

Weekend Edition

TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SATURDAY • JANUARY 17, 2004

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Good Samaritan goes on shopping spree



BY BOBBI-JEAN MACKINNON
Telegraph-Journal

She managed to wrap her arms around hundreds of people in the city Friday night. And this wasn't the first time.

The mystery woman who donated truckloads of new clothing and toys to the Rothesay Regional Fire Department's annual Christmas drive has struck again.

She donated an estimated \$16,000 worth of warm clothing, cash, cookies and chocolates to at least two local charities.

"I saw it was an urgent thing," she said, referring to the frigid cold weather we've had in recent days with temperatures dipping to about -30 Celsius. "When you're cold, it's awful."

But she didn't want to be recognized for her generosity. "I don't want personal glorification," she said. "The Lord gives you, you share it. . . I don't even think about it."

"We all do our best to contribute to the peace and love in this world. . . It's a good thing to make other people happy."

Jean Claude Isaac was one of the many people whose lives she touched on her latest venture. Mr. Isaac, 68, a resident

Greg T. Marks/Special to the Telegraph-Journal
Less fortunate people will benefit from the thousands of dollars a generous area woman spent at Mark's Work Wearhouse Friday night in Saint John.

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SAMARITAN: ‘The Lord gives you, you share it’

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at the Salvation Army on St. James Street, was sporting a new, top-of-the-line jacket, snow pants and hat.

“I’ve never owned anything that’s this good before,” he said, his eyes welling with tears and pride.

“I’m so grateful . . . It’s just wonderful. What a nice gift . . . I won’t be cold anymore.”

“It’s just like Christmas all over again,” said Robert Buckley, a caregiver at the Salvation Army. “I’m sure all the guys are going to appreciate it. It’s been a very cold winter.”

“You are doing a very good job, I am just contributing a little bit to further your good cause,” she said.

Executive director Major Carson Durdle, who was called at home by staff and decided to come in to start distributing the warm clothing immediately to the most needy, said he could not recall such a generous donation.

“We’re certainly overjoyed and thrilled with this receiving of gifts, such goodness and kindness,” he said, shaking the woman’s hand. “We can almost help everybody in some way or the other.”

But the mystery lady would not accept a receipt for her donation. She wanted to maintain her anonymity. She did, however, agree to pose for a photograph to be posted on their wall.

All she would divulge - after much prodding - is that her first name is Celestia, she is 50-something, semi-retired, uses a cell phone that’s being held together by duct tape (“The dog ate it.”) and lives in England.

She has been travelling across Canada, visiting friends in Kingston and Toronto, Ontario, and most recently, Saint John.

“I like Canada. You are very peaceful people,” she said.

She has been in the Port City for about five months, but will be leaving in a couple of days. She said she would like to stay longer, but her Visa is due to expire.

She also donated \$4,000 cash to Romero House for the mobile unit. “I want a hug,” said co-ordinator Lillian



Greg T. Marks/Special to the Telegraph-Journal
Jean Claude Isaac, a grateful recipient of an anonymous donor’s generosity, tries on a new snowsuit Friday night at the St. James Street Salvation Army.



Greg T. Marks/Special to the Telegraph-Journal
A vehicle is loaded with the dozens of bags of goods purchased Friday night at Mark’s Work Wearhouse by a Good Samaritan. The items were brought to the St. James Street Salvation Army.

Brown. “This will finish me out the year, thank you.”

Staff at Mark’s Work Wearhouse were also struck by the woman’s generosity as she emptied rack after rack, filling her shopping cart.

“Are these the warmest you have? Ok. Empty them. All of them...Oh, your carts are so small.”

Store manager Chris Ewart described it as “unbelievable.”

“I’ve never seen anything like this, never. And I’ve been here five years. Even our business accounts, nothing like this.”

Mr. Ewart decided to offer the woman a 15 per cent discount and also donated 25 packages of three-pair socks free of charge.

“If she’s giving to charity, I can do something on my end.”

Employee Bobbie Jo Hawkes got so caught up in the excitement, she added two more packages of three-pair socks to the parcels, paying out of her own pocket.

“It’s not much, but...” she said to the woman. “This is so nice of you,” she said to the woman. “Wow, I just can’t get over that. It’s just so amazing.”

“That’s a good deed-and-a-half,” agreed coworker Dwight Burke, who helped load the bags into the woman’s vehicle, cramming them in until they reached the roof.

“Charity is not only money or clothes, it’s love and kindness also,” said the woman.

Reach our reporter
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Good Samaritan goes on shopping spree

by Bobbi-Jean MacKinnon - Saturday, January 17, 2004

TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL New Brunswick, Canada www.canadaeast.com



Photo caption: Less fortunate people will benefit from the thousands of dollars a generous area woman spent at Mark's Work Warehouse Friday night in Saint John. Greg T.Marks / Special to the Telegraph-Journal

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SAMARITAN:

‘The Lord gives you, you share it’



Photo caption: Jean Claude Isaac, a grateful recipient of an anonymous donor's generosity, tries on a new snowsuit Friday night at the St. James Street Salvation Army.

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