



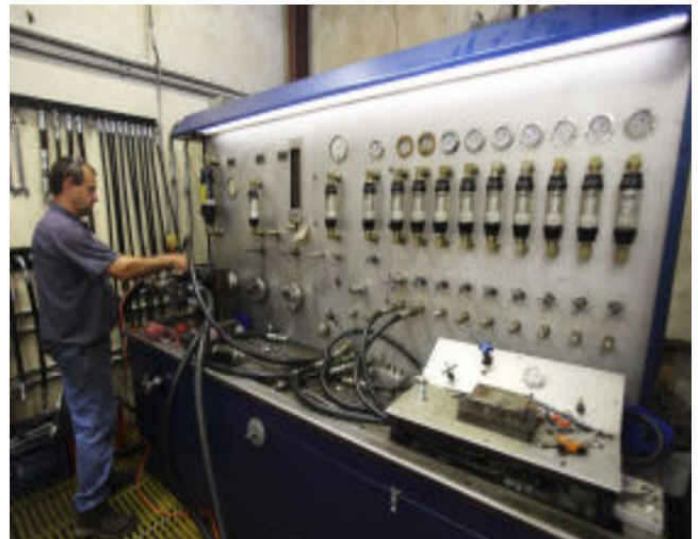
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Photos by Calvin Mattheis/The Hutchinson News

From left, Bill Speakman, Mo Penny and Dennis Rayl of B&B Hydraulics in Hutchinson pose in the shop area of B&B Hydraulics on Friday. B&B Hydraulics, the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce small business of the month, is a supplier for agriculture, drilling and other service industries as well as a distributor of Parker Hydraulic parts.



From small start, B&B Hydraulics continues to grow its business

By John Green The Hutchinson News jgreen@hutchnews.com | Posted: Saturday, June 21, 2014 7:08 pm

B&B Hydraulics was born of necessity and opportunity.

And it's how the 25-year-old company has survived and grown responding to its own and customer needs, and seizing opportunity while trying to address those needs.

That's how it's gone from a two-man operation launched in 1989 to employing 23 people today, with multiple locations and two subsidiary businesses. It also has partnered with several other major companies as a product distributor.

The business at 2400 Line Road is the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Month for June. It was also recognized last week by the governor's office and federal regulators with a SHARP award for workplace safety.

From adversity

Mo Penny worked as a salesman for Cessna Fluid Power about a dozen years before he went to work for Alex MacLeod at a Massey Ferguson combine store. MacLeod had stores in Wichita and Hutchinson, and Penny managed the Hutchinson location.

Part of their business at the store was putting together hydraulic hoses and fittings for agricultural customers. They also acquired surplus hydraulic parts manufactured in Hutchinson by Cessna for their business.

Most farm and industrial equipment, from tractors to backhoes and loaders, rely on hydraulics to operate. Liquid – usually oil or hydraulic fluid is pressurized to provide power and lift.

When they saw “the writing on the wall” that the Massey Ferguson combine corporation was going to file for bankruptcy protection, Penny and MaCleod, recognized an available niche market reselling the surplus hydraulics.

“Cessna had a surplus they needed to get rid of, and we found an outlet to sell,” Penny explained. “We had customers that needed one or two for a loader, while Cessna’s customers were for large orders. That’s how we got started.”

Some of their customers inquired about getting parts for hydraulic pump valves or cylinders, or asked if their business could do repairs, Penny said. So they hired a third employee, a service technician.

They started out in a small building on Whiteside Road, but quickly moved into a building they shared with its owner, with three times the space, on Line Road. Eventually, they bought and occupied the whole building.

A new partner

In 1997, Dennis Rayl, who’d operated his own small farm and oilfield repair shop near Windom for about five years before a lightning strike burned it down, heard from a former customer that B&B was looking for someone to run its shop.

He was employed at Sterling Drug in McPherson at the time, working to pay off debt on the old business, when he moved to B&B.

“When I came on there were three in the shop and three working up front,” Rayl recalled. “I worked in the shop about five years before I became active in management decisions.”

He’s now a partner with Penny in the business – MaCleod has retired ♦ and oversees sales.

“Dennis Rayl has done more for this company than anyone ever before,” Penny said. “He’s helped the company grow tremendously.”

In 2004, Bill Speakman, who’d been working at Keystone Manufacturing in McPherson, learned from his father, a customer of B&B through the Union Pacific Railroad, about a position there.

“I worked my way up from the shop to managing the shop,” said Speakman, also from the Windom area. “Over the last five years, I’ve moved into day-to-day business management.”

Now he’s general manager.

“We also, throughout pretty much the state of Kansas, have found another niche where we service, repair and install balers and compactors,” Penny said. “You find them behind Wal-Mart, Dillons and Kmart. We do that for a number of manufactures of that type of equipment,” which all run off hydraulics.

The service was added about 20 years ago, Penny said, and continues to grow. Also on the management team is Chuck Buggeln, who oversees service and installation of the compactor units.

“We have a crew of technicians on the road all the time, serving, repairing and installing balers and compactors,” Penny said.

The Hutchinson operation

On the north side of their plant, they do cylinder and piston pump manufacturing and repair.

“It doesn’t matter the system, application or industry,” Sparkman said. “We do all makes and models.”

They built an apparatus in-house that can remove highly-torqued fasteners, as well as all the necessary equipment for basic machining, he said, so “we can build a cylinder from scratch.”

Inside the fully-climate controlled building is oil testing equipment and a lapping machine, which can smooth a metal surface to within 100-millionth of an inch, Sparkman said.

In the center of the building is a parts inventory and rows of coiled hydraulic hose.

“On average we make 10 to 20 hoses a day for walk-in customers that need them on the farm or industry,” he said.

On the south side of the building is their mobile equipment repair shop, where mobile equipment, such as bucket trucks or skid loaders, are brought in for hydraulic repair, as well as pressure testers. One recently added can generate up to 400 hp and test high-flow, high-pressure pumps.

“Our immediate service area, for B&B Hydraulics, is about a 60 to 100 mile radius around us,” Penny said. “We do have an online store, and we sell all over the U.S., Canada and ship overseas.”

Add ons

Down the block is B&B Auto Electric, a business B&B purchased last October and relocated from Fourth Avenue to space at the end of Line Road.

“They rebuilt starters and generators and magnetos, things like that,” Penny said. “That fits into what we do. We used to take things to them to be rebuilt and repair. They were going out of business and we decided to purchase it and move it here. We continue to use it, and we share the same customer base. If you have hydraulic trucks and tractors, they start with generators and alternators.”

Their latest addition was becoming a Parker Truck hydraulic center, marketing that company’s line of products.

They are also an SKF Lincoln automated lubrication distributor for Kansas, Nebraska, Southwest Iowa and Western Missouri, with another subsidiary, Lincoln Engineered Division doing installations all over the country from its base in Overland Park, Penny said.

“We have five people that do that, every day, and we’ve probably been doing it about 10 years.”

“We’ve tried to stay flexible and viable in the market,” Rayl said. “Once we found a market, we took advantage of that.”

Though 71, Penny doesn’t have plans to retire soon, planning to continue working at least three or four more years.

“It’s a little easier when you own the business and have good people supporting you,” he said. “I just happen to be here hanging on.”

Dillon dazzles City Council with presentation on The Alley

Brad Dillon, an attorney, county commissioner and he’ll smile when he reads this bowling entrepreneur; knows that everybody wants to know when construction will start on The Alley of Hutchinson. “It will be soon,” he said. “I can’t be more specific than that.”

Dondlinger Construction, the general contractor from Wichita, is still waiting on some bids from subcontractors. Once it has those, the construction company will finalize its contract with Hutchinson Entertainment Project LLC, the development group Dillon is a major part of. Then they can complete the sale of \$6.5 million in industrial revenue bonds previously approved by the City Council. And then the construction can start.

“I hope it will be sometime in June,” Dillon said. “When Jim (Strawn) and I started this, the goal was to replace what we lost when Countryside (Lanes) closed. We’re going to end up with a lot more than that.”

Dillon gave the council a glimpse of how much more with a multi-media presentation on Tuesday.

“With this presentation, I wanted to let everyone know we’re working hard on it, and it’s going to be worth the wait,” Dillon said. This will be the third bowling alley/entertainment center built from the ground up by Frank and Cathy DeSocio, two other principals in the development. Their first was North Rock Lanes in Wichita. Then they took the concept of a bowling alley to an entirely new level with The Alley near 13th and Greenwich in Wichita.

Then another group of bowling proprietors in Baton Rouge, La., took the design of The Alley and improved upon it. The DeSocios took Dillon and others to visit that bowling center in Louisiana, and now they’re going to improve upon that concept with The Alley of Hutchinson, Dillon said. “We’re going to have a facility that is the absolute state of the art right now,” he said. “There won’t be another city our size anywhere in the country that will have anything nicer.”

Starting with the basics, The Alley of Hutchinson will have 20 traditional bowling lanes. But each will have bumpers to keep the kids from throwing their bowling balls into the gutters. What’s more, when you’re bowling with your child, those bumpers will rise and drop back down automatically, depending on whether it’s the turn of a child or an adult to bowl.

There also will be six “boutique” lanes in another area for private parties and casual bowlers who drop-in when the traditional lanes are being used by league bowlers. The boutique area will have glass garage doors that can be lowered to provide privacy for a party or simply a little less noise. The boutique area also will have its own bar that can be staffed as required by the customers.

Need bowling shoes? Hutchinson’s Alley will have 300 pairs of unisex rental shoes up to size 15. And the stitching will glow when they’re having cosmic bowling under black lights. Kids shoes won’t have laces but instead Velcro straps. The Alley will be completely friendly to people with disabilities. “There are no steps anywhere,” Dillon said. “The floor is completely flush.”

There will be adjustable ramps for people with disabilities to use to aim their ball and get it rolling down the lane. There will be balls with retractable handles for people with arthritic hands to use. The Alley of Hutchinson will aim for shorter league bowling seasons to accommodate more and more leagues such as a coffee league early in the morning, a seniors league in the afternoon, a coop league, a church league, a farmers’ league.

During periods of high demand, lanes will be rented by the hour instead of the game, so that bowlers can reasonably anticipate what time they’ll be able to start bowling. And they’ll get pagers that will tell them when their lane is open.

Dillon said The Alley of Hutchinson also will accommodate high school bowling teams and college kids. When The Alley in Wichita started having “late night” bowling for college kids, 200 Wichita State students showed up the first night. “We want to do the same thing here,” Dillon said.

There will be a 2,200-square-foot laser tag game room and an arcade with 30-40 games intended primarily for kids 12 and under. Kids or their parents will buy a plastic game ce card that can be loaded up with whatever amount of credit they desire. The kids will insert the card into games to pay for their games, and points earned for high scores will be credited to the card. When they’re done, the kids will be able to take the card to a redemption area and trade their points for toys.

The star of the kids’ entertainment, Dillon predicted, will be the Spin Zone, an air-cushioned bumper car ride. Each of the eight cars will have a buddy seat, so that children too small to ride alone can ride with a parents or older child, Dillon said.

As for the interior décor, The Alley of Hutchinson will go for the appearance of an old factory with a lot of brick walls. Interior signage will include images of Hutchinson, and right now the hunt is on for an iconic photo of an alley somewhere in Hutchinson.

There will be a 1,000-square-foot meeting room that businesses can rent. Dillon said that a group of Wal-Mart managers rents a similar room at The Alley in Wichita each month for a business meeting followed by lunch and bowling.

AJ's Sports Grill will have seating for 96 diners and numerous flat-screen televisions and a Direct TV package that will allow the restaurant to show any game customers want to see on at least one television, Dillon said. So if you're a Buffalo fan in a sea of Chiefs fans, there will still be a place to enjoy your game with friends. And when the weather is nice, there will be some outdoor seating on the east side, shaded from the afternoon sun. Dillon also guaranteed good food. The signature item on the menu will be a 29-inch-diameter pizza. Last Super Bowl Sunday, The Alley in Wichita baked 250 of those pizzas for carry-out orders.

"With all the places to get pizza in Wichita, that's what they wanted," Dillon said.

Hutchinson has been without a bowling alley since Countryside Lanes closed in December 2011. In a tip of the hat to Hutchinson's bowling heritage, Dillon said the pro shop in The Alley will be run by the grandchildren of the late Lowell Pigg, who managed Countryside for 22 years.

The Alley of Hutchinson will employ about 60 people, including a dozen full-time. One full-time employee will be a party scheduler. Dillon said The Alley in Wichita is a popular destination for office parties, birthday parties, Christmas parties and other occasions. One high school even scheduled its prom around the availability of The Alley for the after-prom party.

"We're building something we think will draw people from more than 100 miles away," Dillon said.

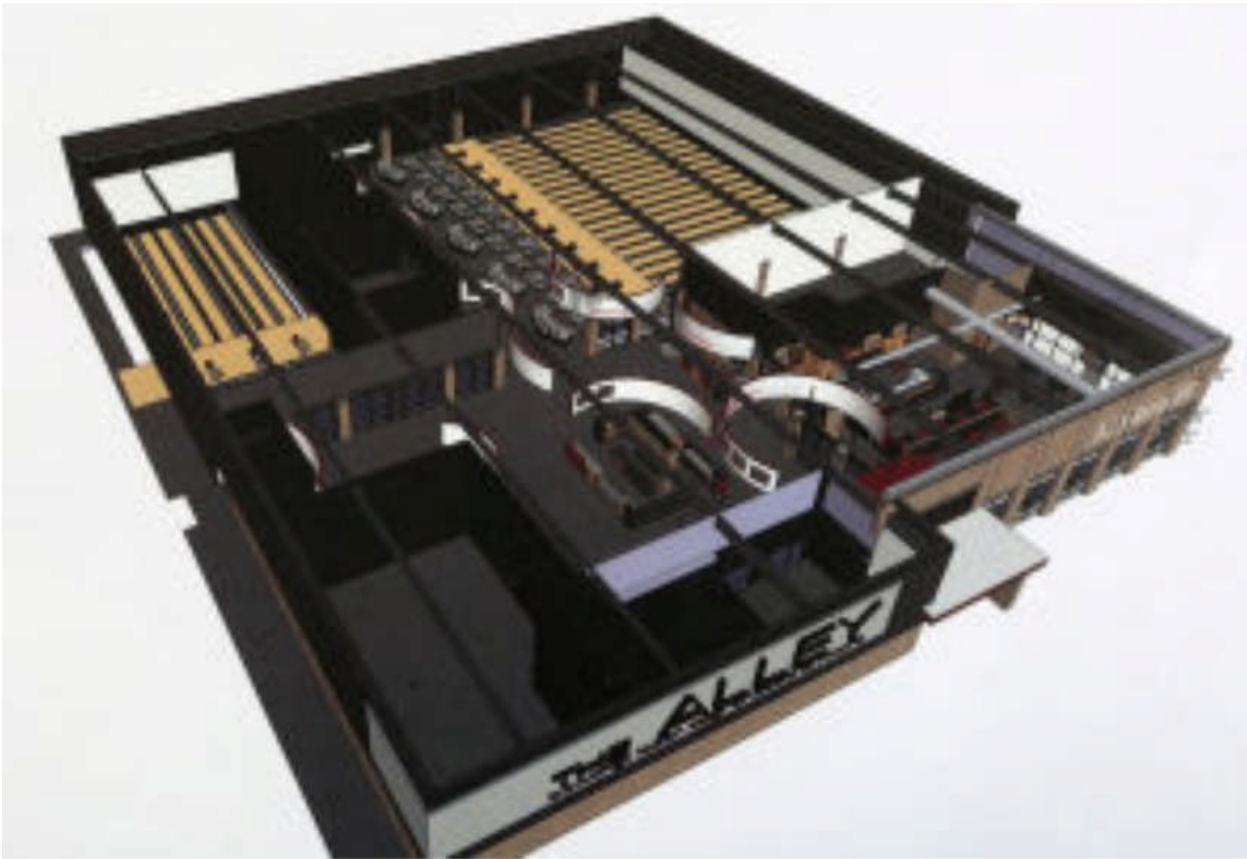
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Travis Morisse/The Hutchinson News

<http://www.hutchpost.com/2014/06/03/groundbreaking-for-new-entertainment-center-coming-soon/>

HUTCH POST: Groundbreaking for new entertainment center coming soon



By Fred Gough



(Story by Rod Zook)

HUTCHINSON, Kan. Developers of the proposed new entertainment center at 23 rd & Lorraine claim they will build a facility like no other in a city the size of Hutchinson.

County Commissioner Brad Dillon who is also an investor in the center was before the Hutchinson City Council giving them a full preview of what to expect. He says they hope to begin dirt work this month with hopes of opening the bowling alley and restaurant in about a year.

The alley as it will be called will provide 20-lanes of bowling with six more private lanes for parties. It will also include lazier tag, air ride bumper cars and an arcade geared to kids 12 and under. There will be many things different from the old bowling alley.

One of the major ones will be the 6-private lanes which can be used for parties and private functions. If a party is held, a full time assistant will be there to cater to that group alone. Secondly, the lanes will be rented by the hour and not by each game meaning times can be reserved for an alley and that a customer will know when they are available.

But, the biggest change they hope will attract more bowlers is when they will have leagues. They say they will be much shorter than the traditional nine month long seasons. They want various leagues, such as a church league, senior league and morning leagues. They also hope to stay open for late night bowling for the college students.

The center has an acre of land in reserve in which they hope to open a miniature golf course or a go-cart track at some point in the future.