

Bucyrus expands mining museum

BY RICH ROVITO

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Bucyrus International Inc.'s mining equipment museum has undergone a major expansion with the hope of luring more visitors to the facility, located on the grounds of the company's sprawling manufacturing complex in South Milwaukee.

Bucyrus recently completed the expansion of the museum, which first opened to the public in January 2009. The museum now features three floors of exhibits covering 18,000 square feet, as opposed to the single-floor, 6,000-square-foot setup under the previous layout.

The museum is part of a development that's been dubbed the Bucyrus Visitor Center — it also features an expanded company store, which sells a variety of Bucyrus-branded apparel and other merchandise, as well as a 47-seat theater.

"I see a lot of potential in the museum," said Paul Johnson, program manager for the visitor center.

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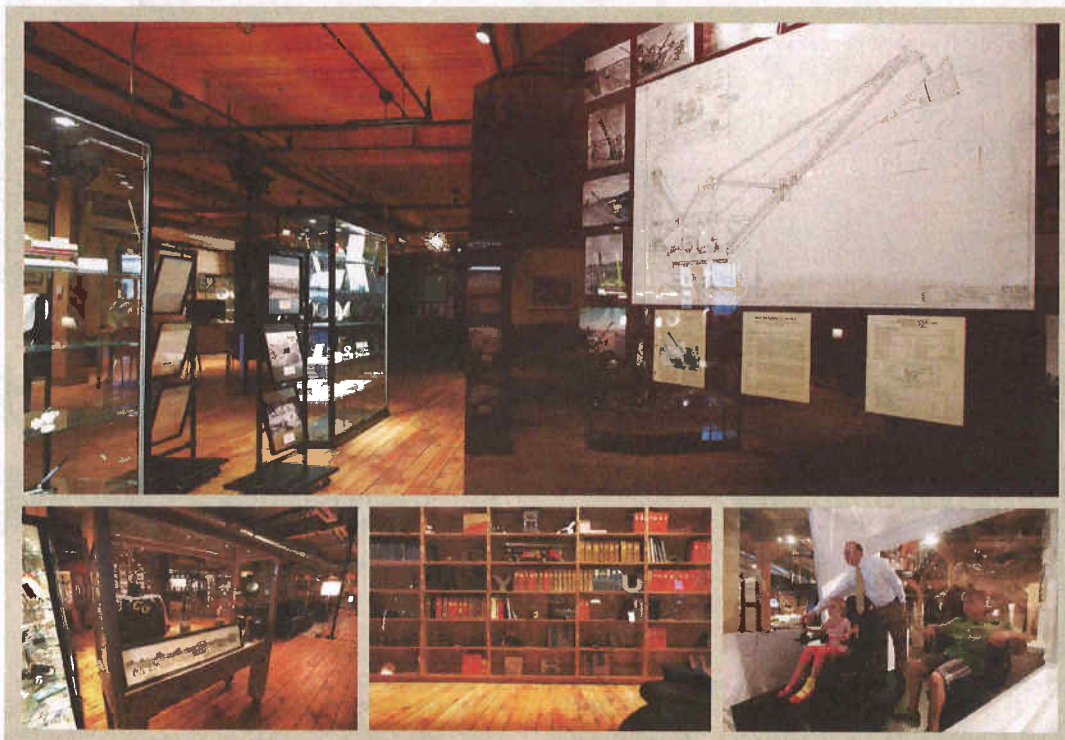
Paul Johnson
Bucyrus Visitor
Center

Johnson joined Bucyrus in May after serving as education curator at the Dinosaur Discovery Museum in Kenosha.

The expanded museum opened in May and operates five days per week. Previously, the museum only had been open every other Saturday.

The museum focuses on Bucyrus' history and the large pieces of mining equipment it produces. It features a variety of multimedia presentations and displays, including an interactive shovel simulator, as well as product models, historic photos from the Bucyrus archives and a diorama of an open-pit mine.

The second floor of the museum fea-



SCOTT PAULUS

The Bucyrus museum features three floors of exhibits covering 18,000 square feet.

tures numerous models of Bucyrus' walking draglines, the massive pieces of equipment used mainly for mining coal that can cost as much as \$150 million. A library on the third floor has been named for outgoing Bucyrus chief executive officer Tim Sullivan.

Sullivan is set to depart from the company upon the closing of a deal in which Bucyrus will be acquired by Caterpillar Inc.

Paul Upchurch, president and chief executive officer of Visit Milwaukee, the area's convention and visitors bureau, is confident the museum can be a regional attraction.

"I think there is a huge curiosity about large mining equipment," Upchurch said.

The strong manufacturing roots of Wisconsin and Illinois could draw tourists to the museum, he said. Cross-

promotional efforts between the museum and South Milwaukee's burgeoning farmers market, held Thursday evenings near Bucyrus' factory, also could bring in visitors, said Bob Pfeiffer, director of the South Milwaukee Public Library and head of the market.

The city also is looking into possible partnerships with tourism groups, said Danielle Devlin, executive director of the South Milwaukee Community Development Authority.

"South Milwaukee has a rich manufacturing heritage and it's important to celebrate it," Devlin said.

Amy Malingowski, manager of community relations for Bucyrus, declined to reveal how much the company spent to upgrade the museum.

"It was a fair amount," she said.

C.G. Schmidt, Milwaukee, served as general contractor for the project.

Continuum Architects & Planners and Graef, both of Milwaukee, provided architectural and design services.

Bucyrus initially considered building an addition to house the museum. Preliminary plans called for a lower-level expansion that would have featured mining equipment displays.

"We decided that it would have been cost prohibitive," Malingowski said.

The museum is located in the Heritage Building at 1970 10th Ave. The building had been part of Bucyrus' manufacturing operations and its original hardwood floors and Cream City brick have been preserved.

Bucyrus has its headquarters in Oak Creek and a manufacturing campus in South Milwaukee. About 1,500 people are employed at the South Milwaukee site and 200 in Oak Creek, Malingowski said.