

'I want to look respectful for myself and others'



YOUR STYLE
Anne Murphy

It's all about the experience for Sharon Erdman — and always has been.

From the time she was young, Erdman has taken inspiration from all that she observed and learned. As exhibit manager of Patient Experience Design for Mayo Clinic, Erdman said, she creates expressions of the organization's mission, values and heritage in physical spaces.

Born and raised in Florida, Erdman received a Bachelor of Science degree in visual art and art history from Florida State University and went on to serve as creative director for several organizations including Disney, PBS, Target, Barnes & Noble and the Discovery Channel. In Rochester, Erdman noted, she and her family appreciate all there is to see and do professionally and personally.

Please describe your style.

If I had to choose a word or two, I would call it curated comfort. I call it curated because I choose what I wear based on what my day will hold — who I am going to be with, whether I am going to be fabricating an exhibit, in a meeting or with family. And, obviously, I want to be comfortable.

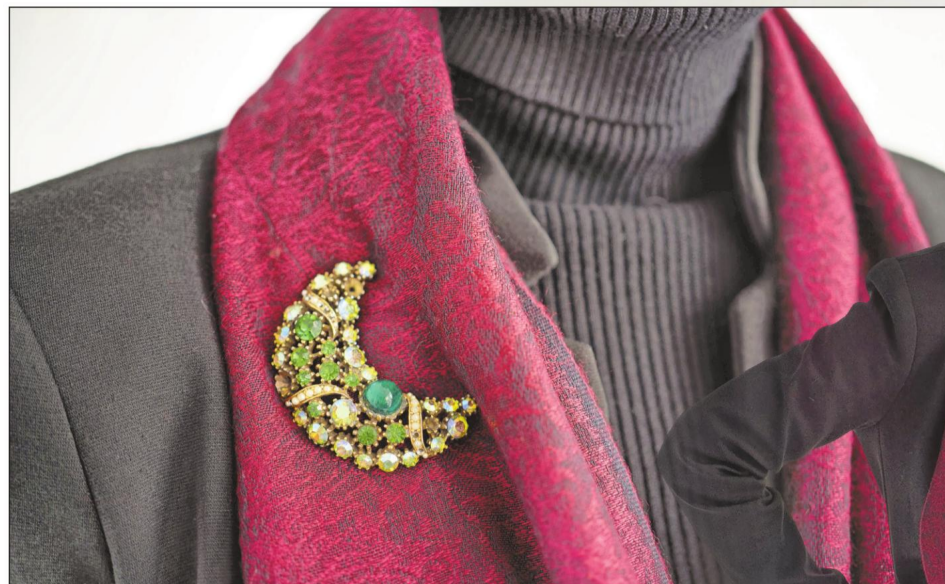
Origins of your style?

There are a lot of cross sections. And it starts with family because that is what you are born with. My father worked for the space program and taught me to be curious. That even translates to my interest in color and patterns. My mother was a nurse but sewed my clothes until I was in high school. We didn't have a lot of means and so we would go to the five-and-dime store and look at McCall's and Simplicity patterns. That was my first introduction to the world of color and patterns in clothing and constructing those.

I was also very close to both of my grandmothers, who allowed me to be curious. One lived very close to land where things were incredibly simple, and she brought to me an awareness of just how beautiful basic things are. My other grandmother was a seamstress and so she fashioned things for people, allowing them to dream.

Did COVID change your approach to style?

I think it changed all of us. I have to



Joe Ahlquist / Post Bulletin

Sharon Erdman.

admit it made me a little lazy at times. Working remotely, it's easy to fall in a very relaxed routine. But I tried to remember I do have meetings and have people I want to be respectful of. At the same time, it also helped me discover I really do like that comfort — and not to worry if I had a wrinkle here or there.

What do you wear on a daily basis?

Professionally, business casual or business attire. If I'm going to a family gathering or picking up groceries, again, I still want to look respectful for myself and others. That could involve comfortable shoes, jeans, a comfy sweater.

What do you hope your style communicates?

I truly hope it communicates that I'm approachable and friendly and I have a lot to offer in the sense that I'm interested in hearing other people's ideas and perspectives. I never want to be perceived or show myself as being unapproachable in any way.

Your most important wardrobe component?

I'd honestly have to say a smile. We all have a smile and it allows us to say hi, I see you and also communicate that even if you're having a bad day it's going to be OK.

What should every well-dressed woman have in her wardrobe?

I'm big on scarves. This goes back to one of my grandmothers. She had a scarf for every occasion and every reason. Hers came in many different colors and allowed her to transform a basic dress for less than a dollar. I have many from her. I also pick up scarves wherever I go. They

are inexpensive, versatile and you can find beautiful textures and colors.

Beyond your grandmother's scarves, do you have priceless sentimental pieces?

I have a lot of my grandmother's jewelry including brooches. One of my favorites is the one I wore for my photos. Wearing it means she is always with me. And, I still have the college T-shirt that I bought during my first year at Florida State. I sometimes bring it out for games. I'm a big college football fan. I maybe should store it away in some archival bag, but I haven't. Objects and clothing are memories, visual reminders of important people and times.

Your favorite style season?

Fall. I love summer, being a Floridian, but fall is so colorful with all of those jewel tones that are repeated in clothes we wear during that season.

Preferred shopping here?

I don't have a real go-to. I do like thrift shopping because it is a positive way to recycle and most places I go support groups that are important here. I like the idea that we can always find something that someone else is finished with. It's a very positive part of the community experience here.

Style motto

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Do you know someone who has unique style? Send nominations to life@postbulletin.com with "Your Style" in the subject line.



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