

10 THRIFTY PLACES TO SHOP

Treasure hunt or find good buys at these area thrift and consignment stores

By Kelly Federico
Of The Morning Call

Shopping at retail stores makes me break out in hives. Instead, I go treasure hunting mostly every weekend at thrift stores, searching for deals as I rifle through lengthy racks, peer into numerous boxes and peruse packed shelves. It's a hobby, but it also saves me a lot of money.

With a stormy economic climate, I'm not alone. More and more families are turning to thrift and consignment shops to clothe their families. Business is booming.

Whether you'd like to trim some fat from your budget or need a new avocation, here are 10 great thrift and consignment shops in the area to get your resale adventure started.

A note of distinction: Thrift stores sell donated clothes and use the money for different causes. Consignment shops accept only certain clothing and when it's sold, a portion of the selling price goes to the original owner.



ONCE IS NOT ENUFF in Emmaus sports a great selection of hats.



Photos by Rich Schultz The Morning Call

THE ATTIC, a buy/sell/trade store in Bethlehem, features trendy labels for the college-age set.

Where to find clothing, furniture and more

SALVATION ARMY FAMILY STORE

1195 Mickley Road, Whitehall
610-434-9560

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

A dazzling, massive selection organized by color and type, but not by size, so digging is a requirement. Tons of clothing plus bathing suits, uniforms, Halloween costumes, linens and plenty of furniture in good condition. Very clean store, with a friendly staff.

■ **Average prices:** \$5-\$7 for pants, \$4-\$7 for tops, \$2-\$3 or less for baby clothes, \$5-\$7 for men's suits and blazers.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothes, furniture.

■ **Pricing specials:** Wednesdays are family days; half off designated colored tags.

NOVA THRIFT SHOP

1628 Swamp Road, Fountainville
215-249-8000

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

This shop, which benefits victims of sexual assault and other serious crimes in Bucks County, features a solid selection of designer labels, such as Banana Republic. You can put together a pricey looking outfit for less than \$15. The housewares are good for a treasure-hunting excursion.

■ **Average prices:** \$4 for shoes, \$4-\$9 for

VIDEO



Take a look around The Attic in Bethlehem.

themorningcall.com

shirts, purses under \$6.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, jewelry, household knick-knacks.

■ **Pricing specials:** Thursdays are bag

RULES TO THRIFT BY

If it's your first foray into shopping at thrift and consignment shops, here are some tips to make the most of the experience.

■ **Know what you're looking for.** Combing through tons of racks can be intimidating for neophytes, so have a plan.

■ **Used is beautiful.** Most of the items at thrift stores are in good shape, and the items at consignment shops are as close to brand new as you can get.

■ **Be patient and visit frequently.** You may have to make several visits before you find exactly what you want, but resale shops get new items all the time. At department stores, you have to wait for a new season.

■ **Have cash on hand.** Many now accept credit cards, but some don't.

■ **Go with friends.** Make it a day and visit a few stores.

■ **Merchandise is sold "as is."** So inspect carefully, and if the shop has dressing rooms, use them. Zip those zippers and check those buttons.

■ **Enjoy the hunt.** Know that your combing will pay off and you'll find a treasure for a song.

■ **Be creative.** Many household items can be reused as something different. See their potential.

■ **Don't feel like you have to buy something.** With prices so low, the urge to buy can be very strong. Be sure you love something before you buy it.

STORES

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days, meaning \$5 for a bag of whatever you find — clothes, housewares, books — in the back room. Children's pieces are 50 cents on Tuesdays.

SALVATION ARMY THRIFT STORE

477 N. West End Blvd.,
Quakertown
215-536-1750

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

My pick for the best thrift store in the area. Gigantic selection is type-, color- and size-coded. Merchandise is well priced and there's a good mix of labels and generic fashions. Decent book selection and a great furniture section with substantial pieces in good condition.

■ **Average prices:** \$1-\$3 for a T-shirt, \$5 men's blazer, \$3-\$5 dress shirts, \$5 women's skirts, \$10-\$20 winter coats.

■ **Merchandise strengths:**



Clothing, furniture

■ **Pricing specials:** 50 percent off certain tag colors on weekends.

TWICE AS NICE RESALE COMPLEX

2905 W. Emmaus Ave., Allentown
610-797-6722

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

Encompassing separate men's, women's and clearance shops, the quality selection here changes frequently. Owner Pat Zazo says she's picky about what she accepts, which is done by appointment only. A well-organized inventory makes shopping

easy, and the women's shop has a nice selection of bridal wear and leather pieces.

■ **Average prices:** \$8-\$12 for jeans, \$10-\$20 for a winter coat, \$8-\$12 for shoes. Wedding dresses all marked \$100.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, shoes.

■ **Pricing specials:** If a piece has been on the floor for two months, it hits the clearance store.

THE ATTIC

14 W. Broad St., Bethlehem
610-866-2279

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

This buy-sell-trade haven has a great selection of trendy labels for the college-aged set. Will buy your used clothing for cash or store credit. Large selection of hip jewelry, shoes and bags. A second store in Kutztown is even bigger.

■ **Average prices:** \$7-\$9 shirts, \$12-\$15 jeans, \$28 men's blazer, sweaters are \$10-\$13.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, shoes.

■ **Pricing specials:** Marked down based on when clothes hit the floor.

GOODWILL FASHIONS

Tilghman Square, 4680 Broadway,
South Whitehall Township
610-391-9760

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

A good clothes selection and a quality selection of quirky housewares. This place is also a jackpot for kids clothes. Great find: a cherry wood, six-drawer dresser for \$20.

■ **Average prices:** Most shirts \$4, most pants \$5, men's blazers \$7, housewares 50 cents to \$1.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothes, housewares.

■ **Pricing specials:** Whatever the manager decides. All red apparel was half off in honor of the Phillies' victory the day I was there.

ONCE IS NOT ENUFF

358 Main St., Emmaus
610-967-4383

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

This cozy boutique has a dense collection of well-known labels. Clothes are grouped by type and shoes by color. If you need a formal gown, this is the place to be; most hover around the \$60 mark for a \$300 dress. Also features a great jewelry, hat and purse selection.

THE CLOTHES

are sorted by color at the Salvation Army Family Store in Whitehall.

Rich Schultz
Special to The
Morning Call

■ **Average prices:** \$10-\$12 for jeans, \$9-\$11 for a sweater, \$15-\$20 for a suit.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, jewelry.

■ **Pricing specials:** Prices go down considerably when the garment has been on the floor for two weeks.

VIA THRIFT

1583 Lehigh St., Allentown
610-437-1612

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

This recently opened store has a solid selection of clothing staples priced right. It's on the small side, but worth a look because the pieces are quality. Even for thrift, prices are amazingly low. Also has a nice selection of purses.

■ **Average prices:** \$2-\$5 for women's tops, \$5 jeans, men's blazers and polos.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, general treasure hunting

■ **Pricing specials:** Different every day and are posted on the door. The day I visited it was 30 percent off everything, 50 percent off kids clothing.

THE GOOD BUY GIRLS

1752 W. Allen St., Allentown
610-434-5868

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

The emphasis is on vintage at this West End consignment shop. If you've got some extra cash, this is the place to splurge on trendy duds from labels such as Ann Taylor and Ralph Lauren or on estate jewelry. They stock juniors through women's sizes as well as some men's retro wear. Venture to the back for a dynamite selection of vintage gowns and furs.

■ **Average prices:** Jeans \$18-\$20, purses \$25-35.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Clothing, especially vintage, and furs.

■ **Pricing specials:** Seasonal: Now it's 20 percent off all suedes and leathers.

VIA THRIFT — FOUNTAIN HILL

1401 Broadway, Fountain Hill,
610-866-6776

■ Why it's a thrifty person's paradise:

A big, organized store where all items are very inexpensive — a must-visit for treasure hunting. A dedicated kids section features clothes, books and toys. Items found here (and purchased by a thrifty companion) included a Strawberry Shortcake jar for \$1 and a vintage suitcase for \$3.

■ **Average prices:** \$3-\$4 for all tops, 20 cents for cassette and VHS tapes, 50 cents for paperbacks, 6-for-\$1 records.

■ **Merchandise strengths:** Books, housewares, vintage furniture and various random items worth hunting for.

■ **Pricing specials:** Vary per day and posted on a whiteboard. The day I visited, it was 50 percent off housewares.

Guide to the

Lively Arts

Music

• **Wister Quartet with Alan Krantz, Guitar** - Presented by The Chamber Music Society of Bethlehem, Foy Hall, Moravian College South Campus, Main & Church Sts., Bethlehem. Friday, November 7, 2008 at 8:00 p.m. The quartet, which has been enthusiastically embraced by our audiences for over two decades, along with Mr. Krantz, has prepared an exciting Spanish themed program which includes a number of tangos and a world premiere of "Tango Noir," composed by Mr. Krantz. Tickets are available at the door or on-line at www.LVArtsBoxOffice.org (\$25, \$20 seniors, \$5 students with i.d.). ARTix Welcome! For more info, visit us at www.cmsob.org or 610-435-7611.

• **Deborah Voigt, soprano** - Presented by Moravian College Music Institute. Foy Concert Hall, Main & Church St., Bethlehem. Wed. Nov. 12, 2008 - 7:30 p.m. The world renowned soprano, with Ted Sperl, piano present *American Songbook*, featuring well known songs from a variety of Broadway musical productions, such as *The Music Man*, *Follies* and *Showboat*. Will she be waring the controversial "little black dress"? Only those in attendance will find out for sure! Admission: \$50 reserved seating. 610-861-1650. www.moravian.edu/lvartsboxoffice.org

• **Kronos Quartet** - Present by Williams Center for the Arts, Lafayette College, corner of High & Hamilton Streets, Easton. Wed. Nov. 19, 2008. 8:00 p.m. Kronos, the visionary contemporary music ensemble from San Francisco, performs George Crumb's iconic "Black Angels," along with three new works by European women composers from their Carnegie Hall partnership. Tickets \$25. 610-330-5009. www.lafayette.edu/williamscenter.

• **The Dallas Brass - American Musical Journey** - Presented by Allentown Community Concert Association Series. Parkland High School Arts Center, 2700 N. Cedar Crest Blvd. Fri. Nov. 21, 2008. 7:30 p.m. The Dallas Brass magic and enthusiasm is contagious. Classical to Jazz. Prestigious six member ensemble. Student Educational Outreach and evening performance participation. Limited Seating. Tickets \$30. 610-395-8379.

• **"Salute the Troops Concert"** - Presented by the Allentown Band, Ronald Demkee Conductor. For Hall, Moravian College. Sun. Nov. 9, 2008 - 8:00 p.m. Patriotic selections. Also, soloists Frank Kaderabek, Trumpet - "Tribute to Harry James;" Steve Reister, Clarinet - Schindler's List;" and the Moravian Choir, Paula Zerkle, director. Sponsor-Bethlehem Morning Star Rotary Club, proceeds benefit The New Veterans Wing at Victory House of Lehigh Valley. Tickets \$10 at door. 610-882-2466. www.allentownband.com

• **Sinfonia's Gala** - Sat. Nov. 15 presents the Pennsylvania premiere of Paul McCartney's new oratorio "Behold My Heart" at Allentown Symphony Hall, 7:30 p.m. The performance features soprano, Elizabeth Weigle; the Camerata Singers and members of the women's choir of the L.V. Charter High School of the Performing Arts. Also on the orchestra's program is the Schumann Cello Concerto performed by world class cellist. Gavriel Lipkind and Mozart's Overture to the Magic Flute. Reception following. Tickets \$40 and \$25 with discounts. 610-434-7811 or