

NEIGHBORS



Saturday, August 30, 2008

Bargains Galore finishes first phase

By DENA HARRIS
Associate Editor

WAUPUN — The donation center is complete and volunteers are now starting on phase two of Project Renovate at Bargains Galore Thrift Store. The first phase took exactly four months to complete, April 21 to Aug. 21.

The donation center has moved to the west side of the building. It was designed as a drop-off center, equipped with a covered drive-through lane so donors don't need to come in the building. Volunteers will assist with donations Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The donation center expanded from about 1,000 square feet to 5,400. It used to be just a sorting room, allowing very little space for all of the volunteers to work together.

"Now we have the whole package in one," Melissa Wierenga, co-manager of Bargains Galore, said. "It's a donation center, not just a sorting room."

There is much more storage space in the donation center. They added a mezzanine for seasonal items.

Below that are the seasonal clothing bays to store out-of-season clothing. There is an open area for sorting and a separate room for cleaning and pricing items before they're put out for sale.

"The volunteers love the new center," Wierenga said. "We designed it with efficiency, comfort of the volunteers and looking at the vision of Bargains Galore. In my mind it turned out like we were hoping it would."

Bargains Galore was closed for two

weeks to transition between the two phases. The ladies clothing department is temporarily moved to the back of the store which used to be the sorting room.

"Everything went really well," co-manager Brenda Hofman said. "Our great volunteer staff pulled together to help with the construction and remodeling."

Wierenga said there were about 200 people at Bargains Galore within the first five minutes after the re-opening on Aug. 21.

"Knowing that during the two weeks we were closed customers would be thrilled when we re-opened is what drives us," Wierenga said.

Phase two, remodeling and insulating the old wood shed, started Aug. 9. The

room was used for storage because it was not heated. The same volunteers from the first phase are working on the second.

"We don't have an estimated time to complete this phase," Hofman said. "We just go day by day."

There are more changes to come as the ladies clothing department will move to the east side of the building and the main center portion of the building will then be redone.

"Basically, the whole store is getting remodeled," co-manager Jade Regnerus said.

When the entire project is done, there will be an open house.

"Without God, none of this would be possible," Wierenga said.

Bargains Galore Thrift Store is open Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

dharris@capitalnewspapers.com

"We designed it with efficiency, comfort of the volunteers and looking at the vision of Bargains Galore. In my mind it turned out like we were hoping it would."

Melissa Wierenga
Bargains Galore co-owner



Neighbors Staff/Dena Harris

Melissa Wierenga, co-manager of Bargains Galore Thrift Store, assists Lisa Rens with her donation at the new donation center entrance on the west side of the building.

Saturday, July 12, 2008

Bargains Galore managers attend annual NARTS conference

Brenda Hofman, Jade Regnerus, and Melissa Wierenga, managers of Bargains Galore Thrift Store, recently attended the National Association of Resale & Thrift Stores (NARTS) 21st annual conference in Indianapolis.

Carefully crafted for resale professionals, the four-day conference is the industry's most comprehensive educational event of the year. The managers attended specialized resale workshops, stimulating networking sessions, a motivating keynote speech and a resale trade show during this focused program.

The managers have been members of NARTS for the past 4 years.

"We have an ongoing commitment at Bargains Galore to continue our resale education and stay at the top of our profession," said Hofman.

"We left the meeting in Indianapolis with renewed energy and a multitude of invaluable ideas to help us provide exceptional service and quality merchandising to our customers," said Wierenga.

Bargains Galore has been a part of Waupun's retail scene since August of 2001 and is proud to be recognized nationally as one of the best thrift stores. The store strives to satisfy the varied needs of residents, offering everything from clothing to furniture at low

prices. At this time of economic recession, Bargains Galore is a thrifty and smart place to shop where you can find quality merchandise at very low prices, all while supporting a "greener" environment by taking part in the recycling effort by purchasing and donating used goods.

Bargains Galore has recently launched Project RENOVATE, an extensive renovation project to better serve the donors, customers, and volunteers. The final results of Project RENOVATE are sure to exceed the customer's expectations, and Bargains Galore will be able to offer an even better shopping experience with many

added conveniences.

The thrift store provides funds for the Christian schools in Waupun and Randolph. Bargains Galore also proudly supports Waupun and the surrounding communities by holding various community-wide events throughout the year donating funds and merchandise.

Business hours for donating and shopping are Thursday from 10 am - 8 pm and Friday & Saturday from 10 am - 2 pm. Bargains Galore is located at 810 W. Main Street, Waupun.