



Crowded Closet

MCC THRIFT SHOP



Together, overcoming the challenges of 2020

While outbreak of a global pandemic caused temporary closure this spring, Crowded Closet has rebounded, experiencing signs of hope on this uncharted journey.

We are staying safe. The retail staff leads in implementing and maintaining well thought-out safety measures. Expressions of appreciation from numerous customers are evidence that being able to shop in a store where they feel safe is important. Workroom volunteers value the safe space to serve.

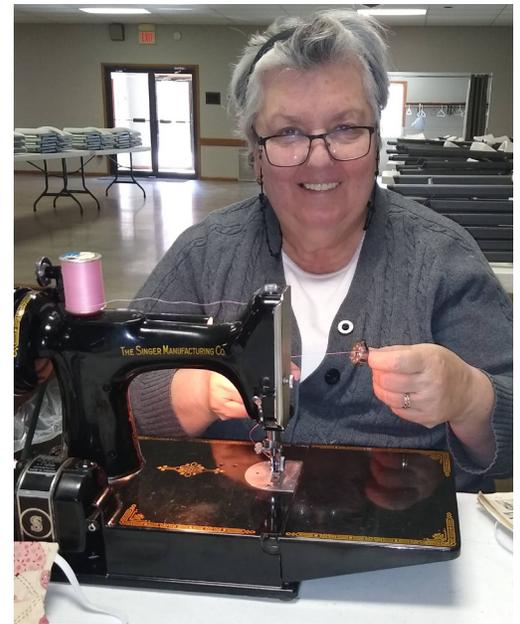
We are grateful for abundant donations. Donors continue to choose to bless Crowded Closet with their quality goods. The shop expansion space stores a record-setting volume of donations.

We appreciate strong leadership. During the challenges of this year, a solid core staff has been retained helping Crowded Closet continue forward. The promotion of strong leaders from within and board leadership has enhanced this team further.

We serve with care and love. Staff feel incredibly blessed by the dedicated base of volunteers who have returned to service. Customers take note of the extraordinary atmosphere they create in the shop and these online reviews attest to it: *“the staff is polite,” “the store is organized and tidy,” “the people are exceptional that work there!”*

We utilize creativity, flexibility and teamwork. A year like none other requires us to look for new solutions and consider what opportunities might be found. Volunteers discovered the opportunity to continue serving while still at home. This flexibility generated over 360 masks sold and \$2,800 in sales.

We experience steady strength. While some in the MCC Thrift Shop network have experienced a bumpier path of additional temporary, or even permanent, closures, we experience stability. Following two months of closure, a plan for careful and gradual reopening has proven beneficial in keeping the Closet open and going strong.



Volunteer Sally Rickey sews face masks as a new product for sale.

Guess Who?

While these volunteers and staff play it safe wearing their masks, you can play a game of “*Guess Who* is behind the mask”? Can you name these members of our Closet family? Answers found on back.





Changing lives locally and around the world. Shop. Donate. Volunteer.

Crowded Closet wins award



The City of Iowa City's first annual Climate Action at Work awards program pinned Crowded Closet first place winner in the Sustainable Lifestyle category. The Closet recycles donations which can't

be resold. In 2019, this totaled 16.3 tons of metal and 81.6 tons of cloth and paper goods. The committee also applauded the shop's 10% decrease in energy usage realized from implementing energy-efficient features in our new building. The \$500 prize was forwarded to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Guess Who? Answers: A) Joanne Nelson, B) Dean Shetler, C) Michelle Lehman, D) John Koch, E) Margaret Miller, F) Jacob Schmieder, G) Bob Powers.

Ten Thousand Villages holiday pop-up shop



This holiday season buy gifts that do a world of good. Shop purposeful goods made by hand for house and life at the Ten Thousand Villages pop-up shop inside Crowded Closet. Open now through Christmas!

Check us out on:    

Volunteer support carries the Closet

Volunteers at Crowded Closet have cleaned up after fire and prepared for flood, but we never practiced a pandemic together until 2020. Volunteers have returned to lead and serve in this unusual time, and they propel Crowded Closet forward. Since our June reopening, over two hundred volunteers have served one-time or more. Volunteer scheduling began gradually to protect the safety of volunteers, and we continue to welcome more, with safe distancing and mask wearing. We keep open for business together thanks to the commitment of our volunteers to practice a safe return to the shop.

Each weekday of shop operations requires at least twenty volunteers. The deep commitment of our volunteer community creates a culture of service and a spirit of generosity that defines the Crowded Closet.

Cashiers Margaret Penning and Elizabeth Slater are some of the dedicated volunteers who serve.

