

## Deerfield native returns to open Loop boutique

By Amy Wilkinson  
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Step into the West Loop's newest boutique and you may feel as though you have arrived at grandma's house for a visit.

Complete with hardwood floors, vintage furniture and sepia-toned photographs, purse and accessory boutique Bess & Loie opened this month at 1019 W. Lake St.

The boutique's grandmotherly feel is no coincidence. Owner Allyson Holleb, 29, a native of Deerfield, named the boutique after her two "stylish" grandmothers, Bess Saliman, 83, and Loie Holleb, who died in 2000. Pictures of her grandmothers dot the shelves and display tables, and much of the décor was harvested from her mother's basement.

"They were both stylish in their own way," Holleb said. "I still carry bags that belonged to each of them."

Holleb returned to the Chicago area after spending four years working as a buyer in New York City. In addition to naming the boutique in her grandmothers' honor, she enlisted the help of her large extended family.

"Coming back here is a family affair," Holleb said. "I had a different aunt or cousin in here every day helping me."

To complement her years as a buyer in New York, Holleb spent time working in a boutique on Division Street to learn more about Chicago shoppers. According to customers, this was time well-spent.

The store "is really cute," said Liz Taylor, 37, a writer from Northbrook. "I liked the stuff in the window, so I came in to peek."

The boutique carries purses mainly by New York and Los Angeles designers and ranging in price from \$200 to \$800. Chicago jewelry designers Joanne Lysiak and Willy Irv are also featured as well as men's tie designer Lee Allison. Men's bags and jewelry are available.

"There's candy and food everywhere," she said. "I really want people to feel at home when they're here."