



Build-A-Bear Workshop™ Cele-bear-ates First Canadian Store in Edmonton!

May 29, 2003

Innovative Retailer Opens First International Store in West Edmonton Mall

Build-A-Bear Workshop™ — the leading make-your-own-stuffed-animal concept for mall-based retailing — is opening its beary first international store at the West Edmonton Mall on Thursday May 29, 2003.

Founded in 1997, Build-A-Bear Workshop is one of North America's most cele-bear-ated retailers, as it is the innovator that invites Guests of all ages to create their own customized stuffed animals. Since the opening of its first store in St. Louis Missouri, nearly six years ago, the company has grown to more than 115 stores across the United States. Now, Build-A-Bear Workshop is bringing its unique entertainment-retail concept to Edmonton as its first step into the global marketplace.

"Build-A-Bear Workshop has a loyal following of Albertans familiar with our store from their travels in the United States and we are thrilled to be opening our first international store at the West Edmonton Mall," says Maxine Clark, Chief Executive Bear, Build-A-Bear Workshop. "Our expansion continues to exceed our expectations and we look forward to spreading bear hugs across Canada!" Build-A-Bear Workshop will open its second store in the Chinook Centre in Calgary on June 20th and in Square One, Mississauga, Ontario in late Summer 2003!

Where Best Friends Are Made™

Build-A-Bear Workshop is founded on the premise that nearly everyone, regardless of age, has a special fondness for stuffed animals. At Build-A-Bear Workshop stores, Guests create their own stuffed animals as they choose, stuff, stitch, fluff, name and dress their way through a series of bear-making stations. A wide variety of inventive bear-sized merchandise is also available, including hundreds of coordinating outfits, shoes and boots, sports equipment, and even jewelry and fashion accessories. There are even miniature pets and pet accessories to complete the pawfect bear family. Build-A-Bear Workshop stuffed animals range in price from \$15 to \$39.

Chief Executive Bear Maxine Clark created Build-A-Bear Workshop based on her keen intuition and business savvy. A recognized retail innovator, Ms. Clark spent 25 years with The May Department Stores and then went on to lead Payless ShoeSource to achieve the position of #1 seller in the world of children's licensed footwear. The innovation of the Build-A-Bear Workshop concept came from Ms. Clark's insight into knowing what families want from a shopping experience and their nostalgia for more fun shopping times. The Build-A-Bear Workshop unique store concept takes children's interactive entertainment retailing to a new level, combining the hands-on, personal experience of making your own bear with the friendly and exciting atmosphere and fun of shopping the way it used to be.

"When I was young, it was exciting for me to see all the displays in the stores, and I loved every minute of it," says Ms. Clark. "That excitement was something I wanted to re-create for children and families today."

"We want to provide a quality fun shopping experience," says Ms. Clark. "Besides, we all need to remember what it is to be a kid. We love seeing the smiles on our Guests' faces, sharing their excitement and watching them have fun."

Build-A-Bear Workshop in the Community

A fundamental principle of Build-A-Bear Workshop is giving back to the community. The company has made a strong commitment to fund raising for children with cancer. Sales of Nikki's Bear™, a soft lilac coloured teddy bear will help children with cancer and their families by funding programs that provide support, treatment and research. Build-A-Bear Workshop also has a unique partnership with the World Wildlife Fund Canada (WWF), offering a series of WWF co-branded plush animals in its stores with a portion of the proceeds from sales supporting efforts to protect endangered animals and their habitats. The Bearemy's Kennel Pals™ line of plush products raises funds to support local animal shelters and helps animals in crisis situations. Children's literacy is supported through the special Build-A-Bear Workshop Read Teddy program.

About Build-A-Bear Workshop

Build-A-Bear Workshop is an interactive, entertainment mall-based retailer that invites Guests of all ages to create their own customized stuffed animals through an exciting bear-making assembly line that combines experience with purchase. Build-A-Bear Workshop is the innovator and leader of the make-your-own-stuffed-animal concept for mall-based retailing and currently operates 115 stores in 35 states, and a very successful e-commerce business. There will be more than 150 locations in the USA by the end of 2003. Canada represents the first step for Build-A-Bear Workshop into the global marketplace, with three stores opening over the next few months in Edmonton, Calgary and Mississauga. For more information, call (888) 560-BEAR or visit the company's award-winning web site at www.buildabear.com.