



**SHELBY GIRL
 LAUNCHES HER
 OWN BEAUTY
 LINE/4A**

Shelby Township's 'giving tree' returns

Donations to benefit Samaritan House

BY SARAH WOJCIK
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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — A holiday tradition that began last year will return to the lobby of the Shelby Township municipal building, located at 52700 Van Dyke Ave., south of 24 Mile Road.

Donation bins will surround the township's Christmas tree, which also will serve as a "giving tree" decked with tags noting desired items for the Samaritan House in Washington Township, which serves needy families in northern Macomb County.

Deputy Supervisor Brad Bates said the initiative was hugely successful last year, surpassing organizers' hopes for the event. He said "Santa," or Clerk Stan Grot, dressed as the big guy in red, delivered two carloads of donations to the Samaritan House.

This year, township officials hope for three carloads of goodwill from Shelby Township residents,



Supervisor's Office intern Courtney Walker stands beside Shelby Township's giving tree, which is now accepting donations of nonperishable food and personal care items for the Samaritan House in Washington Township.

Photo provided by Brad Bates

Bates said.

"It's an outlet for the community to give something small for the holidays," he said. "We were initially thinking of not doing it this year because of the construction (of new countertops) in the lobby, but (Supervisor Rick) Stathakis said we have to do it. If

we miss out on year two, it's not a tradition."

Bates joked that he tasked himself with covering the tree and donations to keep them free of construction dust. The installation of new counters is scheduled to close the municipal building offices on Fridays in December, with

crews working after hours throughout the week and all weekend.

Bates praised Supervisor's Office intern Courtney Walker for creating the tags for the giving tree and setting up the donation

boxes. He said the township had already received donations for the Samaritan House, including a box of shampoo, and that Eisenhower High School students took a flier.

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Photo provided by Brad Bates

Shelby Township Supervisor Rick Stathakis shakes the hand of "Stanta," otherwise known as Clerk Stan Grot, who stepped in to help with the township's inaugural giving tree initiative last year.

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Kathy Wojcik, Samaritan House event coordinator, said that the non-profit food pantry greatly appreciates the donations collected by Shelby Township.

"Most of our clients are on food stamps and can't buy toilet paper, shampoo, dish soap, paper towel, things like that, and we have to buy it if it's not donated," Wojcik said. "That stuff is expensive, and everybody needs toilet paper."

Wojcik said the Samaritan House has already been blessed this year by being the beneficiary of many canned food drives.

Among the list of goods to donate are nonperishable food items and personal care items. Important items include oatmeal, coffee, soup, pasta sauce, diapers (sizes 3-6), toothbrushes, deodorant and toilet paper.

The township will deliver the items after Dec. 22.

For more information about the giving tree, call the Supervisor's Office

at (586) 731-5154.

For more information about the Samaritan House, call (586) 336-9956 or visit www.samaritanhousemichigan.org.

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Editor's note: Kathy Wojcik has no relation to Staff Writer Sarah Wojcik.