



Mark Durham on the job in downtown Belvidere  
 ... With an eye toward a business of his own someday

# Future looks bright for young salesman

**BELVIDERE** — Mark Durham meets people in all walks of life.

A Belvidere High School sophomore, Durham, 15, is a shoe salesman for the Mason Shoe Mfg. Co., Chippewa Falls, Wis.

The company recruits its salespeople through classified ads placed in various publications.

Durham, who has a ready smile for everybody, can frequently be seen pounding the pavement in downtown Belvidere with his sales case held proudly in one hand.

With an eye toward making direct selling a career, Durham already has several years' experience.

He has been with the Mason company since he was 13.

"I was selling Grit (a weekly newspaper with nationwide circulation) then," he recalled. "I saw an ad in the paper for selling Mason shoes."

"That's how I got started."

Durham, who sold Grit for more than three years, said he lived in Franklin Grove when he began selling shoes.

"I was working in Ives Drug Store (as a soda jerk) and I used to sell (shoes) to the people who came down for a sundae," he said.

Having sold nearly 200 pairs of shoes since he has been with the company, Durham said he prefers dealing with men as customers.

"Men buy better," he said.

"Women are too picky."

"Besides I make more commission on men's shoes because they are more expensive."

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**Business**

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cause they are more expensive."

Men's shoes average \$25 a pair while women's shoes run about \$15 a pair.

Durham said his commission is about 25 per cent.

Displaying a pleasing personality and an air of assurance, the young salesman said he sold greeting cards for the Junior Sales Club of America at the age of 10.

"I tried every place to get jobs," he said. "I tried selling and I liked it."

"You make a lot more money selling and it's a lot less work — you walk a lot and you talk a lot, and you can work when you want to."

Durham plans to follow in his father, Floyd's, footsteps.

The elder Durham sells insurance for Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance, Rockford.

"There's a lot more money in selling insurance," Durham said. "My dad wants me to be a life insurance salesman."

The young salesman said he would soon be selling beauty products for Elegance Unlimited, of which his father is a director.

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