

From left, Charlotte Smythe, a first-time volunteer with the Wee-Cycle It Consignment Sale, and Grace Cottrill, a volunteer who is helping her mother, Liz Cottrill, a consignor.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Don't throw old kids clothes away, 'Wee-Cycle' them

BY CAROLYN R. WILSON
Correspondent

In 2008, Alicia Arney had no way of knowing her idea to recycle children's clothing and toys would end up improving the lives of so many people three years later.

Arney, who created Wee-Cycle It Children's Consignment, has watched the Abingdon seasonal sales expand each year with as many as 225 consignors registered for the two-day spring sale on Friday and Saturday at Woodland Hills Christian Church. Friday's sale is 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday's sale is 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with

half-price hours on selected items from 2 to 5 p.m.

"The most wonderful thing about this event is seeing God's hand at work," said Arney. "The consignment sales help families buy and sell quality clothing at bargain prices. That's especially important during this economic downturn." Arney said some of the items for sale include bedroom suites, cribs, outdoor plastic playsets, strollers, high chairs, exersaucers, a battery-operated four-wheeler, and name brand, quality clothing.

Children's clothing and items leftover from the sale are donated to Ecumenical Faith in Action to help

families in Washington County, Va. This year, Arney also has invited seven guidance counselors in the Washington County Public Schools to choose from the leftover items to serve children from low-income families.

After consignors receive 70 percent of the selling price, the remaining proceeds benefit the Woodland Hills Christian Church in Abingdon. Sharon Shipley said she and 22 other church members used the money to build a water cistern for families in the Dominican Republic last

See **WEE-CYCLE**, Page A2

Wee-Cycle

From Page A1

summer. While they were there, the church members purchased a new set of tires for a minister who drove the natives to and from a nearby city.

In addition, customers at the upcoming sales are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items for the "Kids' Cupboard" Backpack Program, which is sponsored by Feeding America. Suggested food donations include jars of peanut butter, granola and breakfast bars, pudding cups, and juice boxes. The program helps meet the needs of hungry children at times when other resources are not available. The food items are discreetly distributed to children on the last day before a weekend or holiday vacation. Arney said food donations left at the Wee-Cycle It sale will benefit children at Abingdon and Rhea Valley Elementary schools every other week.

Baldwin is aware of three huge consignment sales in Knoxville, but doesn't believe they benefit other causes. "Those large sales seem more complicated. I enjoy the Abingdon sale because it runs so smoothly. I always find wonderful deals on children's clothing. And, the sale is a good excuse for me to come back home," said Baldwin, who used to reside in Abingdon.

This is Sykes' second year participating in the consignment sales. The most she and her husband have made at a sale is a little more than \$500. This year, they are bringing baby items, high chairs, bedding, games, sleeping bags, books and movies. Because of the long drive, her husband will drop off their items in Abingdon on Tuesday evening and Sykes will shop at the preview sale for consignors

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Alicia Arney,
creator of Wee-Cycle It Children's Consignment

on Thursday evening.

Teresa Herndon said she and her sister-in-laws Jennifer Herndon and Christy Herndon wouldn't think of missing one of the consignment sales. Each of them likes to shop for clothing for their children, as well as sell items no longer needed. Herndon said they have made plans to shop together at the sale this weekend. This time, she's looking for toys for her 19-month-old boy, Zach.