

The Economy Shop: 101 Years of Volunteerism

My name is Abby Atwood. I am a Masters candidate at UIC in the Museum and Exhibition Studies Department. I have also been a volunteer at the Economy Shop since 2017. Over the last 3 years I have gotten to know how the Economy Shop is run, and more importantly I have learned more about the volunteers themselves and how much time and work goes into running the shop.

For my Capstone project I wanted to highlight these volunteers and share some of their thoughts on the shop, and why they give their time to this organization. Volunteers have been running the Economy Shop for over 100 years, and yet there has not been a record of their thoughts and opinions. The Economy Shop is such an important charitable organization for the Oak Park area, and I wanted to create an online exhibit that documented a snapshot of the volunteers today. I am also hopeful that these surveys will be of some use in the future to another researcher interested in Oak Park history, which is why the paper copies will be donated to the Oak Park River Forest Museum archives.

In this document you will find the full interviews from Economy Shop volunteers who responded to this project in January-March of 2020. The questions each person received are as follows:

Q1. Name / Department

Q2. How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Q3. How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Q4. Why did you become a volunteer?

Q5. What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

Q6. What's your favorite moment/s?

Q7. What's the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

Q8. What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

Q9. The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

Q10. Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

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Q1

Name and Department

Nancy Hines, Sewing and Crafts

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

I first heard about the shop from a neighbor, Georgene Kolar, who was a volunteer in the Basement Emporium. This was about 20 years ago.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

I have been a volunteer since 2005. The shop has not changed substantially in those 15 years, which is a tribute to the wisdom of the founders who started the shop in 1919.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

In addition to Georgene Kolar, two other good friends who were also volunteers at the shop, Catherine Deam and Alison Riff, encouraged me to volunteer.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I have been sewing since my 7th grade Home Economics class, and quilting for almost as long, so my knowledge in those two areas enables me to help many of our customers. Fortunately, we have other volunteers with expertise in knitting, beading, painting, and other crafts to assist customers interested in those areas.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

We have many customers in our room who bring in items they have made with their purchases from our room. We try to take photos of their work and post a "Customer of the Week" sign on our bulletin board so others can see how creative our customers are, and get ideas about what they might make with their purchases. Though we don't have a customer for every week, we do have a collection of dozens of these signs from more than 10 years' worth of sales.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Not difficult, but perhaps frustrating...I often see a customer walk by with a purchase that I wish I had seen before they picked it up. There is so much in the shop that one can never see it all, and it seems that customers invariably walk by with a treasure that I missed.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

I purchase many household and clothing items for myself and my family members. I have made many good friends through volunteering at the shop. I feel good about the fact that we are keeping so much used merchandise out of landfills and getting it into the hands of others who can use it. And I am grateful that we are able to provide financial support to seven worthy, local charitable organizations.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

I think the long-term success of the Economy Shop is owed to the wise women who came up with the idea (101 years ago) of asking their friends to donate items they no longer needed so they could be sold and the profits distributed to five local charities. That model is essentially how we operate today.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

From those who drop off donations, to our staff and volunteers who sort and price those items and to our customers who attend our sales, we have a wonderful group of people all working together to provide much needed financial support to the seven local charitable organizations that are our partners.

Q1

Name and Department

Meg Staven, Good Buys

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

In the 1970s when my children were little

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

6 years

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

The Economy Shop is a great service for all those in our community and beyond. It benefits all the charities it supports greatly.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Ability to organize stock and project what is needed for upcoming sales.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Interacting with my fellow volunteers and customers and getting to know new people

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

[Respondent skipped this question]

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Satisfaction of knowing I helped many charities as well as the people in the community

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Low prices, great variety of quality merchandise

Q1

Name and Department

Jane Costa, Housewares Department

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

From a friend

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

I have been a volunteer for about 3-and-a-half years. I can't think of any major changes. The experience of volunteering has been consistently good.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

In order to help out a friend of mine who was recruiting volunteers for the housewares department

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I can be detail-oriented, and don't mind repetitive tasks. I enjoy interaction with customers on sale days.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Getting to know my fellow volunteers, and also becoming acquainted with our regular customers

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Sometimes when there is a major influx of donations, it requires quite a bit of time to prepare our department for sales.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Social interaction, structuring my time, a sense of contributing to the community

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

The interesting array of merchandise, careful attention to pricing, personable volunteers!

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I enjoy participating in a multi-faceted volunteer experience: earning money for the charities we support, providing bargains and a degree of social interaction for our customers, and maintaining a supportive environment among fellow volunteers.

Q1

Name and Department

Joe Gwozdz, Men's Casual Dept.

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Word of mouth from my wife

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

10 years. Look of room has improved. Different room charity.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Assist in fundraising for room's charity (Animal Care League)

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Good shopping experience for customers

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Humorous/helpful interactions with clients

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Travel in snowy weather (approximately 10 miles)

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Satisfaction in knowing I help reduce hunger with new room sponsor

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Providing variety/excellent value in comfortable setting.

Q1

Name and Department

Donna Morris

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Looking for a place to give kid's things away

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

4 or 5 years—I started as a volunteer in one room and now chair of another. In most of the rooms I see more organization and definition of materials on sale. Some paid staff have changed and there are more regular volunteers in some rooms as opposed to one time volunteers.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I am retired and live in Oak Park. I like that they cover a wide variety of materials. Mostly I like that I am contributing to support organizations in Oak Park that support the vulnerable people in our community.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I love to think about organizing almost anything and I am willing to research ways to be the most successful in meeting my goals.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

When I was gifted with a very competent volunteer who is a regular member of our team and the first time our sales hit \$1,000.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

We have gotten as many as 20 boxes in one day to sort. It used to make me feel bad that so many good items had to be rejected because of some small point of paint or grease. Now I know these items (although can't be sold, can be given to people who could afford to buy them). Also trying to get the pricing right so we get things sold at the best price to reach our goals.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Doing something useful and not having to take the work home with me!

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

The fact that it's a department store. It is mostly run by volunteers. They have high quality items donated. I have a friend in her late 20s who recently move here. I took her on a tour and left her to shop. When I asked how her shopping trip was she was elated - bought a lot and even found a dress that would have cost over \$100 in a retail store for a few dollars. This has happened many times in the few years I've been working here.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

Although I would be there without a social element I have very much enjoyed the company of other people who volunteer there. I have shared information with people who work in other rooms. It creates a connection with the community since I no longer have children in school.

Q1

Name and Department

Women's Better Clothes

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Word of mouth

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

10 years not much as far as I can tell

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

To fill my time in retirement

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

None

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

I love it when I pull out of the boxes beautiful good shape 60s clothes

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Sometimes the bending is tough on my back

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Knowing that my efforts help people who need to afford nicer clothes and also help local charities

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Volunteers!!!! and getting and keeping the word out on the shop's exceptional inventory of so many things

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

Most of the other volunteers are very nice people but not all

Q1

Name and Department

Nancy Clark, Shoes (currently staffed by OPRF Day Nursery)

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

As a board member of the Day Nursery we needed to help staff the department assigned to the Day Nursery (over the years there have been 3 different assignments).

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Since 1996 (24 years)-- Greater flexibility for volunteers, more sales by credit card, elimination of "evening" sales, shift to more sales on Saturdays.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Initially required as part of being a member of the Day Nursery board.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

After time spent in any department that includes working during sales volunteers acquire a sense of what merchandise sells -- especially for departments that have seasonal variations.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

I love seeing customers help each other, and during the time preparing the departments for a sale I am delighted to observe the friendships grow among volunteers.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Dealing with an occasional difficult customer.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Satisfaction that the proceeds help very worthwhile agencies within the community and that the customers find good merchandise for very fair prices. I also enjoy interacting with volunteers who are different from me - some are younger, some of a different background, makes my life richer. As an officer (currently treasurer) I am able to make a contribution towards the behind the scene operation of the shop -- feels good as someone who retired from the paid workforce.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Good values, surprises, creative reuse of items.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

We work and we have fun while doing some good, a great combination.

Q1

Name and Department

Beth McBride, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

From my neighbor across the street

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

About 20 years. It really hasn't changed, just new volunteers as older ones retired.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I found it not only interesting, but fun.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I like organizing and making shelves attractive.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

We do laugh a lot at some of the unusual items that are donated.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Holidays...the volume of small decorations can drive you mad.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

It's not only fun, but the work earns money for our charities, a sense of satisfaction.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

A sense of contributing to local worthwhile charities while selling quality items.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I thoroughly enjoy it.

Q1

Name and Department

Donna Ambrose, Housewares

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Director of Senior Citizens Center of Oak Park/RF

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

4 years approx. It's pretty much the same.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Worthy cause, sociability, satisfaction of helping others

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Good with numbers and values

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

When a customer finds somethings they've been looking for; chatting while we are sorting and pricing

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Wish they had escalators - LOL

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

The satisfaction of maybe making life a little easier for our customers; also, the enjoyment of being with other like-minded people

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Good merchandise at very affordable prices along with helpful, smiling volunteers

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

It's a wonderful experience and I love every bit of it.

Q1

Name and Department

Lisa Sorensen, Toys

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Discovered it nearly 25 years ago after moving to Oak Park.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

12 years.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

After years of bargain shopping, I felt a good way to give back would be to become a volunteer. Exchanging my time for so many good deals.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I have a decent knowledge of toys because of raising four kids, so that helps with pricing things. I also have a sense of patience and good humor which are necessary.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

It is a delight to see children find the "perfect" toy buried amid our collections, and then they dig out their handful of change or crumpled bills to pay for it themselves.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

The most difficult aspect is when the shoppers don't appreciate our mission, and complain about high prices or try to haggle for lower prices.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

I like the fact that by working at the ES, I am supporting seven local agencies at the same time.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

"What's old is new again." "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Both of those slogans could sum up the 101 years of Economy Shop success. But more than anything, I think it's the determination of the volunteers to keep it afloat. Volunteers play many roles, work hard, and understand that ES is an institution that we want to continue to thrive.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

A side effect of volunteering that might be overlooked is that it provides a social outlet for people that otherwise might not feel like they belong anywhere. Each room becomes a real community and develops long-term relationships that extend well beyond our doors.

Q1

Name and Department

Mary Ann Schott, Counting Room/Men's Formal

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Through Animal Care League

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

About 6 years.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

It's a fun place to be.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I was in banking for 20 years before I retired so I bring a lot of experience to the Counting Room. I also did data entry earlier in my career so it helps in recording the credit/ check sales in Excel.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

I get to walk around to each room when collecting the cash envelopes so I have a chance to if there is anything I am interested in buying.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Having the end of day totals balance!

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

There is a nice vibe from all the volunteers so it makes it a happy place to volunteer.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Nice items at a great price!

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

Great place to volunteer or shop!

Q1

Name and Department

Lauren Murphy, Accessories

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

It's two blocks from my house ;)

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

6 years. The shop has not changed much in my opinion. I have moved into the lead role in our room, so there's been some changes there.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I was looking to start volunteering somewhere once my kids were in school full time.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I owned a wholesale children's clothing company for a long time, so I have experience in pricing, sales, and merchandising

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Getting to know all the volunteers in my room and developing such wonderful relationships

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Working Saturday sales when my kids have things going on.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

I love being with people I don't normally interact with. My circle of friends are parents of younger children, so spending time with mostly retirees is a great treat.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

The dedication of the volunteers!

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

Grateful that I can be a part of something so special

Q1

Name and Department

Sharon, Housewares

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Years ago—newspaper. More recently Senior Center newsletter

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

5 years. Different charities. No night sale anymore

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I had time; in the neighborhood; I like resale

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Work ethic

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Finding bargains, seeing friends/neighbors

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Some customers

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Bargains, good feeling when you find something the customer wants

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Bargains, many volunteers

Q1

Name and Department

Housewares

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Friend

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

5 years

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I retired, had some free time, tried it and got hooked.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Knowledge of dept/room inventory via many decades of home experience

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

When we all weigh in to determine what an unknown donation is.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Some patrons don't realize we're all volunteers and hold us up to a standard meant for full-time with benefits workers.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

A good camaraderie with fellow dept volunteers and a shared interest in food and cooking.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Who doesn't love a well-run well-stocked well-organized second-hand store!

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

Great survey. Very well designed. Very thorough.

Q1

Name and Department

Lisa Polk, Men's Formal

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Ingrid Pearson

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Since 2007. Different groups now run different rooms. Also 2 new groups have been added.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

The Animal Care League was offered a room in 2007 and I've been volunteering ever since.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I've been involved with the ACL in many different roles from membership to president in the 35+ years I've been involved with them.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Hearing about the price a picture brought at auction. Also the luncheons

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Having no walkie-talkie anymore. Since our room is so small, we can only have 1 person working. If we need change, a bathroom break, etc.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Enjoy the people

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Great prices, variety of items, location. Merchandise changes often

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I'm grateful for the opportunity to have the ACL there and am happy to be part of its history.

Q1

Name and Department

Alicia, Antiques

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Lived in Oak Park in the mid '80s. Not sure how I found it but was a regular shopper for years.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

2 years. Not much change- that's fine.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I was a shopper since the '80s and when I retired they asked me. I had so much fun shopping so I expected volunteering would be fun too and it is!!

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I am a fast hard worker. Organized. Was a retail store manager. Know the product.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

They are all precious- people knowing you and chatting- the teamwork- the good feeling of getting everything tagged and finished.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Getting up early for marking day- I now live in Chicago.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Friendship- community- shopping- feeling as if I have helped a good cause.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

Providing great items (of all kinds) to people at great prices

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I really look forward to it!!!

Q1

Name and Department

Judy Busic, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Lived in neighborhood

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Two+ years. Leadership Cathy to Ellen.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Retired. Want to be productive and appreciate all the shop offers.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

I love a good bargain. Like to display items in a way that will help them sell quickly.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Finding the right item for customers. Their appreciation for us.

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

Leaving without purchasing something myself. :)

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Getting to know other volunteers, helping raise funds for various organizations.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

The shop provides quality merchandise at good prices. Customers love bargains and the fact that proceeds go to charity. It's a win-win situation.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I love the shop. I'm happy to help there. Enjoying friendships with other volunteers.

Q1

Name and Department

Kathy Atwood, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

I'd shopped there very sporadically in the 1990s so I can't even remember.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Two and one-half years.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

After becoming regular shoppers, my daughter and I decided to take our involvement in the shop one step further.

Q5

What unique quality or insight do you think you bring to your department?

Because I'm a musician, I always price the musical instruments.

Q6

Describe your favorite moment(s) at the shop.

Marking days are always fun because the Emporium people are so great to work with. But shopping days are fun down there too, especially because our interesting items bring in very interesting people!

Q7

What's the most difficult aspect of working at the shop?

The fatigue. It's hard work!

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering at the shop?

Positive interactions with good people, the benefit of shopping early on sorting days.

Q9

What do you think is the reason for the Economy Shop's long-term success?

It's a win-win situation. High quality items at low prices; recycling; all proceeds go to charity; only open three days per month so it's not too time-consuming for volunteers but it provides enough work to make it seem worthwhile.

Q1

Name and Department

Ellen, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

From other volunteers

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

1 ½ years

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Always volunteered – New to Oak Park so I wanted to get involved.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

Had experience in “Second Mile Shop” back home. And I enjoy people and helping them!

Q6

What’s your favorite moment/s?

Helping shoppers find something they treasure or need.

Q7

What’s the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

Not enough space for all our donations!

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

- Enjoy working with other volunteering
- Enjoy meeting out "shoppers"
- Thrilled when I help someone find that certain item.

Q9

The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

Kindness of staff- providing service to community.

Q1

Name and Department

Christiane Metzger, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

First heard about the economy shop through my daughter, who had been shopping here.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

Have been a volunteer since 2012. Since then, the shop has many new volunteers and all the departments have had renovations to make the shop much better.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

Always loved to identify things people donate, and research what they are used for and how and where they were made.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

A keen insight in recognizing valuable things.

Q6

What's your favorite moment/s?

Marking day and coffee

Q7

What's the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

Dealing with customers (very few) that are not nice.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

Being involved with other volunteers and customers

Q9

The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

Variety of things we sell at unbeatable prices.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

I love the Economy Shop.

Q1

Name and Department

Jacqueline Elder, Basement Emporium & Good Buys

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

I can't remember but I know a friend told me.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

I have been here 2 years. It has provided structure, purpose, and I have made the BEST friends!

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I retired and had the time and energy. And it is a NATURAL ANTI-DEPRESSANT for me.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

A little knowledge about art.

Q6

What's your favorite moment/s?

-Singing with Judy Basic on Saturday afternoons.

-Laughing my ass off with Donna and friends

-Love all the great buys I get.

Q7

What's the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

Xmas time – All those decorations make me crazy.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

I get more than I give:

-Great stuff

-Great Folks

-Great customers

Q9

The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

Prices are great and we volunteers are FAB!

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

They treat us well here.

Q1

Name and Department

L.A.V, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

[Respondent skipped this question]

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

1 ½ years. – Same no change

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

I love the fact that it serves the poor and helps the public to escape high retail costs.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

Regular

Q6

What's your favorite moment/s?

Sharing friendship!

Q7

What's the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

There is no hard part.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

I know that I am helping others to live with all the good that takes place.

Q9

The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

Charity, helping people to pay less and great workers

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

It is love, friendship and charity.

Q1

Name and Department

Donna G. Kanter, Sewing

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

Through my dear friend George Ann Zussman

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

10 years

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

George Ann encouraged me, and I must say, I love it.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

I show up and then some.

Q1

Name and Department

Gail Hague, Basement Emporium

Q2

How did you first hear of the Economy Shop?

When I was a member of the Board of at Hephzibah Children's Home, we volunteered there in the Children's Room on the 1st floor.

Q3

How long have you been a volunteer? How has the shop changed since you started?

I've been a volunteer since the early 70s. Then when I became an auxiliary board member of West Suburban Hospital, I volunteered in the "Housewares Room" – and then in the "Casual Men's Room" – Now in the Basement Shop.

Q4

Why did you become a volunteer?

At first, because it was part of the organizations service, although voluntary.

Q5

What unique insight do you think you bring to your department?

I love to interact with people. I owned a shop in River Forest and always had a job from high school on, so I just like being there. It's a wonderful establishment.

Q6

What's your favorite moment/s?

I think Marking Days are fun and not as hectic as the Sale Days are. I have met some interesting customers there. Always fun and conversations – some short, some long.

Q7

What's the hardest part of working at the Economy Shop?

We get so much merchandise and it's hard to find the space to display it. A lot of overlapping, very crowded.

Q8

What do you personally get out of volunteering/thoughts on volunteering?

It's fun to give--even more than get, most of the time. Everyone, almost, is so excited to find the right thing.

Q9

The Economy Shop has been running for 100 years, what do you think is its key for success?

-It's social for a lot of people

-It's fun to get a deal

-And now, these times are hard on everyone

-I always find items to admire and purchase.

Q10

Anything else you wish to say or comment on being a volunteer at the Economy Shop, or the Economy Shop in general?

The volunteers are so nice especially in the Emporium and Sewing, Toys and Books. I love that we get to help the agencies. It's a great place.