Made New Mercantile celebrates opening with ribbon-cutting, shelter donation



Co-founders Stacy Jordan and Nancy Brown joined supporters Friday for a ribbon-cutting hosted by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce. | RAY HUNTER

RAY HUNTER
CORRESPONDENT

RICHMOND — Made New Mercantile, a nonprofit thrift store supporting local charities, celebrated its opening Friday with a ribbon-cutting hosted by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce.

Co-founders Stacy Jordan and Nancy Brown opened Made New Mercantile at 454 Big Hill Ave. in September. About 25 volunteers help run the shop and sell donated merchandise.

Neither co-founder takes a share of the profits. After covering operating expenses, the store uses the remaining proceeds to support local charities and community needs.

The store, a chamber member, marked the occasion with its first donation: $2,004 to Haven of Hope, a 30-bed emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The donation will fund one bed for an entire year.

Monica Barnes, the shelter's founding executive director, said it stays full almost all the time. She receives calls daily from people seeking a place to stay.

"We are 100% volunteer ran and 100% donation funded. So there's no big grants, no big corporate sponsorship. This money will simply go towards keeping the lights on and the water going," Barnes said. "Just to pay the bills."

Barnes said continued support like this could help the shelter expand into an adjoining building and provide more beds.

Made New Mercantile also works with Enrich's One-Stop to provide items directly to people who need them. One-Stop staff can contact the store about a specific need and send someone with a voucher to receive available merchandise.

"There's a voucher that they can come, and they can get what they need," Jordan said. "So as long as we have funding available, we can help."

For Brown, who moved to Richmond from San Diego seven years ago, supporting local charities offers a way to put her faith into practice and care for the community she now calls home.

She said she wants that support to carry out "what the Lord tells us to do: feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and help the less fortunate."

Jordan said Brown's name kept coming to mind as she prayed about opening the store.

When she finally reached out, Brown told her she had been waiting for the conversation.

For Jordan, the store's name reflects what she hopes that partnership can do.

"We are taking someone else's old things; we're making them new, but we're also using it to make a difference and make it new for someone else's life," she said.

Their volunteers have helped sort donations, prepare for the ribbon-cutting, build the website and manage social media. April Cain, a close friend of Stacy and Jamie Jordan, said she wanted to help make Stacy's longtime goal possible.



Made New Mercantile co-founders Stacy Jordan, left, and Nancy Brown stand inside their nonprofit thrift store, which opened in September. | RAY HUNTER

"I know that this has been something she's wanted to do for years, and so I just want to be here to support her. I'm so happy and excited for them," Cain said.

Made New Mercantile is open Thursdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Changes and updates will be posted on its Facebook and Instagram pages. Donations are accepted by appointment only. Visit madenewmercantile.com to arrange a drop-off or learn about volunteering.



Made New Mercantile presents a $2,004 donation to Haven of Hope, enough to fund one bed at the emergency shelter for a year. From left are Jamie Jordan, Felisha Centers, Haven of Hope founding executive director Monica Barnes, and Made New Mercantile co-founders Stacy Jordan and Nancy Brown. | RAY HUNTER

Neighbor is taking attendance at church



ANNIE'S MAILBOX
BY ANNIE LANE

Dear Annie: My wife and I are members of a local church, though I will admit we are not exactly front-pew regulars. We go about once a month, sometimes more during holidays or when life is calmer. Our faith matters to us, but we practice it quietly and privately.

One of our neighbors and her husband also belong to the same church. They are much more involved. He does readings, and she sings in the choir. I respect that, and I admire people who give so much of their time.

The problem is that this neighbor seems to have appointed herself the church attendance monitor. At neighborhood cookouts, driveway chats and casual gatherings, she will say, in front of others, "I didn't see you in church on Sunday."

It always lands like a little public scolding. My wife and I both feel embarrassed, as if we have been called to the principal's office in front of the whole class. Sometimes there is a perfectly good reason we missed church. Sometimes we were tired, traveling, helping family or just needed a quiet Sunday at home. But I do not think we should have to explain ourselves.

We like our neighbors and do not want to create hard feelings. At the same time, our church attendance is personal, and I do not appreciate being shamed over potato salad at a block party.

What can I say that is polite, firm and maybe even a little humorous, so she gets the message without turning it into a neighborhood feud? — Keeping the Faith Privately

Dear Keeping the Faith: Your neighbor may have an important role singing in the choir, but that does not make her head of admissions.

The next time she points out that she didn't see you in church on Sunday, smile and say, "We must have missed each other. But thank you for thinking of us." Then change the subject.

If she insists on figuring out what you did in the time you weren't at church, say something even clearer, such as, "We prefer to keep our church attendance private." Translation: It is none of her business. But that is subtly said with a hymnal in one hand and good manners in the other.

You do not owe her any explanation on what you do with your own time and how you observe your own religion. Faith is something that many people consider to be deeply personal, and you have every right to keep yours private.

"Out of Bounds: Estrangement, Boundaries and the Search for Forgiveness" is out now! Annie Lane's third anthology is for anyone who has lived with anger, estrangement or the deep ache of being wronged — because forgiveness isn't for them. It's for you. Visit http://www.creators-publishing.com for more information. Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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