

## Potential debutantes attend Belle Haven fashion show

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When Marsha Mifflin went to school in Joplin, Mich., a debutantes cotillion didn't exist.

So when she joined the Greenwich Junior League in the late 1980s it was one of the events she got involved in. Later she saw her daughters Brooke, class of 2000, and Julianne, class of 2004, celebrate their senior high school years as debutantes at the annual June cotillion held by the league.

Sunday, her third daughter, Genevieve, began her preparations for the cotillion by watching a fashion show in Belle Haven and giving her a glimpse of the style of gowns they could choose from.

"I think it is a good experience for them," Mifflin said before Sunday's event started. "It's an event where they are with their fathers, although the mothers get to do all the shopping and planning."



*Alex Paradise, 16, of Greenwich High School, models a cotillion gown for prospective Junior League Greenwich cotillion debutantes and their mothers on Sunday in a private home. (Helen Neafsey/Staff photo)*

Genevieve said she is excited about the cotillion and remembers attending her older sisters'. Mifflin already is eyeing the next one -- in 2017.

"My daughter Devon is 11, and hopefully, she will have it," she said.

At the cotillion event, the fathers present their daughters to society. It springs from a time hundreds of years ago when women were presented to society when they were 18 years old.

But Elise Green, president of the Greenwich Junior League, said today's women have many more opportunities than those women of decades and centuries ago.

"They came out as debutantes, and then they were expected to marry," she said.

The organization sends approximately 500 invitations to female town seniors who are either attending school in Greenwich or are at a boarding school, said Green.

Approximately 30 replied and 24, along with their mothers attended the event, league member Amy Carbone said.

Last year there were seven debutantes.

It is the first event in a series where mothers and daughters will be invited, said Susan Khanna, the active chairwoman of the cotillion. The sustaining chairwoman is Rhonda Morley. The sustainers are league members who have been involved in prior activities.

The 10 models -- Alex Paradise, Francesca Ceci, Anna-Sophia Haub, Lucy Keohane, Isabelle Andrews, Faith Morley, Courtney Fischer, Lacey Henry, Katie Galbraith and Sarah Tranfo -- are high school juniors.

The gowns were provided by the Plumed Serpent of Westport, and the House of Botticelli, of Bronxville, N.Y. Staff writer Frank MacEachern can be reached at [frank.maceachern@scni.com](mailto:frank.maceachern@scni.com) or

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