

## ReStore Gazette

### Special Edition

#### **!Read all about it! New changes are on the horizon!**

Here at the Aberdeen ReStore, we have been gone through many changes over the past year and half since we have been open. Many times, so many changes have been put into place that we have left some of our customers scratching their heads, wondering and feeling frustrated. Please know that the changes have been made with the best intentions to try to make operations run smoother and in the interest of the safety of our donors, customers, volunteers, and staff. Beginning **January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018**, changes in streamlining how we handle all donation pick-ups and customer purchases will occur.

Here are some hints, explanations, and tips on what to expect:

#### **Step 1: Online only request Donation Pick-up Scheduling**

As we continue to grow in familiarity, so does the requests to come out to the community to complete donation pick-ups. We are changing the way that we will require people to schedule their donation pick-ups. Sometime soon after the first of the year, instead of calling in to schedule a donation pick-up, we will be moving to an online only scheduling system, that will be easy to use and access.

Every day, we miss many calls each day, because we cannot possibly answer each call that comes in. We wish we could, but we have found that it is not humanly possible and sometime cannot return calls for well over 48 hours. In order to work on these challenges, we are investing in better, user friendly systems which will guarantee that each person receives a timely response to their donation request. We are still a small operation that serves a large area with only one truck and volunteers/staff. We may continue to see extended periods of time where we are booked out pretty far in advance.

We will also be closely screening what will be coming to our store, both at pick-ups and drop offs. Our main purpose is to sell as many donated items as we can to make room for new incoming items and use those profits to build more homes, and make repairs for the individuals that we serve. We wish that we could accept just about everything but we have limitations, and as such, we may say no, respectfully, and kindly, to item(s). The items that we sell may be used, and sometimes not the latest style, but they still have to be in great condition.

A detailed list of what we can and cannot accept will be on our newly updated website with directions on how to donate, and a Donate Now button which will direct you to exactly what you need. We will also be updating our phone message to make you aware of this change and how to donate online.

The Donation drop off process will still remain the same other than tougher screening for items we can and cannot accept. We continue to thank all of our donors and supporters who help us every day help more families.

## Step 2- New hours here at the store!

This is great news for all of our customers who love to come and visit us, only to find that we are closed some days of the week. We are adding Tuesday to the new work week.

Our new hours will be as follows:

Tuesday 9 am-4 pm **NEW DAY ADDED**

Wednesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm

Saturday 9 am -4 pm. **HOURS HAVE BEEN REDUCED**

- **Donation drop off closes 1 hour before closing**
- **Pick-ups end 30 minutes before closing**

For example:

Tuesday and Saturday Donation drop off is 9 am-3pm; pick-ups 9-3:30 pm

Wednesday-Fri day: donation drop off is 10 am-5 pm; pick-ups 10-5:30 pm

## Step 3: Shopping...how, why?? WHO????

**Many of our customers come into the store, find many bargains, or items that they fall in love with and purchase. However a few stumbling blocks happen after the purchase is made:**

- 1) **How do I transport it?** Well, many folks don't have a truck at their disposal and the awesome couch they bought won't fit into their sedan-what now?  
We are working on putting together a list of available outside resources for you to use to try and hire outside vendors (local truck rental companies, private haulers, moving companies) to help you get your new couch home. The list will be available for our customers after the holidays.  
Please know that we do not personally endorse or have any affiliation with these resources. We are simply extending a courtesy to try and help you find help.
- 2) **How am I going to get it into my vehicle?** Our volunteers, and staff **WANT** to help you-we truly do. We strive to provide quality, friendly customer service every day. However we **CANNOT** load vehicles. It comes down to safety and insurance liability.

We understand that our customers range in age to level of ability of physical limitations, and you may also not be able to load it yourself. We understand the inconvenience this puts onto our customers in having to coordinate yet one more thing, find more people to load your item(s), but we simply are not allowed to provide this service. We hope that you can continue to respect and understand our policy. Our volunteers and staff will continue to provide the best service possible with bringing the items to your vehicle when we can.

- 3) **I can't pick it up until next week....** The items you see today may be gone tomorrow in many cases, and you don't want to lose something you love, so you buy it right away. We **LOVE** that you found a great deal and the perfect piece to go into your home.
- We are an extremely small store that has some logistical challenges. Our item inventory changes so rapidly through donation drop offs, pick-ups and purchases that we have to continually make space for new items each day. As soon as an item is sold, almost immediately we need room for the next dresser, or cabinet that came in to take its place. With this challenge of space, we have run out of room to store customer's purchases for the entire 7 days. With the prior 7 days hold time, inventory clogged our back room and our sales floor, leaving less room to bring out new items for your shopping pleasure.

We would love to be able to extend more time for families/individuals to hold their item(s) longer, but **CANNOT HOLD ITEMS PAST 3 days**. Items not picked up on the fourth day will be put back onto the sales floor to be resold. We do not provide refunds or exchanges for items, and we will only extend store credit, **minus a 20% stocking fee** for items not picked up. Items left in the store cost us space, time and sales. If your item is still here, you are allowed to still claim your item with the correct receipt.

We also reserve the right to deny store credit issued to customers past 30 days from the date of purchase.

Circumstances come up in lives that are unavoidable-and while we are compassionate, in order to be fair to all of our customers, we cannot deviate from these policies.

- 4) **This item has damage-I will offer you less than what is on the tag-** Thank you for being observant, and fully inspecting the item before you buy it. Yes, it may have damage, but what the price says, is what we hope to get for the item.

We base our prices on the quality, type of materials, desirability, uniqueness, quantity, which donor it comes from, age and damage. Pricing is not an exact science, and our staff and volunteers do our best to come up with what we feel are accurate and fair prices. As a non-profit, we need to raise money in order to help the individuals in Harford and Cecil counties attain safe housing and affordable mortgages.

- 5) **Donated items flow, requests for Holding items or checking inventory via the phone or social media:**

We receive a very STEADY stream of an assortment of donations (via pick-ups, and drop off) every day that we are open for operations. We can never guarantee what we will get or exactly when we will get it. We strive to bring out each donation as quick as we can but, here are some things you need to know first-

- a) We may need to inspect the items further, this may mean we need to research the item online before we can make a determination on price. Just because a donation has been dropped off and you see it and want it, does not mean we can price it then and there. We also do not sell items from the back receiving area or up from the front where housewares are processed. As this would be unfair for the rest of the shoppers as they have not had a chance to see the item yet. We understand that you may not want to wait until it comes out, but we have many things going on at once, and ultimately it is a matter of finding a new

- space for the item. Only certain individuals here at the store can price items, and we may be helping other customers at the same time.
- b) we are a largely volunteer operated organization – which means that we have every level of ability to be able to help and try and provide you with the best shopping experience possible. Sometimes we are not always able to help in every way, but we will try if we can!
  - c) we do post new inventory online-but this is only a small amount of what is or may be available. Please know that just because it shows it online does not mean that it is available. We cannot hold items or accept phone calls to purchase items over the phone. The items that are posted online can be purchased very quickly, even after a few minutes after posting. We cannot take down pictures of items that have been sold-we would never get anything else done😊

## Step 4: making your final purchase-

All customers will continue to shop as normal-peel off the colored tag on the item(s) you wish to purchase and take them to register to check out. Instead of just receiving a paper receipt, we will be filling out a “Sold Item Claim Form” (as pictured on the next page) for your transaction. All items will be listed with a description; general colors of the items, what the item comes with (when applicable) and if there is any noted damage. You will also be given a firm CLEAR date/time of when the items have to be picked up by, which will always be **three days**. Each customer will be required to sign and date the form acknowledging the items to be picked up and our holding policy. One copy will be given to you and the other will be kept here at the store for our records. Like any other store, you are required to keep track of your receipt and must bring it with you to pick up your items.

<b>SOLD ITEM CLAIM FORM</b>		
	<b>ReStore</b>	Hours: Wednesday-Friday: 10 am-6 pm Tuesday and Saturday: 9 am-4 pm Pick up items Wed-Fri: 10 am-5:30 pm Tuesday & Saturday: 9 am-3:30 pm
1018 Beards Hill Rd, Ste. 300 Aberdeen, MD 21001 410-567-7698 <a href="http://www.aberdeenrestore.org">www.aberdeenrestore.org</a>		
Print name: _____	Phone Number: _____	Pick Up By Date: _____
ITEM(S)- with description/list any defect _____ _____ _____ _____		
<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> ALL donated items are sold as is, and may be incomplete. Please inspect all items before making your final purchase. 3 day hold only for items-and must be picked up by _____.		
Claiming purchased item(s) by the deadline is the purchaser's sole responsibility. Purchased item(s) left at the store beyond the date on this form will be returned to the floor and store credit, minus a 20% restocking fee from the purchase price will be issued. NO REFUNDS/EXCHANGES-all sales are final.		
You are responsible for loading and securing your purchased item (s).		
I agree: _____ Date: _____		
Please bring this ticket/picture of it when picking up items		

**EXAMPLE**