowed her husband.

Erskine himself is a geologist. Since there's a slowdown in that field in West Texas, he has put his inventive talents to work in other ways.

"I'm an exploration geologist," he said. "And there's about as much use for an exploration geologist in Midland the last few years as there is for a slide-rule salesman."

One of his innovations is fancy hummingbird feeder of his own design.

The ceramic feeder is molded from the earth's best clay, kaolin, is hand-decorated and fired in a kiln at 2,400 degrees Fahrenheit.

It is marketed under the Erskines' Capote Research and Development Company. "Capote" is taken from "El Capote," Erskine's grandfather's ranch, so called because of low-flying clouds that cloaked its South Texas hills.

The feeder, Erskine said, represents a quixotic quest: a seemingly futile effort to preserve the world's wildlife. Erskine's fears he is "romancing with noble deeds and unreachable ideals."

"We are not going to save the hummingbird by coming out with a hummingbird feeder," said Erskine, 58, who has had an affinity for birds and treating sick, injured and crippled birds since his

childhood in Iowa and St. Louis. "Our society is doing everything possible to destroy the hummingbird — pesticides, chemicals and habitat destruction."

The feeder's aesthetic beauty will appeal to people far more than its practicality and may hold special appeal to people who enjoy "House Beautiful" magazine.

"That's really the idea of the feeder," he said. "It's a personal thing. It's for people as well as for hummingbirds. It's a good deal."

From a functional standpoint, the feeder is designed to be "the best hummingbird feeder on the market," Erskine said. "It has so many things going for it that other hummingbird feeders don't."

- Such as:
- The porcelain feeder is heavy enough to remain stable in the West Texas wind.
- It is not cheap-looking and gaudy as are some plastic feeders and it is durable.
- It is adaptable for feeding larger birds and is designed to discourage bees and wasps from robbing the birds of the sugared water.
- It is impervious to harsh weather and is dishwasher-proof.
- The feeder's lace-like porcelain screen conceals the polystyrene reservoir bottle, which can be filled from the top.
- The bottle's plunger valve is activated by a tin weight, which, unlike lead, is not toxic to birds.
- The feeder's design allows ultraviolet light into the reservoir and prevents mold formation.

Since the hummingbirds' metabolism is extremely high, the birds often require energy not so readily available in their normal plant juice-sucking insects called aphids.

The feeder's nutrients are one part cane and five parts water, brought to the boiling point to maintain the stability of the solution.

The sugared water becomes a substitute plant nectar which "would be better" for birds if it were available, Erskine said.

"When there are a lot of blooms here, don't even come to the feeder," Midge Erskine said.

"People think they are doing something 'ful' by providing feeders for the birds, when it might make them more aware of other life and of nature."

Erskine's continuing work with birds and his geologist-biologist wife's interest in birds following their marriage in 1960. But his work was primarily geology and his training was in business.

He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Northwestern in 1951, served in the military and realized he wanted to turn his geology into a profession. He got a degree in geology from the University of New Mexico, and just finishing work for a doctorate, took a job with Shell Oil Co. He never made it back to school to finish the degree.

After working as an exploration geologist for Shell in Houston and Abilene, he settled in Midland in 1970. He left Shell in 1974 to become an independent consulting geologist.

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