

Teachers Warehouse Coming in 2004.

Recently, the three Rotary Clubs of Bloomington, IN kicked off what will be a major gift to the school children and teachers of Monroe County. The Teachers Warehouse is an incorporated not-for-profit project, where teachers in schools with 60 percent or more of their students are eligible for free-or-reduced-fee lunches, may shop for free supplies for their classrooms.

Every year, school teachers spend their own money to cover supplies for extra projects in their classrooms or to provide the basic supplies to children whose families cannot afford them. On the average, each teacher contributes between \$500 and \$1000 every year to purchase these supplies, said

the Rotary Clubs of Bloomington. The Teachers Warehouse will not only provide basic supplies but also relieve the financial burden of our classroom teachers.

The Teachers Warehouse is scheduled to open in August 2004, with a basic concept to recycle, reuse, and reformat supplies and raw materials from business and industry for use in classrooms. In the ensuing ten months, Rotary will locate a building and begin renovations to include a retail store and a warehouse section. Rotary has already begun to enlist the participation of community busi-

nesses. Several businesses such as the IU Credit Union have donated cash contributions to help with start-up expenses. WTIU is providing a combination of cash and on-air marketing to make the community aware of the program. Bender Lumber will donate the building supplies, including shelving that will be needed to convert a warehouse space into the Teachers Warehouse. Bunger & Robertson is providing pro-bono legal support and the Odle, McGuire & Shook staff will help with the design elements. Other businesses will donate materials and supplies from their operations that can be recycled.

Rotary plans to recruit volunteers to work in the warehouse and in the retail store section. Volunteers are needed to sort, categorize, and display materials received at the Teachers Warehouse. Volunteers also are needed to call on local businesses to enlist them in the recycle-reuse

concept of the Teachers Warehouse. As a speaker's bureau is in development as well, volunteers are needed to make presentations to public groups.

After a grand opening scheduled for August 2004, The Teachers Warehouse will be open several afternoons during the week and Saturday mornings. Warehouse hours will accommodate the school day to be as teacher friendly as possible. Teachers, whose schools are eligible to participate, will be asked to volunteer a minimal amount each year at the Teachers Warehouse. In fact, all teachers may purchase supplies by volunteering a set number of hours for each shopping trip.

Bloomington's Teachers Warehouse is one of about 27 such projects around the country. In fact, the Crayons to Computers project in Cincinnati served as the model for the start up of the Bloomington project.

Contact Judy Witt, Teachers Warehouse President, at PO Box 7556, Bloomington, IN 47407 or call 812-339-4273 for more information. The Teachers Warehouse web site is currently under development.

