

This show will melt your heart

THE SECOND ANNUAL LAURA JEAN MELT YOUR HEART FASHION SHOW WILL RAISE FUNDS FOR THE AUTISM SPEAKS FOUNDATION

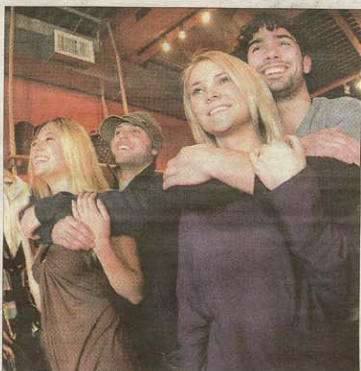
By Marilyn Bellemore
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The Second Annual Laura Jean Melt Your Heart Fashion Show Fund-raiser set for Sunday, Feb. 25, benefits the Autism Speaks Foundation, and by the results of a recent federal survey, it's a cause worth looking into.

Last week the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released statistics which showed that about one in every 150 children in this country suffers from autism or a closely related disorder. Those figures would make autism an urgent public health issue, according to the developmental disabilities branch of the organization.

However, long before the survey was conducted, Laura Flynn, owner of Laura Jean, the trendy, upscale boutique on William Street, did her part to help the cause. A close friend's child has autism and Flynn has participated in walks to raise money in the past.

This year Flynn has collaborated with Amanda Gallagher and Judith Shumway of the popular and eclectic consignment shop Closet Revival/Vintage Revival on Marlborough



PHOTOS BY RICHARD W. DIONNE JR.
Models (from left to right) Ashley Bickford in a Sky blouse and J jeans, Dan Hatch in Diesel attire, Caitlin Nelson in a C&C top and Kasil Jeans, and Mark Flynn in a True Religion t-shirt and AG jeans.

Street to present a fashion show called Melt Your Heart, which will benefit autism.

Shumway, who specializes in vintage clothing, said that she'll feature gowns, furs and accessories from the 1940s through the 1980s. Gallagher will present a mix of contemporary pieces.

"We've been successful working with Laura Jean before," said Shumway. "Our clothing creates a diversity of fashions."

Flynn's store, a destination stop for many men and women, is the ultimate place to find the

perfect pair of jeans or that special shirt. She carries lines like Tsubi, J Brand, A G, Diesel, Gold Hawk, Sky and Joie.

"I have at least three or four styles of jeans for all different body types," said Flynn who treats her clients with individual care. Can't find the perfect fit? They even offer an alteration service.

"It's rewarding to help people out like that," added Flynn. "We give personal attention. People

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Model Ashley Bickford fashions a 1960s prom gown, a 1950s mink stole, 1960s kid gloves, and 1950s rhinestone necklace from Closet Revival-Vintage

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get pampered here."

There will be fashions for men and women at the show which will be a fun vintage and denim mix. Hair and makeup is by Ki-Ra on Marlborough Street.

Ashley Bickford, 21, a senior at Salve Regina University, is one of about a dozen models for the show.

"I like fashion benefiting a good cause," said Bickford who

works with Maggie Inc. in Boston.

At last week's photo shoot with NTW she modeled clothing from Vintage Revival. She wore a beautiful prom gown from the 1960s and looked classic and elegant wrapped in a mink stole. Her rhinestone necklace was from the 1950s and gloves from that era or earlier, according to Shumway.

There will also be a chance to participate in a silent auction. Among the many fabulous gifts

are a Judith Ripka sterling silver and 18 karat yellow gold bracelet from Grennon's of Newport (\$650 value), a coin silver necklace from AH Ornaments of Wickford (\$195 value), two framed prints from William Vareika Fine Arts Gallery (\$175 each), jeans for men and women from Laura Jean in different sizes (\$180 and up) and a \$100 gift certificate to Raphael's Bar & in Providence with town car service provided by Access Newport.

"There's been so much progress in finding ways of preventing and helping children with autism," Gallagher. "Just having the knowledge and fun provided at the event, how can you not want to come out and support a good cause?"

check it out ...

The Second Annual Laura Jean Fashion Show Fundraiser "Melt Your Heart"

- **Where:** Newport Blues Cafe
 - **When:** Sunday, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m.
 - **Tickets:** \$30 per person. \$5 off with Winter Festival button
- Info: 849-5326 or 845-0592