

BUSINESS



PAGE 25A | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2007 | EDITOR: DAN MILLER | 312-321-2841 | Let's get into it.

LAST WEEK: 84.78 DOW INDUSTRIALS down 0.63 percent at 13365.87 8.19 NASDAQ COMPOSITE down 0.55 percent at 2674.46 17.53 S&P 500 down 0.65 percent at 1478.49



Mr. Adam Monk has made his picks. Yours? | AL PODGORSKI-SUN-TIMES

It's stock picking time



THE CURIOUS INVESTOR

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The bubbly is on ice and it's almost 2008. And that means it's time to bring out our inspirational tradition at the Sun-Times, our beacon of hope in times of uncertainty, our tribute to the wisdom of common sense. Yes, it's time for (cue the drum roll) the seventh annual Monkey Manager stock-picking contest for 2008, chaired by the eminent Mr. Adam Monk.

If you are new to these pages (and bless you if you are), Mr.

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Buying into a good cause



ABOVE: Katherine Bissell Cordova, manager of the Greenheart shop, 746 N. La Salle, holds a handbag made from recycled innertubes in Colorado. RIGHT: Cordova displays a cell phone/iPod holder made from recycled innertubes from South Africa.

| BRIAN JACKSON-SUN-TIMES



SCI-TECH SCENE | Local fair trader shops flourishing

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Retailers who sell merchandise from the developing world at a fair wage are opening shops throughout the Chicago area.

The first to open in the city are The Fair Trader in Hyde Park at 1623 E. 55th St., and Greenheart Shop at 746 N. La Salle.

Other fair-trade retailers opened recently in Crystal Lake, Glen Ellyn and Oak Park. The veteran fair-trade retailer is Ten Thousand Villages, an Evanston mainstay for the last decade.

"People are hungry for fair trade," said Katherine Bissell Cordova, manager of the Greenheart shop that opened in October.

The 700-square-foot shop on the first floor of the non-profit Center for Cultural Interchange pledges that the people who make its merchandise are paid a fair wage and that a percentage of the proceeds are donated to a community project that the merchants choose.

Cordova found nearly all of the store's merchandise on the Web. She started at the home page of the Fair Trade Federation, at FairTradeFederation.org. The federation, based in Washington, D.C., certifies fair-trade businesses.

"Having all the information at one [Web site] was wonderful," Cordova said. "It has been vital to opening the store."

Greenheart's merchandise is accompanied by stories of their origin, much like Whole Foods profiles its producers on in-store signs. The store's goods include wrapping paper at \$2.75 a sheet made by women in Bangladesh from hyacinth, which would otherwise clog water aquifers; and wastebaskets, umbrellas and mes-

senger bags made of detergent packages from Indonesia, ranging in price from \$20 to \$59. The store employs two full-time and two part-time.

The Hyde Park store (TheFairTraderChicago.com) is run by three women who attend the same neighborhood Unitarian Church: Lucinda Pardo, Evelyn Johnson and Madeira Myrieckes.

Their merchandise includes silver jewelry with semiprecious stones made in India, Nepal and Guatemala for \$15 to \$30; embroidered shawls from Afghanistan for \$95, and batik fabric aprons for \$12.

Studies show shoppers are increasingly looking to buy merchandise with meaning, whether it's an energy-efficient dishwasher or an organic bedspread.

Cordova expects the Greenheart shop will handle sales from its Web site, Greenheartshop.org, in February. The Web site is slated to include a blog, artisan stories and products on sale.

Greenheart Shop buys locally from wholesalers such as Maya-Works in Chicago and WorldFinds in Westmont.

Other local companies marketing their "green" bonafides are:

- ◆ Noon Solar (NoonSolar.com), a men's and women's handbag manufacturer in Humboldt Park that makes its bags out of hemp and organic cotton, and incorporates a solar panel sewn into each bag's side. The solar panel charges a battery box inside each bag, from which the user can power his or her iPod or cell phone.

- ◆ Electronics retailer Abt (Abt.com) in January opened a recycling center behind its Glenview store. The center has 14 dock doors for drop-offs by Abt's truck drivers and a machine that flattens and bails cardboard for recycling.