

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Summer 2020

Many Local Businesses Promote Sustainability Living

Since its founding in 1990, Recycle Rutherford has sought to recognize local businesses that promote sustainable living. An outgrowth of this effort launched the “Spirit of Recycling Award” in 2018. That event was intended to be biennial, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced cancellation of the 2020 awards and banquet.

To recognize businesses this year, we are doing something different. Board members were asked to select businesses that embody the primary principles of sustainability—reduce, reuse, and recycle—in their daily operations. We are featuring these businesses in this newsletter.

Several board members have shopped, consigned, used, and volunteered at the featured businesses and write from first-hand experience.

Remix Consignment Furniture

211 Robert Rose Drive

Murfreesboro, 37129

615-295-2355

<https://www.remixfurniturestore.com>

Hours: M-F 10-6; Sat. 10-5; Sun. 12-5

Remix Furniture is a locally owned family business, says owner Michael Hill, that has evolved since its opening in 2015. Hill started as an employee in what was originally a consignment only store. He purchased part interest in Remix in 2018 and became full owner in 2019. In addition to consignment furniture and décor from individuals, **Remix** carries model home furniture, vintage goods from estate sales, some new décor, and Amish-made new furniture.

Hill explained that his wife, Katherine, does the marketing; his mother is the bookkeeper, and his father, who is retired, gives him a hand or keeps him company now and then. Five individuals comprise the sales staff—a manager and four employees. “It really is a family business,” says Hill. “My brother-in-law also is on the staff.”

Hill says that he prices items very competitively, including the new Amish furniture. “Our prices run consistently lower than other places, and we definitely have an eclectic inventory that changes weekly, even daily.” He explains that the model home furniture is considered “used” although it isn’t. Among the interesting items consigned through the years are a guitar-shaped custom-made table and several items from former Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota. He suggests that if people want to consign items to come

by, call, or email. The website has detailed information. Hill estimates that their stock is roughly 50 percent consignment, 25 percent model home furniture, and 25 percent Amish furniture.

You can shop or sell at Remix!

Although the store was shut down to all in-person shopping for the month of April because of the pandemic, they still had decent sales, Hill says. He attributes this and the fact that July was their biggest month ever to their online and social media presence. “We implemented Shopify in August 2019, so we were prepared to go online. We just didn’t realize what was coming!”

Not only is the store a business success for his family, but Hill sees it as a service to customers and the community. Items are reused, and consumers get the most from their money. Hill says they are diligent recyclers. “I probably learned that from the first owner!” They recycle the large amount of cardboard they receive as well as plastics and paper. “The only thing we send to the landfill is true trash,” Hill states. “Any furniture we don’t sell goes to Habitat or Goodwill. Everyone makes a difference.”

If you are looking for excellent buys in furniture or decorative items or if you have such items you no longer need, consider **Remix**. It’s a win/win situation—you as an individual and the community as a whole both benefit.

The Shoe Fixer

1104 Memorial Blvd. Suite 7

Murfreesboro 37129

Phone: 615-849-5817

Hours: M-F 10-4; Sat. 10-2

Email: theshoefixer@gmail.com

If you want to extend the life of a pair of shoes or repair a purse or handbag or belt, you are fortunate to be in Murfreesboro and have the expertise of **The Shoe Fixer**. The black lettering on the shop’s front window advertises repair of leather goods—shoes, purses, belts, zippers—and luggage. The proprietors, Roger and Misty Burnett, consider themselves “low tech” but are certainly skilled in other ways. They have a business phone number but no website. They have a presence on Face Book but basically rely on *The Yellow Pages* or word of mouth of their local customers.

In addition to repairing many items, they sell shoe and boot polish, leather conditioner, and shoelaces. If

(continued on page 2)

Businesses Promote Sustainability

(Continued from page 1)

you have a broken zipper, clasp, or snap on any household, travel, or camping accessory, there's a good chance it can be repaired—ask **The Shoe Fixer**.

Repair equipment and supplies take up considerable space. The original storefront was 500 square feet, including storage in the back, until a little over two years ago when the space next door became available. Misty insisted they take the leap to expand their premises. In doing so they needed to become creative. Misty started offering pre-owned or consignment items for sale, specializing in cowboy and dress boots, shoes, designer purses, and belts. If the pieces are not sold within a reasonable time, the items are donated to charity with the owner's permission.

Extend the life of leather goods!

At times, a charity will approach them with a need for a special product, such as work boots, and they try to respond if that product is in their inventory. Misty has a good eye for popular brands of footwear and handbags and those with plenty of wear left. She even offers periodic discounts on Facebook.

A shoeshine side business evolved for shoes or boots that needed a meticulous shine without repair. The business offers a special shine service, and clients can drop off shoes or boots during operating hours and retrieve them later that day. A shine is also part of the service for any leather dress shoe or boot that is re-soled.

Not only do the Burnetts help extend the life of leather goods, but they generate very little waste, just a few scraps of materials they cannot use.

Roger began learning the techniques of leather repair in 1989 during a college job at a shoe repair shop in Hickory Hollow Mall. Finding that he really liked the trade, he apprenticed with three local cobblers and started his own business in 1995.

Let's celebrate **The Shoe Fixer**—a business providing valuable services to our community for 25 years.

The Garden Patch at Greenhouse

309 S. Spring St.

Murfreesboro, 37130

615-494-0499

www.greenhousemin.org/garden-patch

Hours: Tu., W, F 10-5; Th. 10-7; Sat. 9-12

Donation Hours: T-F 10-4; Sat. 9-12

The **Garden Patch** is an upscale thrift shop that is part of Greenhouse Ministries. Shoppers return because of the attractive organized displays and unique items available. There is the added benefit of knowing that purchases help others in the community. Clothes and other donations given to Greenhouse are either passed on to clients in need or they are sold in the **Garden Patch**.

All proceeds from the shop go back into Greenhouse Ministries. The shop offers competitive prices on name brand clothing, furniture, household items, toys, and

more. Also, there is a furniture and large appliance store selling high quality items!

Enjoy the Garden Patch boutique!

Established in 1999 by Cliff and Jane Sharp, Greenhouse Ministries seeks to help people move from hopelessness to seeing a way forward. Greenhouse meets the physical needs of clients by giving out food, clothes, furniture, toiletries, bicycles, and other necessities. Then, Greenhouse educates clients by offering adult education classes including computer use, GED tutoring, budgeting, sewing, art, and literacy. Greenhouse connects their clients to other help including job opportunities, housing availability, and resources from other nonprofits. Greenhouse serves everyone without qualification. The nonprofit does not base benefits on income or employment and tries to serve whoever walks through the doors with love and respect.

Andy Pounds, who coordinates Greenhouse's Veteran's Volunteer Program and oversees the physical operation of the complex, says they recycle and reuse in both the thrift shop and the warehouse operations. He explains that they recycle large amounts of cardboard and metal. Also, they recycle clothes they can't use or sell in the store by giving to other charitable organizations like Amvets or Straight Street. They try not to throw anything away but sometimes have to send things to the landfill. Often, they must spend time and money cleaning up and hauling off items dumped after hours because goods get scattered by homeless and other individuals going through them. If it then rains, everything becomes unusable.

Pounds encourages donors to carefully check drop off hours and to never leave items after hours.

In addition to donating clothing and household items, there are many opportunities for volunteers at Greenhouse, including the **Garden Patch**, warehouse, food pantry, bicycle repair, and working with clients. The website states that the operation runs on more than 400 volunteer hours each week.

Whether you choose to shop, donate items you no longer use, volunteer, or all the above, the **Garden Patch** and Greenhouse Ministries offer opportunities to enhance the sustainability of our community while assisting other citizens.

Habitat ReStore

850 Mercury Blvd.

Murfreesboro 37130

Phone: 615-849-5994

Hours: Mon. 12 noon-6; T-F 9-6; Sat. 9 -5

Email: info@rchfh.org

One unfortunate result of the pandemic is that some businesses have had to close, and "we're getting furniture and merchandise from those closings. But at least it's going to a good cause and keeping the unneeded items out of the landfills," says Melissa Cross, development director at Habitat for Humanity, as she described the effects of COVID 19 on Habitat ReStore.

(continued on page 3)

Businesses Promote Sustainability
(continued from page 2)

Cross explains that they had to close for about six weeks “during the initial lockdown, losing about \$1,000 a day. We had a few days where we accepted donations.” She says they also started an online auction, which helped move some items and kept people interested; they expect to set up an online store soon.

“We officially opened back up May 4, and people were definitely ready to bring more donations in after cleaning out their houses for several weeks. And they were also eager to shop! Yes, many were also doing repairs and redecorating (businesses as well as individuals). We did very well during the come-back. There has been a little lull in shopping in the store, but people are still donating quite a lot. Many are redecorating or reducing their clutter,” Cross says.

One of the established features of the store, which is not new, is getting how-to information out via social media and emails with ways for people to recycle, refurbish, recraft, upscale and reuse household items. Cross says, “I had some MTSU interns who were able to do that remotely and still get their credits. One is now doing Facebook Live posts at the **ReStore** and really hopes to attract more college age shoppers who need affordable house goods.”

Cross presented a program to Recycle Rutherford in Fall 2019 and shared ideas for many projects; the program was covered in Recycle Rutherford’s Winter 2020 newsletter, available at www.recyclerutherford.org

Customers or donors can reach the **ReStore** several ways: they can call the number above for information or to arrange a pickup. Information and photos of items are also on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/restoremurfreesboro> , or on the website: <http://www.rchfh.org/restore/>

People can also text “SAVE” to 844-532-5877 and receive an immediate 30% discount on a purchase. They will also get messages about special sales, incoming stock, and Habitat events.

The **ReStore** accepts donations of household goods and resells them to the public where they get *a new life*

and are kept out of landfills. The store encourages people to recycle and shoppers to think about how to reuse and repurpose items. They accept home furnishings and accessories in good condition, working appliances, home office items, building materials, flooring, lighting, commodes, sinks, hardware, and more. They also buy some new items such as area rugs, lighting fixtures, and welcome mats at a discounted price. They offer free pickup for large item donations. Also, they receive surplus goods from big box stores, Amazon, contractors, manufacturers, and supply stores. “The beauty of the Habitat business model is that profits from the **ReStore** fund the administrative costs, so other donations can be used to build affordable housing for families in need,” explains Cross.

Give back through the ReStore!

The **ReStore**, which opened in 2003 when Habitat received a big donation of lumber from Sledgecraft, has a fulltime manager, Josh Chappell, and six part time employees. Cross says, “We estimate that we keep over 560 tons of materials out of area landfills every year. Part of this is educating people about the **ReStore** and how their household items can be recycled and resold to new homes.” When they have donations that can’t be fixed or sold, they take them apart for proper disposal, such as scrap metal recycling. About all they send to the landfill are items that can’t be dealt with any other way; for example, badly worn sofas that often are dumped outside the door.

Recognized with a grant from Bonnaroo Works Fund for the environmental impact of reducing solid waste, **Habitat ReStore** had a display at the 2019 Bonnaroo Arts & Music Festival “where we showcased recycled and upscaled items such as a painted couch, crafted furniture, and fun accessories. It was a big hit with concert goers from around the world,” Cross says.

Whether you’re looking for a practical or fun item for your home, put on your mask (required) and check out **Habitat’s ReStore!** Your support makes a big difference in the community.

Recycle Rutherford Membership Form

I enclose my annual dues to support Recycle Rutherford and receive the newsletter.

- \$25.00 supporter \$15.00 student \$100.00 patron
- I am contributing \$_____ in addition to dues.
- I prefer the newsletter to be emailed and am providing my email address.

PLEASE PRINT:

name _____ amount enclosed _____

address _____

city, state, zip _____

telephone: day _____; evening _____

email _____; volunteer interest _____

Please make check payable and mail to Recycle Rutherford, P.O. Box 1804, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804

4 The Recycler, Summer 2020

Fall Meeting October 26

Since it appears that we will still be in the throes of the pandemic in October, we will meet virtually on Facebook Live. Stay tuned for details in our fall newsletter and on our website.

Also, in the fall issue of *The Recycler*, we will **continue featuring local businesses** that promote sustainability. **If you have a suggestion** for a business to feature, **please let a board member know or submit through our website.**

Public Works Gathering Information

Public Works Committee members received and reviewed 12 responses to the RFI (request for information) during several special meetings in August. Now they are working on an RFP (request for proposals) which is expected to go out in October and be due in 30 to 45 days. They will then hear presentations and presumably choose a proposal and award a bid.

You can watch the meeting on county TV or YouTube channels and contact members with comments or questions.

Cut Plastic Use with Detergent Strips

Doing laundry is an ever-present necessity, but it often isn't an environmentally friendly activity. Not only are many detergents loaded with harmful ingredients, even the eco-friendly ones come in large plastic containers that may or may not be recycled.

Detergent strips offer a plastic-free alternative whose light weight decreases transportation costs and small size saves space. According to reviews, they clean well and are safe for all washing machines.

Tru Earth Eco-Strips cost \$15 to \$16 for 32 strips or loads. For small loads, a strip should be torn in half. Order from <https://wellearthgoods.com/>. They are shipped free in paper packaging. Eco strips are also available from Amazon. At either source, the cost is less for subscriptions.

At this time, no household hazardous waste collection is scheduled in the county.

2020-22 Officers and Board

Recycle Rutherford holds elections each April at the annual meeting; in general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms.

The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the term of each ends. The board meets monthly on first Mondays at 6:15 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. Spring Street.

Rachel Cornett, president
Bonnie Black, vice president
Suma Clark, secretary
Rick Racker, treasurer
Glenn Himebaugh, past president

Board Members:

Linda Hardyman, 2022
Diane Parker 2022
Beth Spivey, 2022

Reminder: To renew your membership, please see the form on page 3. Dues are only \$25 per year. We don't want to lose you!

For more information, go to www.recyclerutherford.org

Like us on Facebook!

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P.O. Box 1804
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