

Local couple presents annual food, clothing drive to benefit community

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Quentin T. Howell and his wife, LaTonya Howell, never forget for a moment that the needs of Baldwin County are great.

This year marks the third year the local couple has put together a winter food and clothing drive to serve Baldwin and surrounding county areas. Last year, the clothing drive was located at Allen's Market, but because of the need in the community, the Howells have decided to relocate to a larger facility to better serve the needs. The event provides clothing, shoes, toys and monetary funds to those who need help this holiday season.

"One of the most profound things last year was that we had a line of people down the street. The need is large and the facility has to get larger to accommodate the need," Quentin Howell said.

"We've branched out a little more this year and have decided to host the drive at the National Guard Armory. We had so many donations last year, and the amount of people that we served last year was extensive," wife LaTonya said.

The clothing drive was started out of the Howell's own pockets, but the drive has expanded due to community and business support. The drive is set up like a department store, with separate areas for clothing and food. Howell, who is also an area radio personality for Love 103.7 FM, will also host a live remote the day of the clothing drive.

"We will have on-air personalities giving a live remote and we are very excited about that," he said. "We are so thankful for the businesses that have donated goods and monetary donations. GCP Express has a raffle going on for a tablet. To be entered in the raffle, all you have to do is bring in a donation of food, clothing or money to be entered into the raffle."

The clothing drive will be from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Saturday. Thirty baskets of food will go to predetermined families that the Department of Family and Children Services have notified. The clothing drive is open to everyone and completely free to Baldwin County and surrounding areas.

"Last year we had dry goods that we handed out to everyone," LaTonya said. "That was something that we were so glad that we could do."

The Howells want to remind everyone of the needs the community faces.

"I'm glad to be able to help my wife who is spearheading this project. Too many people forget that we have a need all year long. We've been committed to helping

the many people who are unemployed and we are trying to fulfill our Christian duty,” Howell said.

“We are accepting all clothes, shoes, accessories, school uniforms and baby clothes. So many of our donations are brand new items that have never been worn before. It is going to be such a fun day, and we will remember those who have been forgotten,” LaTonya said.

The drive is still in need of volunteers before the event to help categorize and organize the donations.

To donate to the clothing drive, bring donations to Howell's Medical at 630 Merriwether Road, across from Victory Baptist Church. For larger donations, pick up can be arranged. For more information, call (478) 414-1120.