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PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

Clothes fill the racks at Coast Rehabilitation Thrift Store in Astoria.

and the thrift store has a steady stream of loyal shoppers year-round.

The thrift store accepts most donations big and small, including books, furniture, clothing and appliances — though as with *Deja Vu*, no baby strollers or car seats.

“We’ll take anything that we’re able to resell,” Hocking says.

Items most needed are small appliances such as toasters and microwaves, though Hocking admits that it’s hard to turn things away. “This community is very generous and extremely receptive to the people I employ,” he says. “That’s the best part of this for me.”

Another facet of the thrift store is helping the community at large. To that end, CRS partners with Clatsop Community Action to provide 15 vouchers in the amount of 10 dollars each month to be redeemed at the thrift store by those most in need.

Hocking adds that not only do his employees and shoppers benefit from the thrift store, but also the community at large. “What comes here stays in this community,” he says.

Reuse and recycle

The Refindery Reuse Store at CARTM in Manzanita is an artist-designed resale mecca. Its shelves brim with books, kitchenwares, housewares, tools, toys and even vinyl albums.

The Refindery’s goal when seeking donations is simple: Bringing in your old stuff will help reduce waste.

“The best use of materials is to reuse them as they are at least one more time before they get recycled or disposed of,” says Karen Reddick-Yurka, CARTM’s executive director.

The revenue generated at The Refindery goes toward maintaining CARTM’s recycling efforts.

Reddick-Yurka says the store’s busiest times are spring and summer when many of the area’s second homeowners clean and refurbish their beach houses.

When it comes to the greatest needs The Refindery has for inventory, Reddick-Yurka says “the doors are open” for just about any donations, excluding things like hazardous materials and mattresses.

“As long as it’s clean and has some function, we’ll find a home for it,” she says.

Items that don’t find a home at The Refindery are sent to the Gaia Foundation, which then matches particular items with particular needs.

Locals make up the bulk of The Refindery’s shoppers, including many area farm families. In spring and summer, though, many folks from Portland and Seattle can be found perusing the shelves.

“We’re often one of the first stops where locals bring their tourist friends to poke around,”



PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

Books and dishware are shown on display at Coast Rehabilitation Thrift Store in Astoria.



PHOTO BY DAN HAAG

Donations to The Refindery in Manzanita entice shoppers year-round.

Reddick-Yurka says.

The decision to throw away old items rather than bringing them to The Refindery for resale boils down to sustainability: Does this item best serve my community in a landfill or at a thrift store?

“It costs a lot of money and natural resources to manufacture things,” says Reddick-Yurka. “By just throwing stuff in a landfill, we lose all of the stored energy and value it took to produce it.”

One person’s trash...

Every thrift store loyalist dreams of finding the Magna Carta behind an old picture frame. While that may not be reality, there are plenty of cool items to be found on thrift shop shelves.

Creel recently came across a working 1923 Underwood typewriter in near-perfect condition among *Deja Vu*’s donations. “We really get some amazing stuff,” she says.

Hocking recalls the time when a woman brought in a large, brand new sectional couch. “She bought it for her dog, and he didn’t like it,” he says with a laugh.

The CRS Thrift Store was able to re-sell the couch at a premium price.

The Refindery lists their “Pick of The Week” on their Facebook page and has seen everything from antique beer steins to a fencing épée.

Reddick-Yurka recalls a poster from one of Jimi Hendrix’s first concerts. “We were going to stick it in the



PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

Wares at *Deja Vu* range from VHS tapes and old televisions to kitchen supplies, trinkets and clothing.



PHOTO BY DAN HAAG

The Refindery at CARTM in Manzanita proves that one person’s trash is another’s treasure.

poster bin for 25 cents,” she says. After some research, it was found to be an original and netted about a thousand dollars.

No more excuses

Beyond thrift stores and nonprofits, there are many other organizations seeking donated items: libraries, churches and animal shelters.

Avoiding spring cleaning actually does local communities a disservice. You can’t even use the excuse that carting stuff to a thrift store takes too much time: Most of them — including *Deja Vu*, CRS, and The Refindery — offer pick up and delivery service.

They also provide handy tax deduction receipts.

In other words, roll up your sleeves and dig in.

DONATE YOUR OLD ITEMS TO A LOCAL THRIFT STORE

Deja Vu Thrift Store, 1389 Duane St., Astoria, 503-325-8624

CRS Thrift Store, 207 Seventh St., Astoria, 503-325-1011

CARTM & The Refindery, 34995 Necarney City Road, Manzanita, 503-368-7764