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# Annual Special Needs Benefit yard sale is Aug. 25

By Dan Baer / The Daily Item

LYNNFIELD - The 20th annual Special Needs Benefit Yard Sale has been scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 25 at the Lynnfield Center Meeting House, and organizers are beginning the process of collecting donations for the event.

Frances Soderberg began the yard sale in 1987 as a way to raise money for special needs children, school programs and charities that she came in contact with while caring for her own daughter, Karen, who has Down syndrome.

Over the years, Soderberg says, the event has raised money for countless charities, including the American Red Cross, where she donated all of the funds from the 2001 yard sale to benefit victims of the Sept. 11 attacks.

"It has grown from a small nucleus to kind of an all-encompassing fundraiser," she said. "It is very diversified."

Soderberg, who runs Soderberg Insurance Services on Broadway, said the funds are often donated to schools that do not have funds earmarked for after school programs for special needs children.

Many of the special needs children, including Karen in the past, have helped out with selling items at the yard sale, and become very involved with the day's events.

The yard sale consists of useful items donated from community members that are moving, redecorating or just looking to get rid of some clutter in their homes. Soderberg said there is no restriction to what can be donated, but she suggests that items be in relatively good shape so that people will be interested in purchasing them.

She requested that residents with donations try and hold on to the items until the day before the yard sale, because organizers are short on storage space. Soderberg has the Meeting Hall rented for the previous night, so volunteers will be taking donation items that evening for overnight storage.

For more information, to donate items or to volunteer call Francis Soderberg at 781-334-3437 or Soderberg Insurance at 781-593-9393.

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