

hinsdale furriers

33 East First Street
Hinsdale

Illinois 60521

Telephone: **630 323-1840**

Facsimile: 630 323-4913

Email: furs4u2@aol.com

www.hinsdalefurriers.com

Summer '2001'

Dear **Friends:**

This has been a real "**Chicago winter!**" The wind, cold and snow brought many of you into see us in need of an emergency repair or two. We tried our best to get your coats back on your backs quickly – when possible, the same day.

The cold weather brought us over 400 new customers, both for repairs and buying new coats or jackets. Welcome to all of you and **thank you for choosing Hinsdale Furriers** as your furrier. Most of our new customers came here because of a referral. Thank you for all the referrals as well. It is good to know that you trust us enough to refer us. We will do our best to keep your trust. Please keep the referrals coming.

Here at Hinsdale Furriers, our **motto** is to **exceed** our **customer's expectations**. This year you, our customers, exceeded our expectations. We almost ran out of inventory. What a great experience! Also, to complete the repairs you needed, we kept our holiday hours through the month of January.

Many of you have asked us about leather and shearling cleaning and repairs. I am happy to inform you that the company that cleans our leathers has agreed to hand clean all of our shearlings. It is a little bit more expensive, but well worth the money. I have also purchased a new sewing machine that is special for leather and shearling so that we can do your repairs in house. No longer will you have to wait 3 weeks to get your sleeves shortened. This machine enables us to custom make shearling coats and jackets. We will also have a full line of ready-to-wear shearlings this season. Now that I have found someone proficient in the care of shearlings, I feel confident in selling them. We will have styles for both him and her, so stop by and have a look. We will be having a **special shearling sale October 1-15**.

On a more personal note, it is hard to believe that Ray and I have celebrated our third anniversary. Ray's Mum is still living with us and turned 90 this year. His older daughter Sue, the web designer/artist, has received her working papers so she can work on her permanent residency. His other daughter, Anne, is pretty well settled in our home in Bristol, England. We keep hoping that she'll take the leap and come across. I wonder if those of you who have known me the past 30 years are as amazed as I am with all the changes my life has taken in the past few years.

Thank you all, for your continued support, both business and personal. I am so glad that most of you have become friends along with being customers.



"Editor's" Note

Hello, everyone! Not all of you know who I am, so as my first attempt at an article in the Hinsdale Furriers Newsletter, I would like to introduce myself. My name is **Melissa Houdek**. Although I have not previously written an article for the newsletter, I am the person who does the final proof reading and editing each year. I know that Susie has mentioned me in past newsletters. She probably described me as her step-niece, as we are related through marriage (her mom is married to my grandpa). Regardless of no blood relationship, I still consider Susie to be my aunt. Not only am I a full-time employee at the Furriers, but I am also a full-time student. I just got my Associates Degree in Science and I plan to keep attending college to get a degree in Pharmacy. As you can imagine, work and school keeps me very busy.

Anyway, most of you have probably seen me at the store or talked to me on the phone at some point in the last **five years**. **That's right!** This March was my fifth year anniversary at the Furriers. It is hard to believe that I started working here before I could legally drive. By doing some quick math, it is not hard to figure out that I am still young, but do not let that deceive you. **Five years of experience** has educated me very well. Susie has taught me everything and she is a great teacher. So, do not be afraid to ask me the questions that you have for Susie when she is not around. I love to help people and I enjoy answering your questions.

On a completely different note, this year Susie took me to Canada to see **my first International Fur Show**. This is a show that previews all of the latest fashions and trends in the fur industry. I guess Susie figured that it was time to get a "younger" opinion of **what's hot** and what's not. And let me tell you, this show had both! Some styles were outrageous. For example, many designers started carrying ostrich feather coats and jackets in their lines. To add to the craziness of the feathers, they were dyed hot pink, electric blue and yellow. You'd need to wear sunglasses to look at them. There were many other new, cutting edge styles that I found to be unsightly, but that many others were lining up to buy. But, with the bad came the good. **Fresh new attractive styles are making their way to Hinsdale**. Specifically, there are two types of coats/jackets/vests that are stealing the spot light. These include shearlings and knitted furs. The shearlings come in the traditional colors of brown and black, but they also come in an array of other colors. We will be carrying a large selection of shearling coats, jackets, strollers, and vests which are available in black, brown, metallic blue, metallic bronze, and champagne, just to name a few. In terms of knitted furs, we will be carrying fashions from Paula Lishman, Zuki, and some knock-offs that are not as expensive. These too will be in a variety of colors and styles.

I also learned that it is imperative to have the correct accessories for your furs. We will also have matching hats, shawls, headbands, scarves, earmuffs and purses. Overall, the take-home message that I received from the fashion shows in Canada, is that **sheared** and **color** are the **fashion words** for **2001/2002** Blacks and browns will never go out of style, but **COLOR** is definitely in.

During our trip to Canada, Susie allowed me to make my own choices of what to order for our stock this year. Now, Susie and I are having a contest to see whose choices sell and whose don't. Please, come in to see everything we picked and **help me win the contest!**

Calendar of Events

- JUNE 16 & 17 HINSDALE FINE ARTS FESTIVAL**
In Burlington Park from 10am-5pm
- JUNE 25 – OCT 5 FARMERS MARKET**
Mondays only from 8am-1pm
In parking lot directly behind our store
- JULY 4 CLOSED FOR 4TH OF JULY**
- JULY 13 & 14 HINSDALE'S ANNUAL SIDEWALK SALE**
Check out our HOT prices!
- JULY 16 PRE-SEASON FUR AND LEATHER SALE**
- AUGUST 15 NEW INVENTORY ARRIVES DAILY**
- SEPT 1-3 CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY WEEKEND**
- SEPT 10-22 REMODEL SALE**
(for some ideas checkout the refurbish article) 20% off all remodels
- SEPT 18 & 19 CLOSED FOR ROSH HASHANAH**
- SEPT 22 HINSDALE'S ANNUAL GARAGE SALE** At the public works garage from 9am-5pm
- SEPT 27 CLOSED FOR YOM KIPPUR**
- OCT 1-15 SHEARLING SALE**
Take 25% off everything in the store and an additional 10% off shearlings
- OCT 27 BOLEY FAMILY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL** Costume parade thru downtown Hinsdale
- NOV 23 HINSDALE CHRISTMAS WALK**
6-9pm. Come meet Maggie the Clown for face painting and balloon art!
- NOV 26 - Dec 23 HOLIDAY HOURS**
8:30am-6:30pm Mon-Thur.
8:30am-5pm Fri.
9am-5pm Sat.
11am-3pm Sun.

A little about our Delivery and Pick Up Service...

We have always offered **free pick-up** and **delivery service** to our customers and we are happy to do so. It has become much more popular in the past few years with the parking in Hinsdale becoming more and more of a challenge.

We **pick-up** coats for storage only during the months of **April, May** and **June** and **deliver** them only during **October, November** and the **first week of December** between the hours of 8AM and 4PM. It is not cost effective to keep a full time person here for that job alone and I prefer knowing the drivers personally since they are driving around with **your** coats! My solution to this for the past few years is to have my husband who is retired and our daughter or a retired friend do this job together.

We schedule dates for the pickups in March and have 6-12 dates available in each area - depending on the number of customers we have in each area. Unfortunately, since we only have one customer in Peoria or in Olympia Fields, for example, we do not go there. We send letters with these dates to the areas we do serve which are divided accordingly Naperville/Lisle, Bloomingdale/Glen Ellyn/Wheaton, North Suburban to Downtown Chicago, Northwest Suburban and Joliet area. We also schedule a local pick-up or delivery date at least every other week. We do not send letters to local areas. The letters for pick-up are sent in late March, and in early October for delivery.

You can call us anytime after March 15th or October 1st to schedule your date. When we have 40 stops on one day we close that date. There are extra dates put in that are not on your letters. I carefully map out all the requests in an orderly fashion and call you 48 hours in advance to let you know the two-hour time frame in which you need to be home. (We try to accommodate special time restraints, but this is not always possible. If we are starting north and going south and you live at the mid point you cannot be first!) To keep our storage prices down we need to take time and miles into consideration.

Now you know our procedure. Please, after you schedule your date, hold off on making that day's other plans until we give you the times between which we will be at your home. If you must be somewhere else, let us know if you have a neighbor who can be available. In the last year we have had to back track or reschedule because the customer decided to take a shower or go to the post office during the two-hour time frame. We at Hinsdale Furriers pride ourselves on a timely, polite service. Please, if you need to run an errand, leave a note with instructions to go to your neighbor. We cannot leave your coat between your doors or in your garage, and we will not come in and take a coat. We need a signature upon pick up and delivery. So we do not have to spread the cost of redelivery to all of our customers, we have instituted a **fee of \$20 for rescheduling** when no one answers the door during the scheduled time frame. If there isn't an answer when we ring the door bell and knock, we call from the car phone. You can call us before hand to reschedule, or drop off or pick up your coat at the store and not incur the fee. It is very few customers that do this and we do understand emergencies - we had one customer with a ruptured appendix. Of course, we didn't charge her a rescheduling fee.

Charity Corner...

Once again we will have **Entertainment Books** for sale to benefit the **Joe Lessman Division of Multiple Sclerosis**. The cost of the book is \$25. I bought 5 books last year. One of our favorite restaurants had a buy one get one free up to \$20, Lerner's clothes (my daughter's favorite) had 2 \$10 off coupons and Dominick's has 4 \$5 off coupons. Just using those saved me \$60 per book - not to mention all the other restaurants we tried. It is a great way to help a good cause.

WINGS (Women In Need Growing Stronger), continues to grow. The resale shop is doing gangbuster business helping to support the many homes we have. It is hard to believe when I first volunteered with them 10 years ago the transitional housing only provided beds for up to 10 homeless suburban women and children and now they have beds for over 60 and provide services to many more. The nicest thing about the WINGS Resale shop is that residents receive "WINGS Bucks" that they are able to spend on clothes while they are in the program and for furniture and kitchen needs etc. when they are ready to move out on their own. If you have anything you'd like to donate, feel free to drop it here and I will get it to WINGS. Remember, I drive a van so I cannot move furniture. If you'd like to learn more about WINGS come in and chat with me, it is my favorite charity or call 847-640-8542 and get on the mailing list.

I still speak to DUI offenders at the Maywood Court House once each month on behalf of **Mothers Against Drunk Driving**. Telling the story of the Boley's and how a drunk driving crash on July 4th, 1997 took the lives of the 4 of them and changed my life (and many others) dramatically. This past December I was honored to tell the story at Mayor Daley's Candlelight Vigil of Remembrance. I hope that by telling this story in their honor and memory, I can reach at least one person during each speech and they will not get behind the wheel when they have been drinking.

Let us know about your charitable endeavors. This year 2 of our customers are walking in the Avon Walk to Fight Breast Cancer, 1 customer is doing the AIDs ride, we ordered our flowers from a customer selling them in support of the Ronald McDonald house. We try to help whenever we can. We cannot always say yes, but we try! **Thanks to all of you for what you do to help make this world a better place.**

Ideas for re**fur**ishing...

Does it seem like you've had your fur coat or jacket **fur**ever?
Maybe it is time to give it an updated look!

If the coat is still in good condition, we can add pelts and make it longer, fuller or anything else you can dream about. But, remember adding pelts adds cost to a remodel.

We can **turn your dated coat into a stylish swing coat or bodacious bomber jacket** for the more casual lifestyles we all lead. This can usually be completed without the cost of new pelts.

One of our most **popular remodel** items is turning the older coat into a liner for a magnificent micro-fiber coat or jacket. Many of the available styles can be made so the liners and any fur trim can be detached. Some of our customers who have bought new coats have added this to their wardrobes rather than trading in the old and a few have made coats with fur linings for the man in their life! If you aren't warm enough on those cold winter nights and want to save on utilities, a fur throw may do the trick.

Want to have a **new cuddle friend** or a gift for that special child in your life? Your old stole can be made into a 16" or 24" teddy bear. We are even able to use your old monogram on the paw making Teddy a family heirloom.

Are your **feet cold and tired**? How about using your old fur to make a foot stool?

Still need **more ideas?... headbands, earmuffs, pillows, muffs, trim a wool coat, sweater jackets, vests, golf club covers...** Stop by and see our samples or talk to us about our other ideas.

