

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Summer/Fall 2019

Habitat for Humanity Puts New Twist on the Three Rs

Meeting Location:

**Heritage Center, 225 West College St.
Monday, October 21, 2019, 7:00 p.m.**

Recycle Rutherford invites members and the public to **hear an informative presentation by Melissa Cross**, director of Marketing and Development for the Rutherford County Area Habitat for Humanity. Through their ReStores, **Habitat adds Repurpose to the traditional Reduce, Reuse, Recycle mantra.**

After over 20 years as a producer for television shows on Home & Garden TV and the DIY Network, Cross joined the Habitat for Humanity team in Rutherford County. She loves showing people how to recycle home furnishings and building materials and how to do décor crafts that **give household items new life – and save them from landfills.**

One of the unique things about Habitat is that proceeds from the Habitat ReStore pay for the administrative costs of the non-profit. Thus, all monetary donations go to the actual building of affordable housing for area residents. **The ReStore keeps more than 560 tons of materials out of landfills annually.**

Items are donated to the store by residents, contractors, and companies and include furnishings, doors and windows, building materials, cabinets, and hardware. Cross says, **“We love showing how to repair, reuse and repurpose all types of household goods.”**

The ReStore received a grant from the Bonnaroo Works Fund to have recycling craft events with groups and artists and then display the “upscaled items” at the Bonnaroo Festival.

The public is invited to this informative meeting. The location is easily accessible on the ground level of the Heritage Center, located less than a block off the Public Square, just down College St. behind Marina’s restaurant. There is plenty of parking in the Pinnacle Bank lot just across College Street.

Next Community Forum Oct. 2

The next community forum on **Solid Waste and Recycling will be held on Wednesday, October 2, 6:30 p.m., in LaVergne at the Multipurpose Building** (located behind City Hall) at 5093 Murfreesboro Road.

Organized by Murfreesboro resident Steve Baughman out of concern for what happens when the landfill closes, this is the third forum. **All interested persons are invited to attend.**

At the first of the forums on April 9, Mayors Bill Ketron and Shane McFarland shared their thoughts and concerns. Ketron expressed support for working toward zero waste through recycling and composting; he said the county is willing to hear proposals from companies that would accomplish these goals.

McFarland dwelt on the economic aspects of trash collection and discussed the addition of a fee. He said that incentives are necessary to get people to recycle and speculated that we might see a recycling pilot program in the next year.

Baughman invited representatives of several groups to speak, including Seema Prasad, who promotes large scale organic composting. Go to <https://resourcecapture.com>

Cynthia Allen, representing Stones River Watershed, expressed concern about the effects of runoff from composting and similar operations.

Jeremy Aber, representing SOCM, explained the group’s support for zero waste, achieved through recycling, composting, reduction, and reuse. SOCM supports the establishment of a Solid Waste Authority.

Founding member Suma Clark represented Recycle Rutherford and delivered the following:

Since 1990, some 29 years, Recycle Rutherford has been trying to get people to recycle! We’ve worked to make citizens aware of the importance of recycling and tried to create and promote opportunities for them to do so. **Hand in hand with recycling are reduction and reuse—the three R’s.**

Recycle Rutherford’s board is drafting a statement summing up what we recommend. **Our recommendations will be based on conserving natural resources and having the least detrimental impact on our environment.**

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Next Community Forum Oct. 2

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It is difficult to know what specific processes will best serve the county. We do commend the county for seeking information about what is being done in other places and urge them to continue to look at creative and innovative solutions.

Although we have not completed our formal statement, Recycle Rutherford recommends that

- **Recycling and composting be major components of a multi-faceted approach to the problem**
- **Weekly garbage pickup be changed to multiple pickups to facilitate the above: food waste once a month, recyclables twice a month, and garbage twice a month**
- **Educating the public be thorough and ongoing and that the county use citizens' groups such as those represented here tonight to help with that**
- **The county seek input from citizens**

Recycle Rutherford urges that all governmental entities: the county itself and the four municipalities—Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, and Eagleville—**cooperate in seeking the most sustainable and feasible solutions in making necessary changes in solid waste disposal.** We call on our leaders to look beyond current concerns and focus on what will be best for the whole county in the future.

The best way to be a part of the solution is to contact your elected officials and urge them to seek input and consider all options. I invite you to pick up a copy of *The Recycler*, Recycle Rutherford's quarterly newsletter. Contact information for the county mayor and commissioners as well as for the mayors and councils or boards of Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, and Eagleville is in the current issue. And you can read more about Recycle Rutherford.

As we face and consider solutions to this serious issue, I encourage us to see this also as an opportunity to do things better, to assure that the environment we leave for our children and grandchildren is healthy and sustainable.

Thank you!

At the July 9 forum, Baughman said that he thinks a citizens committee is needed. Speakers included Pam Furlong, Tennessee Rehabilitation, who said that the recycling industry has jobs for people with disabilities and that she was excited to think that her organization could help with this project.

Seema Prasad, Resource Capture, again spoke, providing more details about the anaerobic digester that is a key component of the operation she proposes.

SOCM (Statewide Organization for Community Improvement) supports having a local facility. The spokesperson reminded the audience that whatever is done is going to cost more than the landfill has, but it is an opportunity to improve.

Republic Services Vice President Dan Jameson spoke and introduced Jeremy Jernigan, new manager at Middle Point. Jameson said that Republic is not the company they once were and hopes they have improved. He pointed out that recycling is not profitable right now because of the lack of markets, but he stated that the company believes there are opportunities for industry in this situation.

Learn to Use Energy Efficiently

Katie McKee, energy advisor for Murfreesboro Electric, spoke at Recycle Rutherford's spring meeting. **She pointed out that the bulk of what we spend on electricity goes for heating and cooling.** For example, out of a \$100 utility bill, \$55 typically will go toward heating and cooling, followed by \$20 for heating water. The amounts spent on lighting, laundry, dishwashing, refrigeration, and cooking are relatively low.

McKee says that householders can control where their money goes by adjusting their thermostats. **She suggests that staying as close to 78 degrees in the summer and 68 degrees in the winter could save up to \$64.00 annually.** This is relatively easy if the inhabitants are gone much of the day to school and work. Programmable thermostats change temperatures gradually and thus are energy efficient.

She showed a chart that illustrated that every degree lower in the summer or higher in the winter results in a 3% increase in cost. Thus, if you choose to cool your house to 72 degrees instead of the recommended 78 degrees, your electricity cost for cooling will increase by 18%.

Other ways to enhance the efficiency of heating and cooling your home include **regularly changing the filters**; every three months is recommended. Being sure that your **duct work is tightly sealed** and free of leaks is important as is being sure that **nothing blocks vents and the return grill.** An annual checkup by a certified technician will help keep your system at top efficiency.

The second highest expenditure on the typical electric bill is heating water. The recommended water heater setting is 120 degrees. **McKee said that an easy way to reduce hot water usage is to take shorter showers and to take cooler ones in the summer.** She suggests running the dishwasher only when it's full; the same recommendation goes for the washing machine; also, it is effective and easier on your clothes to use cold water for washing and rinsing much of your laundry. Insulating both hot and cold-water pipes and using low-flow aerator faucets and showerheads increases your dollar savings.

LED (light emitting diode) bulbs are more expensive to buy but last at least three times longer and use half the energy of incandescent or old-fashioned bulbs. The coloring of the bulbs is important; spend some time reading the packaging and learn what you prefer. Also, the package has information about the wattage or lumens—the higher the number, the brighter the bulb.

A great deal of electricity is wasted by newer electronics which continue to use energy even after they are turned off. **Be sure to unplug your phone charger when it's no longer in use.** Power strips are a convenient way to guard against some of this wasteful use. You can easily turn them off when you're gone as well as during storms.

Be Part of the Solution to Plastic Pollution

There are more than 6.3 billion tons of plastic waste out there, endangering wildlife, waterways, and our own health. **Environmental experts agree that kicking our single-use plastic habit is an ideal first step** toward saving our planet. Make it your goal to give up single-use plastic but be assured that whatever steps you take in that direction will make a difference.

It's okay to start small.

Following are some suggestions:

- **Instead of accepting plastic bags at the grocery, use reusable cloth bags or string bags.** Some stores sell reusable bags; often they are plastic, but they can be reused. There are many sources online. The bags fold flat into a pouch, making them easy to store in your car and carry as you shop.
- **Instead of plastic produce bags, bring reusable ones** made of mesh or muslin. Search online for reusable produce bags, and you'll find a variety available.
- **Instead of plastic wrap, use products such as Bee's Wrap,** made by a company in Vermont by infusing cotton with beeswax, jojoba oil, and tree resin to create a reusable food wrap in beautiful prints. They suggest using the warmth of your hands to soften the wrap and create a seal. Order at <https://beeswrap.com>
- **Instead of getting a to-go box for your leftovers** at restaurants, keep clean **reusable containers** in your car and use those.
- **Support legislation that establishes a bottle recycling bill;** these have been extremely successful in other states.
- **Support bans on plastic bags and polystyrene foam.**
- **Explore the variety of bowl covers or lids** which can be used for storage or microwaving: <https://charlesviancin.com> Made of silicone, the lids form an airtight seal on your containers. Viancin designs the lids based on flowers and other objects found in nature. They are durable and reasonably priced and can be ordered online or found at places such as Bed, Bath, and Beyond, Walmart, or Target.
- **Instead of plastic sandwich, storage, and lunch bags, get reusable containers,** plastic or glass. Clever and useful lunch boxes and bags that include a thermos and reusable utensils are available.
- **Instead of a throwaway cup, lid, and sleeve, bring your own to-go mug** to the coffee or smoothie shop or restaurant. Most places will accommodate this, and a huge variety of insulated and useful cups are available.
- **Instead of buying bottled water** and adding to the glut of plastic waste, **buy a reusable water bottle** and fill it with tap or filtered water. Most water sources in the U.S. are safe.
- **Spread the word! Talk to your family and friends about the importance of reducing plastic in our lives. Set an example! Every person can make a difference. Do your part!**

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.

PLEASE PRINT:

name _____ amount enclosed _____
 address _____
 city, state, zip _____
 telephone: day _____; evening _____
 e-mail _____; volunteer interest _____

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

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New Store Brings No-Waste Shopping!

Nashville's The Good Fill is the area's first zero-waste store. Located at 1006 Fatherland Street, Suite 303, the store opened in July. Customers can bring in bottles or jars and fill them with sustainably sourced products, including detergent, dish soap, hair products, and toothpaste tablets.

Meagan Gill started the business three years ago as an online endeavor. The store also sells reusable glass and aluminum containers. A container is weighed, then filled, then weighed again; the consumer is only charged for the product. If customers order online and choose to buy a container, it will be shipped filled. If the customer plans to use an existing container, the product is shipped in a pouch that is 93% less plastic and comes with postage to return it so that Gill can clean it for reuse.

Gill was a hairstylist for more than a decade and began realizing how much waste she created through her profession. The desire to change our throw-away society led her to research and develop alternative ways. More information is at <https://thegoodfill.co>

Dates to Remember

Community Meeting on Solid Waste

Wednesday, October 2, 2019, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
LaVergne Multipurpose Building (behind City Hall)
5093 Murfreesboro Road, LaVergne

Spring Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, October 21, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Heritage Center, 225 W. College
Program: Habitat for Humanity Puts New Twist on the Three Rs

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, November 2, 2019, 8 a.m. – 12 noon
Murfreesboro Solid Waste Department
4765 Florence Road, Murfreesboro

2018-20 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, 2020

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

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