



Thursday, October 4, 2007

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# Ribbon cutting celebrates arrival of Kohl's in Rochester

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Democrat Staff Writer

ROCHESTER — Kohl's, the department store chain opening outlets nationwide at a whirlwind pace, has officially arrived in Rochester.

Representing one of the first businesses to open at the expansive Rochester Crossing at 160 Washington St., Wednesday's grand opening simultaneously took place alongside 80 other Kohl's who opened their doors across the country.

About 60 people gathered for the store's ribbon cutting, with "star employee" Jessica Clute doing the honors, with plenty of notable city and state officials in attendance, including Mayor John Larochelle, state Sen. Jacalyn Cilley and Fire Chief Norm Sanborn. The store opened for business on Sunday but delayed the ribbon cutting until Wednesday morning.

"We are very, very excited. We have a lot of customers in the Rochester area," General Manager



John Huff/Staff photographer "Star Employee" Jessica Clute cuts the ribbon marking the official grand opening of Kohl's at the Rochester Mall Wednesday morning.

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Maureen Gamache said after the ribbon cutting.

Kohl's operates differently from traditional department stores. The most noticeable distinction between Kohl's and traditional department stores is that all Kohl's have centralized checkout aisles. Kohl's also pioneered the use of a "racetrack" aisle that circles the entire store, a technique borrowed from discount stores but rarely used in department stores.

The chain's expansion has mainly focused on the middle of the country but have recently expanded into the northeastern part of the United States. Kohl's now operates more than 900 stores in 47 states.



The stores sell a variety of goods, such as apparel, shoes, and accessories for women, children and men, and home products such as small electronics, vacuums, bedding, toys, and luggage.

The mayor even took time to do a little shopping after the grand opening, saying "it's a beautiful new store."

Larochelle said he views the development of Kohl's and Rochester Crossing as a big step forward for Rochester. In addition to providing more convenient shopping, the business will attract further commercial and industrial development, he said.

"It is going to expand our tax base. It will help reduce taxes on the homeowners," Larochelle said.

Store Manager Lew Aylward, formally the assistant manager of the Newington store, wore a big smile Wednesday morning. "We are very excited to be here in this mall. It's bringing jobs to the community and a wonderful place to shop," Aylward said. "The whole Kohl's culture is wonderful. We really do strive to serve our customers."

Customers were already making purchases by 8 a.m.

**John Huff/Staff photographer Jewelry specialist Morgan Meier, who works at the Kohl's in Biddeford, Maine, helps out at the new store in Rochester during the grand opening at the Rochester Crossing Wednesday morning.**

"It's on my way to work, and I was able to come in

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today and get all the great sales. Everyone was very pleasant and helpful," Connie Copp, of Lebanon, Maine said. When asked whether she planned to return another day, she responded with a "definitely."

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"I'm thrilled. I never want to have to go to Portsmouth again," Rochester resident Wendy Ramsdell said, as she perused the skirts with her 3-year-old daughter. "I'll do all my shopping here now," she added, citing the convenient location.

Aylward added that he believes Rochester was looking for something like the store.

The Rochester store is the eighth Kohl's to be opened in New Hampshire. It expects to add 130 jobs in the area.

The store will be open Monday through Saturday 8 a. m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.



**John Huff/Staff photographer Elaine Leavitt and her granddaughter, Torri Snow, 13, of Milton shop for new clothes during the grand opening of Kohl's at the Rochester Mall Wednesday morning.**

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