

Thrifty memories What's old is new again in Antioch Get more info

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By: Diana Kuyper

On July 1 Antioch resident Jennifer Welsh will open The Village Thrift Shop at the same location that for decades was known as Antioch Thrift Shop, 921 Main St.

Welsh, 34, recalls as a child hanging out with her grandmother, Wilma Gibbs, 93, who was a volunteer at Antioch Thrift Shop, a not-for-profit shop that benefited the mentally handicapped. "I spent many hours at the shop until I went off to college, and it brings back great memories every time I walk through those doors."

The thrift shop closed a few years ago and was turned into Rose of Sharon Boutique, a consignment shop owned by Sharon Westbrook, who is closing her store this month to spend more time with her family.

"I loved having the shop for the past few years but it really took up all my time and now that I am a grandmother I want to spend more time with my family," said Westbrook. With the approval of her clients she is donating all of her unsold items to Welsh's new store.

"Timing is everything," said Welsh, who briefly worked for Westbrook while she was pregnant with her third child last year. "I was looking to open a thrift shop somewhere in Antioch because I love shopping at thrift shops and I have always wanted my own shop. It is perfect that this location has opened up because it holds so many happy memories and it is a perfect tribute to my grandmother."

She will also partner with **Open Arms Mission**, the Antioch-based food pantry that will now be able to refer clients who need clothing and other household items to her shop. "I will give families what they need because most of the items I will be selling have been donated, although I have purchased a lot of items. I like to help people and I support **Open Arms Mission**."

She will spend this month getting the shop in order and welcomes donations. "I am not set up as a not-for-profit so if anyone needs a receipt they will have to go elsewhere. Ideally after I see how profitable the store is and once I meet my expenses I would like to set up a charitable account using my profits, with proceeds going to **Open Arms Mission**."

Welsh said her inventory will include "a little bit of everything for children, men and women, small baby items and household goods, including sheets and dishes. We will offer nice clothing with nothing priced over \$5."

"Pricing will be cheap, cheap, cheap. My purpose is to help people out and recycle good used clothing, shoes and other items."

She will offer a 10 percent discount to seniors, students and members of the military.

She has already hired two employees and she will also work at the shop. With three children she says she has a great support system, including her mother who helps watch the kids.

"I would rather be busy and right now I am busy seven days a week," said Welsh.