

Scarf bombing - A grassroots way to keep Alton warm this winter

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON – If someone finds a nice hat, jacket or pair of gloves hanging around Alton in the coming weeks, don't worry, it is not lost, but anyone is welcome to find it.

Alton Main Street Promotions Co-Chair Sally Kirbach is working with the Riverbend Yarn Bombers (formerly the Alton Yarn Bombers) to help those who need a little help

keeping warm during these long winter nights. For the fourth year running, the group is “scarf bombing” the town – meaning they are going to place warm articles of clothing across the area. Kirbach said she is aiming for places she knows are frequented by many of Alton's homeless as well as those among us who cannot afford proper winter clothing.

Monday morning, Kirbach was carefully adding tags to a collection of knitted hats and scarves. Each declared the item was not lost, adding whoever found it is willing to keep it. This year, Kirbach said she is going to distribute them along Washington and College as well as Broadway and the area around Lincoln Douglas Square.

Due to the anonymity of the process, Kirbach said she is unsure of the impact the efforts have on the area, but she said she trusts items to find where they need to go.

“Once, I was hanging these up, and I saw a woman walk by with a stroller, and she asked what I was doing,” Kirbach said. “I told her I was hanging up clothes for people to take. She asked if anyone could have them. I said yes, and she took a scarf. I saw the relief instantly hit her face, and it was great.”

Kirbach also spoke about some of the places she has seen a woman sleeping in a tent in Uptown Alton, adding she wanted to go to areas most in need of the help.

Anyone wanting to donate items to the scarf bombing is invited to contact Kirbach via Facebook Messenger. She said a potential drop off location for the drive could be at the Post Commons, located at 300 Alby Street in Alton.