

Rialto Building Ready for Business

THE RIALTO at 15th and O Streets has been transformed by a complete interior and exterior renovation. Co-owners Becky Smith and Jody Luth said their aim was to give life back to an old building with style and grace. "Since the building sits at the veritable entryway to downtown, we wanted people to take notice of the look with its expanse of glass. With the Federal Building and the Capitol nearby, we wanted our corner to create a kind of synergy for downtown, and we think we're on the right track," Jody said.

The building first appeared on the corner about 1915, and for thirty years was a theater called The Rialto. In the late 1940's, it continued as a theater but was called Husker Theater. "As we peeled away the interior layers, we found some remarkable artifacts, including some old film reels," Jody commented. Most recently, the building served as the Plasma Building. Luth and Smith own several other properties in the same area and are passionate about recreating existing space and using environmentally-friendly techniques in the renovation process. In reviving the Rialto, they used "green" paints, went with a light-colored roof, installed insulation made from recycled blue jeans, and will place recycling



Renovation continues on The Rialto at 15th and O Streets

bins for their businesses to use. Jody noted that the up front costs for some of the methods might be a little higher, but the end result will afford savings.

The new Rialto will house three retail outlets with one commitment in place. Taco Bueno, a Mexican style cafe, will open for business in late summer. "We're looking for just the right tenants, and Taco Bueno is a great fit. We're still searching for a good fit for the remaining space," Luth said. She and Becky and their three-year old daughter split their time as downtown Lincoln residents, and part-time downtown Portland, OR dwellers. "The two cities really have a great deal in common," Jody noted. "Both cities are very friendly and have great downtowns. Our daughter, Ruby, tells everyone, 'I love Lincoln!' and so do we." 🏙️