

# Gallatin News Examiner

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## **Former Fairvue sales trailer becomes \$15K donation to Habitat**

By Sarah Kingsbury

A sales building on a Fairvue Plantation property that drew the annoyance of the subdivision's homeowners association was put to good use and donated to Habitat for Humanity of Sumner County recently.

An announcement from the company donating the structure said it was "valued in excess of \$50,000," but the building was actually made of three trailers attached to each other on a permanent foundation with a permanent roof. After they were dismantled, the former sales office "lost tons of value," said former Habitat Executive Director Bob Dyer.

An idea to use parts of the structure as Habitat's new administrative offices was voted down by the nonprofit's board, which instead decided to sell the structures and use the money to construct a brand new office, Dyer said. The organization ended up getting about \$15,000 from the donation, which will pay for about half of the project.

Habitat is moving its offices to a property on the corner of Tulip Poplar and Sumner Hall drives. The new ReStore, which sells used building materials, will be directly behind the current one, located in the Gallatin Center on Nashville Pike.

"Our average donation is \$300 ... so this is very significant," said Dyer, who was the organization's director for three years until he retired Dec. 31. "If we got those once a year we'd be tickled to death."

The money from ReStore pays the salaries of the organization's four full-time and two part-time employees.

"We strive to make enough money in that store to build a house a year," Dyer said.

### **Donation had been 'stalled'**

The announcement from the donor company, Happy Dragon Investments, LLC, said its "efforts to finalize the donation months earlier were stalled due to challenges by varying local interests," but Managing Director Doug Hines declined to elaborate on what that statement meant.

In an email, Hines said the company “did not contemplate” the “local conflict/roadblocks to new companies engaging in the area.”

“This has been a completely new experience for us, and as a result, it delayed our plans,” he said.

Fairvue Plantation Homeowners Association President Earl Fischer said the structure on the lot, which is toward the front of the subdivision on Plantation Boulevard, was originally erected as a commercial sales office to help sell lots. Once the majority of the lots were sold, the building was supposed to be removed, but that never happened.

“It was supposed to disappear, and we’ve been very patient trying to negotiate our way through just taking it back to its residential status,” Fischer said.

Any delay may have also been caused by the involvement of lawyers for both the company and the homeowners association in the process.

“Anytime you’re going back and forth with attorneys, as soon as both parties engage an attorney, the other side does too, and those things take time,” Fischer said.

#### **'A win-win'**

Habitat was approached in November to take the building as a donation, and Hines credited the organization’s leaders for “their swift logistics coordination, due diligence and unwavering commitment to pursuing projects in the best interest of Sumner County families” to help coordinate the donation.

“The result has been a win-win for everybody concerned,” said current Habitat Director Susan Johnson.

Happy Dragon acquired the property from Susan Maddux Reed in March 2012, according to Sumner County Register of Deeds records.

Happy Dragon is a San Diego-based investments affiliate of AFT Holdings Inc., an international investment and management group with a portfolio that includes commercial and residential real estate, sustainable foods development, global fishing fleets and technology. Another AFT Holdings entity, ND Limited LLC, owns 10 lots it is developing in Fairvue, Hines said.

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