

Hixson BUSINESS

Vintage clothes give shoppers that va va voom

BY CARI GERVIN
COMMUNITY NEWS WRITER

"Oh, mommy, you look so pretty!" cried five-year-old Sadie Lane a few days before Halloween.

Her mother, Amanda, was trying on a tulle ball gown as a possible costume at Va-Va Vintage on Hixson Pike.

"This is a big change. I wear a bullet-proof vest every day," said Ms. Lane, a policewoman.

Owner Megan Everett specializes in transforming her customers, whether for a holiday like Halloween, a school homecoming dance or simply a new look.

"I'm real Zsa Zsa," Ms. Everett said, using Ms. Gabor's name as an adjective. "I love everything 50s and girlie."

Thus her shop's name, as in "Va va va voom!" Ms. Everett said she had collected vintage clothing for years and thought opening a shop would be fun.

"I'd always buy stuff, even if it didn't fit me, so I had this huge collection," Ms. Everett said.

"This is exactly what her house looks like," interjected Ms. Lane, who is Ms. Everett's best friend.

Va-Va Vintage is filled to the brim with beautiful ball gowns, feathered caps, jeweled brooches, t-strap pumps and even furniture and glassware. Ms. Everett said she spends most of each morning (she opens the shop at noon) hitting thrift stores and estate sales, searching for the perfect items.



Megan Everett, the owner of Va-Va Vintage, picks out a necklace to go with Amanda Lane's costume.

Amanda Lane dresses up for the ball, while her daughter Sadie, 5, spreads her butterfly wings. They were trying to find the perfect Halloween costume at Va-Va Vintage.

Photos by Cari Gervin

"I also sell a lot on consignment, so I'm dependent on the community to bring

things in," Ms. Everett explained.

Since moving to her Hixson Pike location near the intersection of Ashland Terrace seven months ago, Ms. Everett said her sales have tripled. The shop was previously in Soddy-Daisy.

Ms. Everett said her business had also increased dramatically in the weeks leading up to Halloween.

She said she had sold a number of princess costumes and clothes from the 50s and 80s, along with outfits to portray Elton John, Peggy McMillan from "The Andy Griffith Show" and Penny Wharvey from "O Brother Where Art Thou?"

Ms. Everett dressed up as Morticia

Addams for Halloween, with her husband as Gomez and her daughter as Wednesday.

Now that Halloween is over, Ms. Everett said she will be putting more 50s outfits on the racks. One might also expect a number of party dresses perfect for the upcoming holiday season.

Ms. Everett said she loves to mix vintage pieces with new clothes. She said she is obsessed with Victorian things and old lingerie.

"Right now I'm really into bed jackets, wearing those with jeans. I'm really trying to get that look started," Ms. Everett stated.

"Oh, she's a fashion queen!" Ms. Lane laughed.

E-mail Cari Gervin at cgervin@tft-communitynews.com

TIPS FOR BUYING VINTAGE CLOTHING

■ **Always try it on.** Sizes were different back in the day, and even though that dress might look too big or too small, you can't rule it out until you try.

■ **Mix it up.** To make vintage style truly your own, wear older pieces with clothes you already have. Try a vintage blouse with your favorite jeans, or an old fur-collared coat with a new cocktail dress.

■ **Accessorize.** If you hate the idea of wearing other people's clothes or just feel uncomfortable in a head-to-toe 50s outfit, you can still freshen up your look with vintage accessories. Brooches are always classic, and chunky beaded necklaces are very chic right now. A structured handbag will jazz up any suit, and an old scarf makes a stylish belt.

■ **Trend-watch.** Look for fashion runway trends in older clothes — designers like Marc Jacobs and Miuccia Prada are very retro-looking. Instead of paying a ton of money for a 50s-inspired fur coat, 40s-inspired chunky heels or 20s-inspired beaded blouses, why not buy the original?

Juvenile

● Continued from Page 3

"I worked out a system to make sure and handle a child on a non-violent property or shoplifting offense," Ms. Bailey said. "It does not go to court. It goes to public service hours, thus keeping 1,000 children off the record."

The 4,000 plus juveniles on the record

are established and have to pay."

Unlike other courts, Ms. Bailey supervises 100 people and juvenile court stays busy running seven courtrooms daily, she said.

Ms. Bailey does not consider her job a counseling service, she said. Instead, she deals with status of delinquency and abuse issues.

"I am truly frightened by the way children are being raised and unsupervised," she said. "When these children come to us sometimes we get them when it is too