

what weekly

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The Happy Hatter of Waverly

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Fashion, Fashion As I See It

Photography by [Brittney Sullivan](#)

In the world of fashion, there are many different pieces of the wardrobe and most people of style, au courant, will have the basics covered. The casual, the formal, and the professional looks each have their place. There is always room, however, to improve the quality of your ensemble with the tasteful addition of accouterments. Timeless, functional and fashionable, a hat is an easy addition that is always a grand idea.

For hat expertise, I turn to Clyde M. Davis-El, Jr. of Main Street Hats. From his shop at Greenmount and 31st in Waverly, Clyde provided dozens of hats (an entire van-full, to be exact) to complete the looks at the Delta Sigma Theta centennial celebration fashion show at the DC convention center a few months back. He makes sure that anyone in need of a hat for any occasion is well equipped.

I paid Clyde a visit to learn a little more about hats as my knowledge extended to but few types of hats like the Fedora, the Porkpie, and the Hamburg. At his shop I was met with a genuine smile and a the kind of laugh that could diffuse a bad day.



Clyde has been a “hat guy” all of his life, “I love hats, they give the final touch to being well dressed.” The transition from hat enthusiast to hat retailer came after Clyde returned from vacation in 2002 and everyone wanted his hat. Knowing that he hadn’t seen a hat like his anywhere in Baltimore, Clyde took a risk, called the store where he purchased his hat, and bought out their inventory. Beginning to sell the hats to friends and friends of friends, the demand was growing and people knew this “hat guy” named Clyde. “I knew I was onto something,” explains Clyde and he ordered hat boxes, taking the next step with his unexpected business endeavor. These were the beginnings of C & E Hat Center, LLC.

Soon the hats took up significant real estate in his home so Clyde turned his eye towards a place to grow his business. Clyde said that opening the store was the right move, “it felt right, it feels good.” The store opened in July of 2009 as Main Street Hats, selling classic and traditional hats for men and women. Selling high fashion, top quality hats, the like of which would typically be found in New York or Chicago, was the mission. “We offer a unique opportunity to our diverse clientele.”



Clyde doesn't want people to have just a hat, he wants them to feel good wearing it. "It should be an addition to the collection, not just something to wear out this season," says Clyde. When a client comes in, Clyde encourages them to follow where their eyes take them as far as colors of the hats as he offers his expert advice on which styles will suit the individual. What outfit the hat is going to be worn with lends direction to the question of which styles and colors will work best.



Education is a big part of the customer experience as well. The hats at Main Street are high quality pieces and Clyde makes sure each client knows how to take care of their hat. “You should always protect your crown. When you are not wearing your hat, brush it off and keep it in the box. Always pick up a hat by the brim NOT the crown. If you get it dirty, bring it in and get it cleaned.” Clyde adds, “wear the hat how you like, you should look good and feel good.”

Clyde is certainly an entertainer and is in the business of smiles, the hats compliment his persona. The payoff for Clyde is seeing a happy customer leaving the store, with or without a hat. He pays personal attention to everyone who walks through the door, keeping in mind that styles differ, but there is certainly a hat for everyone. “We say, ‘Grab your coat and get your hat, leave your worries on the doorstep because life is so sweet when you ease on down the sunny side of Main Street wearing your C & E hat.’”

