

Pulling into Renovation Station Helping to Build Homes with Habitat for Humanity

By: Melissa Webb, Correspondent (melw@charterinternet.com)

At first glance, Renovation Station may seem like any home furnishings store – filled with hardware and accessories needed for the home. Behind the scenes, however, is the real feat behind the storefront. Renovation Station is one of hundreds of stores across the United States and Canada that operates to benefit Habitat for Humanity. The Franklin store is the hub of activity for home improvement projects throughout the area, binding together the spokes of carpenters, homeowners, contractors, retailers and builders for a common goal: providing homes for those in need.

Renovation Station has everything imaginable that is suited for the home enthusiast. They carry furniture (both new and used), tools, filing cabinets, headboards, mattresses, doors, appliances, faucets and fixtures. They even carry a wide selection of indoor and outdoor lighting and plumbing supplies such as bathroom sinks, shower stalls, vanities and toilets. Odds and ends such as toys, pet supplies and decorative items can also be found. New items arrive daily so customers know to shop often.

"I come in this store at least once a week," said Belinda Bell, a Franklin resident. "This is my favorite store and I tell everyone to shop here! I just got a chandelier here a few days ago and I am ecstatic about it. This store is a great find."

Everything for sale at Renovation Station is priced well below retail value. The entire inventory is donated by individuals and corporations. Homeowners donate items when they are remodeling. For example, when renovating their kitchen, a homeowner may donate their replaced kitchen cabinets or appliances. Contractors donate surpluses of supplies from a job. All of the donated items are put to good use instead of being thrown away or destroyed as they otherwise might have.

Recently, Renovation Station teamed up with ABC's reality television show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Capitol Homes, Inc. was the home building company chosen for the show's recent edition in Hendersonville, which also incorporated the help of more than 2,000 volunteers and 800 sub-contractor volunteers. Capitol Homes completed the home in 94 hours, breaking the show's record of 96 hours for a complete home makeover. David Leuke, founder and president of Capitol Homes, Inc., donated all of the supplies left over from the Hendersonville project to Habitat for Humanity of Williamson County. More than six truck loads have been brought over to Renovation Station for sale.

"Capitol Homes is proud to have been involved with Habitat for Humanity for a long time," said Leuke. "Throughout the *Extreme Makeover* show, we worked closely with our suppliers to be sure that we did not run out of materials during construction. By the end of the project, we had extra materials left over. We asked our suppliers if we could send the materials to Habitat for Humanity instead of sending them back. Every one said, yes. Kohler even sent extra supplies. It is always great to have the opportunity to give back and we are very proud to do so."

Thanks to the generosity of the community and companies like Capitol Homes, Habitat for Humanity just built their 67th home in Williamson County. Renovation Station, which just opened in March, is able to provide for much of the administration cost associated with Habitat for Humanity so that sponsorships and donations can go directly to building homes. Currently, the store achieves between \$1,000 and \$1,300 in gross sales every day. Each sale benefits Williamson County directly.

"The more the community gets involved, the bigger we will be," said Bobbi Copeland, Store Manager. "Everyday, people learn more and more about us and start to team up with us. We are all here to help build homes for people who need them. By working together, we can achieve our goal."

Renovation Station is located at 300 Eddy Court in Franklin. For more information about the store, visit the Web site: www.habitatwillamson.org/renovation.html or call: 615-791-4035.