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Ms. Cheap answers the questions she's most asked Cheap haircuts and free rocks top her FAQ list



Ms. Cheap, aka Mary Hance, gets the royal treatment as she has a manicure and a pedicure at the Tennessee Technology Center on White Bridge Road. Student Troy Dailey handles the feet, while student Jordan Fish takes care of the hands. There is a once-a-year \$5 registration fee, and then a pedicure is \$6 and a manicure is \$5. LARRY MCCORMACK / THE TENNESSEAN

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Sometimes, I feel like a broken record — yes, the Habitat HomeStore is on Eighth Avenue South, and yes, it is Jones Stone that has the free rocks, and yes, if you want a cheap massage, there are several massage schools that have clinics.

I'm not exactly complaining, but I do seem to answer the same questions over and over and over again on the phone and in e-mail, so for today I have compiled a list of the most frequently asked questions, and the answers.

This FAQ list will become a permanent feature on our tennessean.com site so you can refer to it whenever the mood — or question — strikes you.

It's not that I don't want to talk to you or answer your e-mail questions, but I hope this will give me more time to find new places for bargains and answer other cheap questions.

So let me know if you have other questions you want me to add to this list, and I'll do a follow-up — an FAQ II — in a later edition.

Where can you get free rocks?

Jones Stone, at 2705 Larmon Drive (292-4717) and Jackson Masonry at 49th Avenue North at Centennial Boulevard (352-4996), both have free piles. You have to load it yourself, but there is plenty of rock there for the taking on weekdays. I suggest that you take along some work gloves.

What's the place that sells donated building materials?

Habitat for Humanity has started a number of stores in Middle Tennessee counties that sell donated building materials and household goods. The stores, which have great prices and great stuff, are similar but independent of one another, each being operated by the Habitat organization in that county.

In Nashville, the Habitat HomeStore has two locations, 1001 Eighth Ave. S. and 908 Division St. (259-9548). There are also Habitat stores in Franklin at 300 Eddy Court (791-4035); Murfreesboro at 850 Mercury Blvd. (849-5994); Lebanon at 207 Maple St., (453-3799); and Cookeville at 711 East 15th St. (1-931-528-1711).

Where can you get low-cost haircuts, pedicures, manicures, facials and other services?

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For completely free haircuts, call 1-888-888-7778, ext. 1928, or 1-883-3377, and leave a message for April. It's the Supercuts training center at 519 Donelson Pike, where one week a month they do advanced training for licensed stylists who are new to the Supercuts' technique. All you pay is a tip (\$2-\$5 is good).

The lowest price for the whole variety of pampering services is at the Tennessee Technology Center, at 100 White Bridge Road between Target and Nashville State Community College. You pay a once-a-year \$5 project fee and then the services are really cheap, \$5 for a manicure or hair cut, \$6 for a pedicure, \$10 for a basic facial. The students, who are all supervised by their instructors, work by appointment on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9–11 a.m. and from 4–5:30 p.m. They will take walk-ins if they're not already full. Appointments for cosmetology can be made at 425-5522 and for aesthetics at 425-5511. Both programs are on break for the next two weeks and will resume clinics in mid-September.

Other beauty schools with clinics include: New Directions Hair Academy, 3744 Old Hickory Blvd. in west Nashville (353-8333), where you can get a pedicure for \$15, a manicure for \$6. Hours are 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Monday–Saturday, and they sometimes have specials.

Volunteer Beauty Academy, which has locations near RiverGate Mall at 1791 Gallatin Pike North (860-4200) and at 5670 Nolensville Road (781-1500), has clinics which take appointments and walk-ins between 9:30-4:30 p.m. and then between 6-10 p.m. on weekdays. Haircuts are \$5, pedicures \$15, and manicures are \$6.

Where can you get a cheap massage?

Cumberland Institute, 500 Wilson Pike Circle (370-9795) has intern clinics by appointment — 90 minutes for \$60 weekdays, weeknights and weekends. Natural Health Institute in Cummins Station, 209 10th Ave. S. (627-4726) has clinics Tuesday–Saturday that are \$35 an hour. And High-Tech Institute at 560 Royal Parkway (232-3770) offers 50-60 minute massages between 10:45 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. on weekdays for \$25 — cash only. The students who perform services during these clinics have completed a minimum number of classroom and training hours before they practice on you.

You wrote about deals on dry cleaning. Where are they?

At Park Avenue \$1.50 Cleaners, every item costs \$1.50 to clean. You pay when you drop items off instead of when you pick them up. Locations include 5414 Charlotte, 4122 Nolensville Road, 2722 Lebanon Road and 794 Rivergate Parkway.

Where can you send used greeting cards?

The places I used to recommend say they don't need any more cards, so if anyone knows of an organization that wants them, please oh please let me know!

Where can you donate a computer that still works?

Sometimes schools want them, and it never hurts to ask individual schools if they can use what you have. But the best one-stop place to call is the Community Resource Center, 412 Metroplex Dr. (781-1036), which collects all sorts of office supplies and other resources and distributes them to nonprofit agencies throughout the Midstate.

If you know of other nonprofit organizations that can use good computers, please let me know and I'll try to help get the word out.

Where can you get cheap mulch?

The Metro Public Works Mulch facility, at 1400 County Hospital Road, usually has cheap mulch — one cubic yard, which is enough to fill a small pickup truck, goes for \$8 plus tax. But right now, they're without a contractor and all that's available is the fancy mulch — red or black — which is \$18 for a cubic yard. Hours are 7 a.m.–4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. 880-1000.

Even better than cheap mulch is free mulch, which Rutherford County residents can get at Murfreesboro's Public Works facility at 4765 Florence Road. Stop by any time between 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on weekdays and load it yourself, or if you're lucky and they have time, they'll load it for you.

Be forewarned that this is not always seasoned or treated mulch, but it would be fine for walkways or to put in a compost pile to turn for next season. 893-3681.

Where can you find a list of where to pick your own fruits and vegetables?

Go to the www.picktnproducts.org Web site, where you'll find a fruit-by-fruit, county-by-county listing by clicking on "Food & Beverage" and then "Produce." It's great. If you don't have a computer, call 837-5160 and ask.

How does someone get an event or a sale included in Ms. Cheap's column?

First of all, let me know in plenty of time — at least two weeks before your desired publication day — and make sure that whatever you're pitching is free or a really good deal.

And please include a daytime phone number so I can call you if I have questions. My e-mail address is mscheap@tennessean.com, or you may call me at 259-8282.

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