

## Penelope's gives students cash and closet space

Written by Julia Evelsizer, Staff Writer  
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Prom season is quickly approaching, and high school girls are on the hunt for the perfect prom dress. This may not sound important to women attending a university, but many college girls may still have a gown or two in the back of their closet, hardly worn and collecting dust.

Sound familiar? Penelope's, a fine women's resale shop on North Main Street in Bloomington is the perfect place to sell those barely worn prom and homecoming dresses, as well as other gently used clothing.

Penelope's consigns women's gently used, upscale clothing and accessories. The store has been open for 20 years and is currently owned by Lynne Norris. Norris' husband, sister and mother also work with her at the store.

"It's a family affair," Norris said. "If we are working together, there is never a dull moment. We like to have fun."

The store is also a great shopping option for college women.

"We are extremely friendly on the college budget, especially since we carry a wide variety of items from jeans, to sweaters, dresses and even interview suits for that next step into the professional world," Norris said.



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Penelope's is unlike other stores in the area because there are fresh items available every week.

"Many of our regular customers say they love to come to us first if they are looking for something specific," Norris said. "Chances are we have it, and they don't have to spend hours searching store after store at the mall."

Penelope's carries many popular brands including Express, The Limited, Banana Republic, J Crew and Free People. These items are sold at up to a quarter of the original price. The store also sells high-fashion clothing at discounted prices.

"The most interesting pieces that come through the store are the high-end designer pieces like Prada, Gucci and Louis Vuitton bags, or Diane von Furstenberg and Oscar de la Renta dresses. The quality and craftsmanship of these items are amazing, and we get to sell them at a fraction of what they originally cost," Norris said.

The process of consigning clothes is simple.

"Items can be brought in on Tuesdays without an appointment, but any other day requires an appointment," Norris said. "We'll take a look at the items and determine what we can consign for you."

The employees look at the brand, style, condition and season of the items. Whatever items the store decides to keep will be for sale for 75 days.

"If your items sell, you will receive a check for 40 percent of the selling price," Norris said.

"If any items don't sell, they can be picked back up or donated by Penelope's to a women's shelter," she added.

The store is currently looking for transitional pieces such as lightweight long sleeve shirts, capris, light jackets and spring clothing. With prom season right around the corner, the store will consign any current prom gowns that are clean and in excellent condition.

"Some prom dresses can sell for up to \$300. Unlike the 40 percent for regular items at the store, the consignor receives 50 percent of the selling price for a prom dress," Norris said.

Penelope's also has a great rewards program for their frequent shoppers. For every \$150 a customer spends, they will receive \$10 to use on their next visit. To sign up for the rewards program, customers can either download the free "Paycloud" app for Android and iPhone devices, or go into Penelope's and fill out a form.

College students want to be thrifty, and Penelope's is a great place to make a little cash as well as pick up a new pair of boots, or even a Prada bag at an unbeatable price.

"We have a fresh, fun and relaxing atmosphere. We will provide honest fashion advice and helpful suggestions," Norris said. "Since we have been in this area for so long, we have a good idea on what our market is looking for. We really strive to continue to consign and carry what we think you need."

More information on the consignment process or the clothing itself at Penelope's can be found at [www.consignpenelopes.com](http://www.consignpenelopes.com) or by calling 309-828-9155.