

Construction salvage, good will and dehumidifiers too

By Karen Klages
Tribune staff reporter

This week, we hear from readers about a "green" Habitat for Humanity program that lets folks donate used/surplus building materials and/or buy them (and contribute to Habitat's works at the same time) and about the lack of green-ness in some older dehumidifiers.



A possible topic for future "Living the Green Life" articles — what to do with usable construction and home improvement materials: Donate them to Habitat for Humanity's ReStore.

I work for ReStore Elgin. We are a building material resale shop — sort of a Goodwill version of The Home Depot. We have 20,000 square feet — everything in the store has been donated by contractors, manufacturers, retailers, distributors and homeowners. We have doors, windows, flooring, tile, carpet, light fixtures, furniture, appliances, plumbing, electrical, lumber, trim, millwork, air conditioners, etc.

Much of what has been donated would otherwise be dumped in landfills (the Kane County recycling coordinator estimates that 80,000 tons of construction waste goes into Kane landfills each year).

Those donating get a tax deduction. We sell the stuff at bar-

gain prices to the general public (some of our customers otherwise would not be able to afford such items). And profits build Habitat homes in the area. Everyone wins.

The environment is a big winner. Especially in our upper-income areas, where people are remodeling entire kitchens — i.e., they don't like the stain color. They are tearing out perfectly good cabinets, granite countertops and appliances. ReStore takes all of that.

ReStore is a branded concept of Habitat for Humanity. There are several in Illinois, but only two in the Chicago area — one in Gurnee (north) and ours in Elgin (west).

— Jan Miller, marketing and procurement director, Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, Elgin

H&G says: The Habitat ReStore in Elgin opened in April of last year and already has kept 144 tons of construction/home materials from entering area landfills. And it has raised/netted \$69,950 (of its \$110,000 goal) toward the building of a Habitat home in the Northern Fox Valley region, Miller told us in follow-up correspondence. Shoppers can find a bonanza of products at great prices: Full sets of gently used maple or oak kitchen

cabinets sell for \$350 to \$1,200. Brand-new ranges from a construction contractor who overbought were selling recently for \$400. It is important to note, though, that supplies are changing all the time.

860 N. State St., Elgin, 847-742-9905, www.restoreelgin.org



LIVING THE GREEN LIFE

The Habitat ReStore in Gurnee (which also opened in 2006, but moved here from a location in North Chicago, where it had been located since 1992) likewise focuses on building materials (doors, windows, etc.). But it also sells quite a bit of flooring (carpeting and vinyl), a limited selection of furniture and, often, a quirky shipment of this or that.

The store recently got 12,000 new wooden toilet seats, now selling for \$3 each. And: a huge stash of environmentally friendly cleaning products — concentrated liquid soaps to clean walls and floors, a hardwood floor stripper, etc. Profits benefit Habitat projects in Lake County.

3545 Grand Ave., Gurnee, 847-249-3160, www.habitatlc.org

And a final note: There is another "store" for used/surplus construction materials in the Fox Valley, unrelated to Habitat. It's called the ReUseIt Center, and it sells similar building ma-

Reader's green tip

My grandmother, Josephine, used to cut strips from bread wrappers, then crochet them into round rugs. They were washable and would last for years.

I still have a brightly colored one. — Carol Thomas, Schaumburg

Want your own string-bag set?

Keep your e-mails coming, telling us of things you do or things you have found to live more greenly (in 100 words or less). We'll pick a random e-mail and send you your own set of five string bags and stuff sack from reusablebags.com so you don't have to use plastic ones stores provide.

By Monday, send e-mails to: home&garden@tribune.com, with "Green ideas" in the subject line.



terials/home-improvement items at discount prices.

Profits benefit the Mid-Valley Neighborhood Improvement Association, which helps low-income homeowners make emergency repairs to their homes.

1530 Hubbard Ave., Batavia, 630-761-4240

H&G TO DO LIST

NEWS TO USE FOR YOUR HOME LIFE

TRY IT: "Sorry, you have to have your designer call..." Often this is what today's do-it-yourself designers hear when they seek upscale home furnishings and fabrics advertised in shelter magazines. That's frustrating for the DIY-ers. But **L.A. Design Concepts**, a full-service interior design company based in Los Angeles, has started providing a letter of introduction for clients, enabling them to gain access to local design center showrooms across the country, such as those in The Merchandise Mart here. This letter states that holders of the letter are clients of L.A. Design Concepts and requests that showrooms provide tear sheets and ordering information on items selected. L.A. Design Concepts then handles purchasing, billing clients 20 percent over wholesale cost. The Merchandise Mart, however, believes consumers get the most out of the offerings at The

Mart when shopping with a professional interior designer, says Jeanne Fisher, managing director of marketing, Design Center Division, Merchandise Mart Properties Inc. To help shoppers find a designer with whom to work and shop, The Mart offers offers Designer Portfolios, an online resource of more than 50 area designers set up to help consumers find a design professional to work with (see www.merchandise.martdesigncenter.com and click on the Design Portfolio logo). But for those who want to go it alone, Frank Keshishian, who founded L.A. Design Concepts in 1988, and originated this service, says, "Many consumers today are more confident and know what they want. A lot of them have good design capabilities and they don't need full design services. This [service] provides them with the ability to shop on their own." Call L.A. Design Concepts at

310-581-3774 or visit www.ladesignconcepts.com.

— Mary Daniels

KNOW IT: Homeowners looking to get educated about lighting design might want to check out this free hourlong seminar starting at 4:30 p.m. March 28 at (and sponsored by) New Metal Crafts, a lighting design, manufacturing and restoration company in the River North/Gold Coast area. The seminar is titled "Effective Uses of Lighting in Residential Applications." And it will address proper location of lighting in a room, the variety of lighting available, "green" lighting and restoration of lighting fixtures among other topics. Presenters include Deerfield-based architect Bud Dietrich, Rick Glickman of Dream Kitchens in Skokie, and Paul Jurkschat, senior lighting designer at New Metal Crafts. Reservations are required by Friday. Call 312-787-6991 or register by



Veuve Clicquot will introduce this limited-edition Karim Rashid-designed loveseat on Tuesday.

e-mail atinquiries@newmetalcrafts.com. 812 N. Wells St., Chicago; www.newmetalcrafts.com

— Karen Klages

BUY IT: In celebration of spring — and what is traditionally considered to be the start of Rose wine drinking season — a glamorous way to sit pretty in pink will be introduced Tuesday by Veuve Clicquot, in collaboration with international design luminary Karim Rashid. The limited-edition pink loveseat, designed by Rashid as a fresh take on an 18th Century armchair, is made in Italy of fiberglass on a metallic base. A single loveseat takes three days to produce. Each comes with a

certificate of authenticity and a serial number and is under warranty. Beginning Tuesday (don't look for it before that date) the loveseat will be available at www.E-Clicquot.com.

— M.D.

SURF IT: It seems like a long time coming, but the American Institute of Architects has (finally) put together a stand-alone Web site (**How Design Works for You**) dedicated to helping consumers navigate the architectural design process. Although the site address is a bit cumbersome, the site itself is anything but. It does a fine job of demystifying the process of selecting and working with an architect on all sorts of projects — in-

cluding building a new home or remodeling an existing one. A local architect finder, information on AIA Contract Documents and a nice chunk of information on sustainable design (including an online video case study of an eco-friendly home in Minnesota) can be found here. Visit <http://howdesignworks.aia.org>.

— K.K.

TELL US: About your house and garden walks. We will publish house walks in April and garden walks in early May. Please send house walk information by **March 26** and garden walk information by **April 2**. E-mail or mail typed information (time, date, place, organization, admission fee, phone number for the public to call as well as the name and daytime phone number of a person we can contact) to:

Home&Garden Chicago Tribune 435 N. Michigan Ave. Chicago, IL 60611

Send e-mail to: home&garden@tribune.com kklages@tribune.com, mdaniels@tribune.com

For more information, visit www.energystar.gov/dehumidifier.

— K.K.

kklages@tribune.com

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