

At bigger site, Amos Glick's business gets into swing of things

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Amos Glick outgrew the farm.

So the 27-year-old Amishman is moving the family business from Geist Road to the former Carter's distribution center on Route 772 in Leola.

Three years ago Glick thought he had enough room when he moved his family business, Swing Kingdom, to his father's farm on Geist Road in Upper Leacock Township. His father, Daniel, while farming, began helping him build giant 30-by-60-foot vinyl swingsets.

Business boomed, and soon building swingsets while continuing farming became too much.

"We sold the cows," Glick said. "The business grew so fast we couldn't keep after both, so we got out of farming." He plans to lease the farmland out to another Amish family.

The swing business continues to prosper. In three years he has gone from building about 50 swings a year in a

20-by-22 shed to making more than 800 a year.

So now he is moving to a 70,000-square foot facility, the former Carter's building, which became vacant in June 2004. It opened in 1951 as the home for Singing Needles, a sewing factory, and during its peak from 1985-1995 employed 350 people.

He purchased the five-acre site from local developer Robert N. Lepore for \$1.25 million and plans renovations to the structure that will total \$20,000-\$30,000.

Last Monday, Upper Leacock Township approved Glick's proposed modifications to the building. Some of the changes include raising the roof by 6 feet, disconnecting the electricity in about 38,000 square feet of the structure and putting in a diesel engine to fuel a hydraulic pump and an air pump to power the equipment. Glick will also depend on a lot of natural light and may install skylights.

Glick, who has five employees, said the site will allow him to keep big trucks

off back roads and will be easy to get to, just off Route 23.

He said he was not thinking about a move until Edwin Miller, an agent with

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REMAX Associates of Lancaster, paid him a visit and told him about the vacant building. Miller put Glick in touch with Lepore.

Miller said Glick will have two tenants. Country Floor Store, which is owned by Amos, Dave and Steve Stoltzfus in Gordonville, will lease 15,000 square feet for a flooring warehouse. T.C.P. Mechanical Inc., which deals in heating, air conditioning and ventilation, will lease 16,000 square feet.

"It all happened very quickly," said Miller, who said the other two tenants are using the move to expand their businesses. "The New Holland, Gap and Leola area has tremendous need to accommodate the Amish with their businesses."

Glick will use the site for manufacturing, with a limited amount of retail. Most of his swings are displayed at Rick's Lawn Furniture, which has five sites and is headquartered in Ephrata. Glick also has 40 distributors.

He sells many swingsets to consumers in New Jersey and Colorado. The vinyl swingsets retail at about \$2,200, he said. Not bad for a guy who started making swings as a side business. "People were making gazebos," Glick said, "so why not swingsets?"



Jack Leonard/SUNDAY NEWS

Amos Glick is moving his vinyl swingset business, Swing Kingdom, from his father's farm at 86 Geist Road to the former Carter's distribution center on Route 772 in Leola.