

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL TO GAIN MORE STORE SPACE

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BELOIT - With its purchase of the building adjacent to the present thrift store at 610 Fourth St., the Beloit St. Vincent de Paul Society will gain more than 4,444 square feet of space for its charitable work.

Presently, the thrift store operates in 1,500 square feet of space. The building next door at 612 Fourth St. is a one-story masonry and wood frame building constructed in 1938. Society president Todd Ropella announced the purchase at the Society's recent Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, stating that the thrift store will be able to expand and offer additional items.

Society treasurer John Heidt said during the last fiscal year, the local Society assisted 179 families. In addition, more than \$13,000 was used for clients' emergency needs such as rent, food cards, gas cards and bus passes.

"Additionally, we have picked up the cost of minor car repairs and the cost of prescription drugs. We have also occasionally provided clothing, household goods and furniture at no cost," Heidt added.

According to St. Vincent de Paul Society officers, additional space was needed so the Society can continue to provide high quality assistance to the needy and also serve its large number of customers. They agreed it's been a challenge to neatly arrange the store due to the generous amount of clothing and household items donated by the public.

The group had identified three main requirements as they searched for a new building - a new store should be located in a central location in downtown Beloit, the store must be near a bus route, and parking space should be adequate.

St. Vincent de Paul Society has been helping individuals in the Beloit area since the 1930s. A thrift store was opened to offer low-cost clothing and household goods to people with low-income needs. That expanded to using almost all of the profits to help the disadvantaged in our community with their many needs.

The St. Vincent de Paul Store was incorporated in 1965 at another downtown Beloit location. The present thrift store has operated for more than 30 years at its present site.