## **Richmond** News **Banking on Christmas**

## THE RICHMOND NEWS

November 26, 2003

22 Wednesday, November 26, 2003 The Richmond News

THE RICHMOND NEWS

## Business

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## Daiso sees Richmond springboard to North America

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When it opens in a few weeks, Aberdeen Centre will be a retail window on the east.

One of the first stores to peer through that opening will be Daiso, which is regarded in Asia as the "Wal-Mart of dollar stores.'

"This store is to be our springboard to launch Daiso's operations across North America," said Roy Fujita, director of Daiso's international affairs.

Richmond's rich ethnic mix was one of

the reasons Daiso chose Aberdeen Centre as its Canadian launch pad.

"Richmond, with its large Asian population, fits perfectly with Daiso's east-meets-west mandate," said Fujita.

Daiso in Richmond is also a partnership with Fairchild Group, which owns and operates Aberdeen Centre. It's the first time the

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private company will share its brand name. Fairchild Group president and CEO Thomas Fung saw the huge appeal and success Daiso enjoyed in Asia, said Fujita.

"It fits with Mr. Fung's plan for Aberdeen Centre to be more than just an Asian mall."

Dasio was established in 1972 selling mainly home products. It will open Dec. 420,000 different items.

12. Today, Daiso has more than 2,400 stores in Japan with a new store opening daily throughout Asia.

Fujita is confident that success can be duplicated here.

The products we sell are for everyone they are affordable and we think the buying public will see that," Fujita said.

Unlike most discount stores, Daiso's stock is original, designed, manufactured and packaged specifically for the compa-

"Because we buy in minimum quantities of 10 million, not only is the product's quality very high, but we can keep the cost

of each item to \$2," Fujita said.

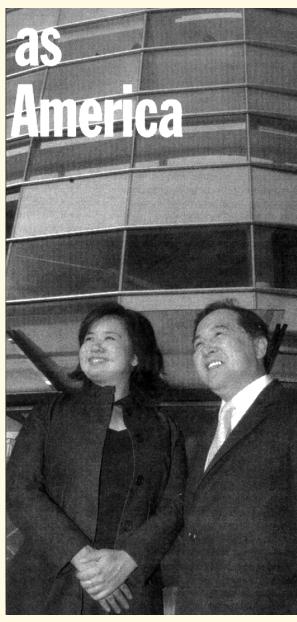
He added Daiso doesn't buy seconds or stock from store closeout sales.

Fujita thinks when word gets out about the quality and range of products available, the public will jump on board.

"Our products aren't considered

Japanese, they have global appeal." Customers to the new 26,432-sq. ft.

anchor store at Aberdeen Centre will find everything from scarves and socks to candies and cosmetics and plants and household items.



JULIE IVERSON/RICHMOND NEWS

Daiso's shelves will carry more than Daiso's Kaman Ng, left, and Roy Fujita stand outside the 40,000 types of products and more than nearly completed Aberdeen Centre, which will house Daiso's first North American location.





