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### Business of the Week: Via Thrift Store

Bargain store in Lower Nazareth benefits a non-profit organization for children and adults with disabilities.

By [Anthony Rando](#) [Email the author](#) | April 18, 2011 [Print](#)

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In a tough economy, bargain-hunting is a must, and Via of the Lehigh Valley wants to help you find those great deals while also helping out a good cause.

Via of the Lehigh Valley is a non-profit organization that aids children and adults with disabilities like cerebral palsy, autism and Down Syndrome. Via helps people of all ages, from preschool to retirement, with developmental and physical disabilities.

The services Via offers includes education, employment opportunities and training, leisure activities and much more.

Via is a Latin word meaning “the way.” And the way the organization is partially funded through five Via Thrift Stores located throughout the Lehigh Valley. One of those stores is located next to [Giant](#) in Lower Nazareth.

[Via Thrift Store](#) carries an array of second-hand goods, from clothing, housewares and furniture to books, games and toys. Also for sale in the grab-bag of a store is formal wear, home décor, seasonal merchandise, and whatever other items are graciously donated by Valley citizens.

“One of the best things about shopping at our thrift stores is [that] a lot of people have difficulty making cash donations, especially in this economy,” said Lisa Walkiewicz, spokesperson for Via. “When they shop in our thrift store, they’re helping people with disabilities right in our community to live a life of significance.”

The Nazareth Pike location was previously owned by Good Shepherd for a number of years; a little more than three years ago, the store was sold to Via.

Amy Drosnock, a sales associate at Via Thrift Store, has been working for the company almost as long as the Nazareth location has been open. Drosnock explained that there’s no stigma with thrift-store shopping; she sees customers from all walks of life.

“We have regular customers that drive up in a Lexus,” she said.

All donations are first deemed salable by the staff based on condition before hitting the shop’s floor.

The store accepts any and all types of donations. Clothing is always the biggest donated item, according to Walkiewicz.

“We take any and all clothing in any condition,” Walkiewicz said. “Items that we can’t sell in stores go to the international clothing market, where it gets sent to other countries and people in need.”

In-store merchandise is marked with a colored tag and rotated accordingly to keep the sale items fresh.

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"Every day there's a sale going on. It's all about supply and demand. Whatever we have the most of is what's on sale," Drosnock said. "Ladies' tops are always our biggest sellers."

And the best part about shopping at Via? All -- or 100 percent -- of the store's proceeds benefit children and adults with disabilities.

Via Thrift Store is located at 859 Nazareth Pike. The store accepts cash, Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Personal checks are not accepted.

The store is open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Donations are accepted during regular business hours.

Check out Via on the web at [www.vianet.org](http://www.vianet.org), or find the closest Via Thrift Store near you at [www.viathrift.org](http://www.viathrift.org).

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VIAs are my favorite thrift stores in the area. I am a faithful shopper of both the Nazareth and Bethlehem stores. The store personnel are friendly and helpful. The stores are clean and easy to shop in. Prices are fantastic. I love that my purchases help others. Money well spent!  
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