

# THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

## Habitat For Humanity Will Open Resale Store In Business Center

April 22, 2005  
Section: PASCO  
Page: 8

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DADE CITY — East Pasco Habitat for Humanity has finally found a space to open a resale store with building and home supplies for bargain hunters.

The nonprofit, which builds affordable homes for lower-income families, is leasing about 7,400 square feet in the new Dade City Business Center. That's the former Lykes-Pasco citrus process plant on U.S. 301.

"They're headed this way," confirmed **Jim Guedry**, owner of the business center.

The agreement comes just in time for a center open house tonight.

The East Pasco Habitat for Humanity Home Store will probably open for business the first week in July, said John Finnerty, executive director. Habitat has an ample inventory, mostly donated from homeowners and contractors, in storage. Some items are new, left over from building projects or unfilled customer orders. The rest is used but functional.

"We've got furniture, housewares, building materials, file cabinets, office-type chairs, filing cabinets, credenzas, bedding," Finnerty said.

Never-used items will be sold for 50 percent off their normal retail price, and used items will be sold for less. Store manager Trudy Rayburn said the store will appeal to homeowners, people fixing up old houses and landlords looking to improve rental properties.

More than 20 other Habitat affiliates in Florida have successfully operated such retail stores, said Finnerty, including one in Tampa. They use the proceeds to build more houses for clients.

Rayburn is confident this store will continue to attract the donations required to keep the shelves full.

"With so much construction going on in Pasco County, there's material left over all the time," she said. The store can absorb material that might have been thrown away, she said.

"Not only does it stop a lot of wasteful dumping, it provides us with material," she said.

Finnerty and Rayburn have been looking for an affordable site for months, they said. The lease with the business center is for three years with options to extend it.

The business center said its other signed tenants include **Guedry's** Citrus Country Groves retail store and packing house, a related citrus company, a graphics company, a telecommunications firm, an industrial coating company, a consultant and Florida Youth Conservation Corps' vocational education activities.

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