

Dream Home Charities looks to help the those in need year round

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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WOOD RIVER - Dream Home Charities has recently made a commitment to help those in need year round.

In addition to events like their annual Fill Santa's Semic, which will be on Saturday, December 2 this year, Dream Home Charities has decided to expand into a new building.

Their vision is to create a place that could be comparable to a department store to help those in need of food, clothes, personal hygiene products or even paying utility bills. All the items would be free and there would be no salaries, admin fees or any kind of pay outs.

"The building itself, we're still in search of," Sherry Gilleland, founder and President of Dream Home Charities, said. "We've been trying to raise money for a year now or reach out to the community to see if there is anyone that has a vacant building that they'd be willing to let us use, or if somebody has a piece of land that we could build on."

Gilleland said once a building or a piece of land becomes available, the Dream Home Charities building would be able to open immediately to start helping the community.

"We could open today if we had the building," Gilleland said. "We have volunteers that are already on our list, that have said they want to volunteer to help the charity so that we continue to have every penny donated stay to help those in need."

With the number of volunteers already offering their time to the Dream Home Charities building, Gilleland said it speaks tremendously of the community and the support of neighbors.

"When I'm talking to people and they ask me how I feel about my community, I tell them I honestly live in a community that is one of the best in the United States," she said. "When there is a call out for help we have not just one person, not just two people but multiple people coming to help."

Gilleland said until a building is found, Dream Home Charities will focus on their other fundraisers like the annual Fill Santa's Semi on Saturday, December 2, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 543 East Ferguson in Wood River.



Over the years Fill Santa's Semis has continued to grow more than Gilleland had imagined.

"Last year we filled two and half semis," Gilleland said. "Over the years its gotten bigger and better. We started out with just a trolley, from the trolley we went to the school bus. Then we filled the school bus so we thought we'd try a semi. Then it was two semis and then last year two and a half."

Gilleland said she encourages people to come out to fill the semi if they've never been, just to see how generous the community can be.

"It's so inspirational and gives you such a good feeling," she said. "People pull up and just pop their trunks and there is loads of stuff. It truly is a miracle."

More information about Dream Home Charities and this year's Fill Santa's Semi can be found on the [website](#) or on their Facebook [page](#).