



Kristen helps with prom dress charity

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Holbrook — As a Boston Bruins Ice Girl, Kristen Wysocki is used to trying to please the crowd at the home games at TD Garden.

On April 17 at Simmons College, Wysocki will try to please high school girls planning on attending the prom by helping them pick out dresses.

Wysocki, 24, a 2004 Archbishop Williams High School graduate, interviewed to be an Ice Girl right before the beginning of the last hockey season.

She decided to try out because she loves to skate and grew up in a hockey family.

Her father coached and her brother played, she said.

Although Wysocki didn't play hockey, she did figure skate and belonged to the Commonwealth Skating Club in Randolph.

As an Ice Girl, Wysocki is one of 15 women hired to interact with the fans at the game.

She isn't a cheerleader or a dancer, but she does try to keep the crowd interested in the game, she said.

At times some of the Ice Girls get to skate on the ice during intermission.

For a three-minute period, young players from local hockey clubs get a chance to play on the same ice that professionals use. During that very brief action, a few Ice Girls referee the game.

The Ice Girls also get on the ice when they hold a T-shirt toss; again, this is done during intermission. The Ice Girls throw shirts up into the crowd.

Wysocki enjoys getting on the ice but at first had a hard time with hockey skates rather than figure skates.

"It was a huge adjustment," she said. "I wasn't used to not having a toe pick."

Along with their job responsibilities when they're at a game, the Ice Girls occasionally help out a charity.

This year, the team has been collecting prom gowns for the Belle of the Ball collection drive, sponsored by Anton's Cleaners.

Wysocki was able to gather up almost 30 dresses from her cousin, neighbor, herself, and her former college roommates, she said.

All together, the Ice Girls collected over 60 dresses.

When the sixth annual Belle of the Ball boutique opens on April 17, the Ice Girls will be on hand to distribute dresses to high school junior and senior girls who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend their school's prom.

All the donated dresses are free of charge.

In order for a girl to get a gown, she must be referred by a guidance counselor, a teacher, church clergy, or a social services representative, be able to present a valid school ID card or other proof of current enrollment, and provide her name and contact information.

Other requirements apply and can be found on the website www.antons.com/belle/.

Wysocki is looking forward to participating in the Belle of the Ball boutique for the first time.

"It's an incredibly warm feeling to be able to help girls who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford it and give them an experience like I had so I'm really excited," she said.

Wysocki remembers her own prom fondly.

"I have excellent memories of my prom," she said. "It was so much fun."

Wysocki is studying to be a registered nurse. She will graduate from the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions with a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

She also has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Boston University that she earned in 2008.

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Belle of the Ball boutique outfits nearly 400 young women with free prom dresses

ON SATURDAY, APRIL 17, nearly 400 high school girls filed into the Holmes Sports Center at Simmons College in Boston with dreams of going to their prom. When they left the "invitation-only" Belle of the Ball boutique, they had a beautiful prom gown to help make the dreams come true.

Anton's Cleaners sponsored the sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom dress boutique, which donates prom gowns to qualified high school juniors and seniors who cannot afford to go to their prom. On display were close to 2,000 donated and professionally dry-cleaned dresses, as well as an exciting assortment of shoes, jewelry, make-up and prom-related accessories to make that special night perfect.

More than 300 volunteers, many serving as personal shoppers, assisted each girl. Volunteers came from the Junior League of Boston,

the Young Black Women's Society, Emmanuel College, the Boston Bruins' Ice Girls and Boston University, while others were individuals committed to creating a memorable day for the girls.

"It's hard to explain the feeling you get when you see the look on the faces of these young women when you know they found the perfect dress," says Arthur Anton, Jr., COO of Anton's Cleaners. "Even in the sixth year, that feeling never fades. Many of the dresses that are donated are elegant, and the girls feel so special from the attention showed them by our dedicated volunteers."

Linda Queripel, who referred students from Boston Adult Technical Academy, said, "Our students were so excited and pleased by the royal treatment they were given. The gowns were awesome and (BALL Pg. 7)

the whole experience is one they will remember forever."

Those sentiments were echoed by Sandra Deneault, the participant registration desk captain, who said: "The very first girl that came in to register was very shy. But when she came out with her

gown on and came over to the registration desk to show us how pretty the dress was, she was smiling from ear to ear."

Mary Lou Andre, a professional wardrobe consultant and founder and president of dressingwell.com, trained the personal shoppers. She and her team were on hand throughout the day to guide volunteers by giving advice on fit, length, style and fabric type.

Invitations to the boutique were arranged through a Referral Partners program of 147 public and private agencies throughout the Boston area and surrounding suburbs, including guidance counselors, teachers and social service agency representatives.

Contributing to the event's success were Belle of the Ball's Promotional Partners, including Jordan's Furniture, FOX25 TV, and KISS-108/JAM'N-94.5, in addition to 76 schools and businesses that collected dresses.

Anton's Cleaners is a family-owned business with 44 stores in eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire, and the recipient of the Massachusetts Family Business Award. To locate an Anton's Cleaners near you, visit www.anton.com.



Ball Campaign a success

STUDENTS at Lynnfield High School recently took part in the Anton's Cleaners Belle of the Ball Campaign. Karen Kelter, a junior at LHS, organized the program that collects gently-worn prom gowns and accessories for needy students in the greater Boston area. Throughout the month of March, students were encouraged to drop off their gowns at the high school and the dresses were then brought to Anton's for cleaning. At the end of April, the Belle of the Ball organization will host a day for girls to come and try on gowns and choose accessories for the upcoming prom season. While LHS has participated in the event in past, this year's collection was the most successful with a collection of over 20 dresses. "Many thanks to Karen Kelter for organizing this worthy campaign," said a spokesperson.



Donate prom dresses to 'Belle of the Ball'

Anton's Cleaners of Melrose is asking Melrose residents to donate gently worn prom dresses for the sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom dress collection program.

The program, which provides a free prom dress/gown to young women who could not otherwise afford one, runs from now through Thursday, April 1.

In Melrose, prom dresses can be dropped off at the store at 888 Main St., Melrose. "We appreciate every donated prom dress," says Anton's Melrose store manager Stephen Staffieri.

The dresses can be any size, but must be free of damage, only "gently worn" and cannot be more than 3-4 years old. The prom dresses are dry-cleaned free

of charge by Anton's, and in mid-April, a boutique takes place in Boston where girls will "shop" for free dresses.

Attending the event is by invitation only, and students must be pre-qualified for the program by guidance counselors, teachers and social service agency personnel. At the boutique, volunteer personal shoppers assist each participant select the perfect dress. At last year's boutique, 350 girls got to choose from more than 2,000 donated dresses.

Businesses and schools interested in helping with Belle of the Ball, either by collecting dresses, assisting with the boutique, or making in-kind donations of shoes, purses and other accessories, should contact Danielle DiGiovanni at 1-800-659-0069 x26 or danielle@graham-comm.com.

For more information, contact Anton's Cleaners in Melrose at 781-665-9874 or visit antons.com.



Anton's kicks off prom dress drive

The high price of a prom dress has long kept some girls from going to one of the most important social events of the school year. And because of these tough times, prom night may now seem an even more distant dream.

Anton's Cleaners, which has locations in Tewksbury and Wilmington, wants to make sure deserving girls have a prom dress. To make that happen, Anton's is proud to kick off its sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom-dress collection drive on February 1, 2010 and continuing through April 1.

"Belle of the Ball's purpose is to make sure any girl who wants to attend her prom can do so in an elegant gown, regardless of her ability to afford it," said Charles A. Anton, president of Anton's Cleaners. "The goal of Belle of the Ball has always been to provide beautiful, trendy dresses to girls who need them, which we have been able to do for hundreds of young women through the years."

The dresses can be any size, but must be damage-free, only "gently worn" and cannot be more than 3-4 years old. The prom dresses are collected and drycleaned at no charge

by Anton's Cleaners and in mid-April, a "boutique" takes place at Simmons College in Boston, where girls will "shop" for free dresses.

Since attendance is by "invitation only," students must be pre-qualified by guidance counselors, teachers and social service agency personnel, who refer junior and senior high school girls to the program. Last year, close to 2,000 dresses in a variety of colors, styles and sizes were displayed. More than 350 girls attended the boutique, enabling almost every young woman who participated to find a dress that was just right.

At the boutique, a volunteer personal shopper under the direction of local fashion expert Mary Lou Andre, author of the book "Ready to Wear" and founder of the Web site, www.dressingwell.com, will assist each participant in finding the perfect dress. In addition, the boutique will feature hair and make-up specialists who will provide advice to each girl.

Dresses can be dropped off at any Anton's Cleaners. 44 stores or Jordan's Furniture's four store locations. Much like Anton's highly successful Coats For Kids program, the

collection effort will be coordinated with high schools, colleges and corporate partners. Companies and schools interested in participating in the event should contact Danielle DiGiovanni at 1-800-659-0069 ext. 26 or by e-mail at danielle@grahamcomm.com.

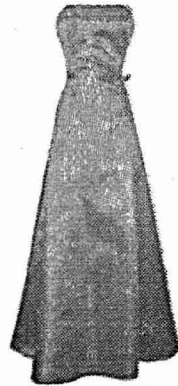
Building on the success of the past five years, Anton's Cleaners is once again working with its promotional partners, FOX25 and radio stations KISS-108 and JAM'N-94.5. Corporate partner Jordan's Furniture is also returning. This year's supporting partners include Boston Women Communicators, Enterprise Bank, Graham Communications, Junior League of Boston, Mary Lou Andre's www.dressingwell.com, Simmons College, WOW Balloons and the Young Black Women's Society, among others

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Belle of the Ball still needs more dresses for its prom dress collection

For a high school girl with a father who drifts in and out of her life and a mother who abuses drugs, senior prom seems like an impossible dream. Yet, Belle of the Ball is the magic of dancing and laughing and enjoying a prom she never thought she'd attend. It's also the magic of two excited teen mothers bringing their new dresses to school for an impromptu fashion show for their classmates. And it's the magic of people coming together with one purpose, to let a young girl know that she is special, and that someone does care that she have the opportunity to be a part of one of the most memorable nights of her life.



a young lady whom she has referred, "With the majority of her family living in Haiti, she has lost family members and friends in the earthquake. The little amount of money earned by her family in Boston is sent to her family in Haiti to help rebuild the homes they lost. There isn't any room for other luxuries. Belle of the Ball is the only way she will be able to attend her prom."

This year, many companies and organizations, such as Mary Lou Andre's Dressing Well, Jordan's Furniture, KISS-108 & JAM'N-94.5, FOX25-TV, Philip Ciampa Salon & Day Spas, Shaw's Supermarkets, Dance Studio of Braintree, Simmons College, and many others, have stepped up to make sure these girls have the chance to attend their proms.

Anton's Cleaners' sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom dress collection will be coming to a close on April 1, and there are still so many young girls out there who are hoping they find the perfect dress so they can attend this special night.

But as we get closer to the event, Belle of the Ball is appealing to residents, companies and organizations throughout eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire to open their hearts and open their closets and donate a gently-worn dress, no more than three years old. All dresses can be dropped off at any Anton's Cleaners or Jordan's furniture location, where Anton's Cleaners will clean it at no charge. Anyone looking to also donate prom-related gift certificates, shoes, purses and other accessories, should contact Danielle DiGiovanni at 1-800-659-0069 x26 or danielle@grahamcomm.com.

Referred by guidance counselors and social agencies, these deserving girls will attend a boutique at Simmons College in mid-April, where they will "shop" for a dress. Each girl will have the assistance of a volunteer personal shopper to help her find the right dress. But even more dresses are needed to make sure there's enough for the nearly 400 girls who will be attending the boutique, who would not otherwise have the financial means to afford a prom dress.

As one high school guidance counselor described



BELLE OF THE BALL

Philip Ciampa Salons join prom dress collection effort

Philip Ciampa Salons, with locations in Winchester, Andover, Wakefield, Saugus and Lexington, has joined Anton's Cleaners as a Corporate Collection Partner for the sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom dress-collection drive.

Owner Philip Ciampa is excited about having the opportunity to be a part of this important campaign.

"A prom is an unforgettable high school experience and we are honored to participate in an event that gives an opportunity to make a lasting memory," he said.

In addition to being a Corporate Collection Partner, Philip Ciampa Salons will be donating gift certificates and sending stylists to the event.

Fashioned after its highly successful "Coats for Kids" program, Anton's has established a collection campaign for Belle of the Ball that calls upon the collaboration of high schools and corporate partners like Philip Ciampa Salons.

"Our corporate partners play a key role in the success of Belle of the Ball," said President of Anton's Cleaners Charles A. Anton, "We appreciate their community spirit and high-level of commitment during these tough

times. They are truly making a difference by helping these young girls look forward to a truly memorable night."

The dress collection drive ends April 1, and dresses of every size, that were in good shape, only "gently worn" and no more than 3-4 years old so that they are still trendy, are being collected. Following the collection, Anton's dry-cleans the dresses at no charge, and then make them available at a special "invitation-only" boutique in mid-April in Boston.

Invitations to deserving high school girls are extended through a Referral Partners Program, which is comprised of selected public and community service organizations throughout the Boston area and surrounding suburbs. Guidance counselors, teachers and social service agency representatives will also refer high school junior and senior girls to the program. Students had to be pre-qualified by a Referral Partner and accept the invitation to participate in order to attend the boutique.

Philip Ciampa Salon & Day Spa is dedicated to providing exceptional service along with

quality hair and skin care to its customers in Eastern Massachusetts. Philip Ciampa Salon & Day Spa has also been recognized as being one of the Best of Boston, and was recently awarded among the Top 50 Salons in New England by a National Market Survey company.

Companies and schools interested in helping with Belle of the Ball, either by collecting dresses, assisting with the boutique, or making in-kind donations of shoes, purses and other accessories, should contact Danielle DiGiovanni at 1-800-659-0069, ext. 26 (or e-mail danielle@gramcomm.com).

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On the Web

SITE www.antons.com

E-MAIL danielle@gramcomm.com

TWITTER www.twitter.com/BelleofBallNE

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/pages/Belle-of-The-Ball/93406396359



BUSINESS

Prom dress drive underway

Anton's Cleaners is asking Lexington residents to look in their closets for a gently worn prom dress that can be donated to Belle of the Ball.

The sixth annual Belle of the Ball prom dress collection program runs through April 1.

"We're asking everyone with a prom dress they would like a young woman to enjoy to donate it, either by dropping it off at their local Anton's Cleaners or Jordan's Furniture," said Charles A. Anton, president of Anton's Cleaners. "By donating a gown, you are helping deserving high school girls, who otherwise could not go to her prom."

In Lexington, prom dress-

es can be dropped off at the 384 Waltham St. store.

"We appreciate every donated prom dress," said store manager Lynda Araujo.

The dresses can be any size, but must be free of damage, only "gently worn" and cannot be more than 3-4 years old. The prom dresses are dry cleaned free of charge by Anton's, and in mid-April, a "boutique" takes place in Boston where girls will "shop" for free dresses.

Attending the event is by "invitation only," and students must be pre-qualified for the program by guidance counselors, teachers and social service agency personnel. At the boutique, volunteer personal

shoppers assist each participant select the perfect dress.

Anton's Cleaners is working this year with many partners, including FOX-25, KISS-108, JAM'N-94.5, Jordan's Furniture, Junior League of Boston, Simmons College, Young Black Women's Society, and many area businesses, colleges and high schools.

Businesses and schools interested in helping with Belle of the Ball, either by collecting dresses, assisting with the boutique, or making in-kind donations of shoes, purses and other accessories, should contact Danielle DiGiovanni at 1-800-659-0069, extension 26, or danielle@gramcomm.com



Needed: Prom-shoe assistance

You can't go to the prom in a pair of Crocs.

Belle of the Ball, which provides prom dresses to high school girls who don't have the money to buy them, is seeking donations that will be used to buy new shoes.

Unlike gowns, shoes cannot be recycled, and many shoe makers who helped out in the past no longer have a surplus.

Anton's Cleaners started the non-profit Belle of the Ball five years ago by to help girls with their prom wardrobes.

The company provides free cleaning.

Girls are referred by guidance counselors and social service agencies.

Gowns will be collected through April 8.

Tax-deductible donations will be accepted through April 5.

Checks made payable to "Caring Partners" can be dropped off at any Anton's Cleaners in eastern Massachusetts or mailed to Belle of the Ball, Graham Communications, 40 Oval Road, Quincy 02170.

