

SIRCH ?Shares the Warmth?

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By Nate Smelle

Thanks to the team at the SIRCH Thrift Warehouse more than 100 local people will be able to stay warm outdoors this winter. Community members lined up outside the SIRCH Thrift Warehouse early on the morning of Friday, Nov. 22 for the fourth annual Share the Warmth Winter Clothing Giveaway. According to Mary-Ellen Coghlan, the Bancroft store's lead, this year's event was the most successful yet. Attributing some of the success to SIRCH's new location in downtown Bancroft, Coghlan said she had a hunch this year's event would be huge by the number of people coming into the store more than a week early to ask when the giveaway was being held.

?You couldn't move, and I couldn't bring out the clothes fast enough,? said Coghlan.

?They were lined up from the front doors to the back of the building and there were people even waiting in their cars. I was here before 9:15 a.m. and there must have been 100 people outside waiting by the time we opened at 10 a.m.?

The new location was not the only factor in play making the event a hit with the public, explained Coghlan. She said none of it would have been possible if it weren't for the team of dedicated staff and volunteers who pitched in. If it wasn't for them, Coghlan said they wouldn't have been able to keep up with this year's demand. She also expressed here gratitude to warehouse manager Don Zilstra for helping to make the event run smoothly.

?Us being in town now made the event that much more accessible,? Coghlan said.

?Out there at the old location, don't get me wrong we were busy and did really well, but it took two events to get rid of everything. The community has been amazing and we have had a lot donated, but this year it looks like almost everything will be gone in just the one giveaway. People keep donating and donating, so if it wasn't for our volunteers we wouldn't have been able to keep up. ? Every year, Coghlan said she is humbled by the generosity of the community members how donate the clothing which allows SIRCH to Share the Warmth. As of 4 p.m. on Nov. 22, she said SIRCH had given away: 165 winter coats; 208 hats; 164 pairs of mittens or gloves; 113 scarves; 33 pairs of winter boots; 49 pairs of socks; 33 pairs of ski pants; 18 winter vests; and, three pairs of slippers. Because of the success this year, Coghlan said they are unsure if they will host another clothing giveaway this winter. However, if there is enough winter clothing donated for another event, she said they will likely host another giveaway later this winter.