Letter *from the* Editor

Kate Chadwick shares some personal insight into this month's theme



Once upon a time (summer of 2015, to be exact) a magazine contributor pitched a story idea to her publisher about clothes shopping at thrift stores around West Chester. To her surprise and delight, he approved that story, gave her a budget, and best of all, allowed her to keep the clothes. Given that said contributor is a consignment shopper from way back, this was most excellent.

Fast forward to the present day, the contributor is now the editor and sourcing a charitable organization to feature in our annual holiday shopping guide. (The editor-contributor is me, hi.)

I was a bit taken aback when Woman's Exchange showed up in my search for local charitable organizations. I'd never visited this consignment shop before, but not because I was intentionally avoiding it. I often park on Church Street—but often when the store is closed, apparently. Further, my primary consignment shop goal is clothing, and, judging by the window displays, this one carried home décor, jewelry, accessories, and the like. But as you'll see in our story, it's so much more than that, from its history, to its mission, to the day-to-day operations. Please add this worthy little shop to your regular borough shopping rotation if it isn't already on it. The best part about charity is its ripple effect, and a visit to Woman's Exchange is a pebble in a pond of positivity.

Given that editors/contributors sit in front of computers reading and writing all day, it's easy for us to fall into the trap of doing everything online—including shopping. The convenience provided by our devices can make our lives and tasks feel streamlined. But can you really streamline…joy? There's something about the tactile, visual, aural, and in some cases olfactory experience of shopping—especially for others—that makes what could be considered an errand or even a chore a more joyful experience.

We visit with a couple of newer businesses in town, The Green House and Solome—two buzz-worthy new additions to the retail scene here. It's easy to take for granted the basic houseplants that inhabit our windowsills and the sweatshirts in our drawers. That's why a visit to a shop where plants are front and center, and inhabit artful, handmade pottery, is so refreshing. And what if you knew—really knew—who made that outfit hanging in your closet? Would your daily ritual of getting dressed be richer and more meaningful? Isn't this time of year when the little things are supposed to become the big things?

What if, like me, you're not particularly into and/or good at shopping? We're here to save the day, and you're welcome. If you're Santa, consider us your trusty elves; if you're Ebenezer, consider us your trusty…ghosts. And when we say "trusty," we mean it. We've been at this shopping guide business since 2012, and we are fairly confident that you'll find something for at least one someone on your list in these pages (even if that someone is you). At the very least, you'll find a whole lot of inspiration.

See you out under the festive lights—have a healthy and happy holiday season, and thank you for reading *The WC Press.*

The Press

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." –JFK

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We've hidden "A Few Of Our Favorite Things" (think *The Sound of Music*) throughout the magazine. Find all 12 icons, and you could be the winner of a Saloon 151 gift card by emailing your answers to contests@thewcpress.com. The first one is a freebie:



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