

ReStore Relaunch: Upgraded Habitat for Humanity store celebrates Saturday

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The Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Sanford will be officially relaunched on Saturday.

Kimberly Rau, executive director of Habitat for Humanity, said a lot of work has gone into remodeling and reorganizing the store. The official celebration of the relaunch begins at 11 a.m. and runs through 2 p.m. The store is located at 413 Wicker St. in downtown Sanford.

"We're hoping for a good turnout," she said. "We've upgraded everything for the relaunch. We have new signage and window graphics outside. On the inside, we've reorganized it. We've moved shelving and created areas where things belong. We redid the floors, painting the perimeter and adding new flooring in the middle."

The store features almost anything you can imagine, from glassware, men's and women's clothes to building supplies.

"Our inventory changes every day," Rau said. "We have a 'Book Nook' with new lighting so people can look at books. The toy area needed a big space and it's got one. We have an appliance area; we've got bed frames and different furniture."

The store is staffed by employees and volunteers.

“We’ve got 12 employees and 25 volunteers,” Rau said. “We have so many things — you can get anything here.”

The store also features a sporting goods section and even has hardware and automotive items.

“We’ve got doors, windows, cabinets, lighting ... we even have energy-efficient light bulbs,” she said. “We’ve got great deals on them. They’re on sale through December. We also carry GreenSheen paints. It’s an eco-friendly paint. We’ve got anything you need for around your home from prom dresses to plumbing.”

But wait, there’s more, according to Rau.

“Our best kept secret is the Habitat for Birds Store,” she said. “It’s got bird items and high-quality birdseed. We’ve also got seasonal items like fall and Halloween things and Christmas items. With the way inflation is going, this is the way to shop.”

There is also an added plus for those coming in the store Rau said.

“We’ve got Mr. Jones, our shoeshine man,” she continued. “People know who he is.”

All of the things in the store serve a purpose for Habitat for Humanity.

“The store is a part of our fundraising,” Rau said. “We build homes and sell to low-income buyers with reasonable mortgages. We are the mortgage originator. They have a first mortgage they have to pay and a second mortgage that we forgive 1/30th at a time each year for 30 years. It’s really truly affordable housing.”

Rau said the fundraising from the store helps provide building supplies for the homes. Both the future homeowners and many volunteers provide much of the labor.

The store also now has a new checkout area upfront including three cash registers. There is also a cash register in the Bird Store. Rau said the store also has newly refurbished shopping carts.

Outside, there is an area that includes building materials from vinyl siding to fixtures.

“You never know what’s going to be out here,” Rau said.

The Saturday event begins with a group prayer of thanks at 11 a.m. and features a food truck, door prizes, super sales, a fundraiser from St. Luke United Methodist Church and more. Rau said people can enter to win a \$100 gift voucher at the store and are welcome to bring items to donate to the store to help its mission. Attendees can also bring canned or boxed food to donate for The Bread of Life Ministries.