

# Media Release



**Manitoba Children's Museum - Kinsmen Building - 45 Forks Market Road - Winnipeg, MB R3C 4T6  
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## **For Immediate Release**

March 4, 2011

### **Buhler Welcome Centre to Transform Children's Museum Site**

***Private-sector gift of \$800,000 announced in support of the Children's Museum Capital Campaign***

**Winnipeg, MB** – A gift of \$800,000 from Winnipeg philanthropists John and Bonnie Buhler to the Children's Museum announced today will support new construction of a signature building, to be named the Buhler Welcome Centre, at the historic train repair facility that houses the museum located at The Forks.

The largest private-sector gift received to date, the construction of the Buhler Welcome Centre will provide Children's Museum guests with upgraded admission amenities and visitor services, and will feature enhanced safety and security for the museum's youngest visitors.

"The Buhler Welcome Centre expansion is a gift to the families in our community that will improve access to the arts by serving as a gathering place. Caregivers can have confidence that the Children's Museum not only provides opportunities for children to learn through play, but that it does so in a facility where the risks related to physical safety and security have been intentionally minimized," says Diane Doth, Executive Director of the Children's Museum.

The Children's Museum renovation and expansion is one of several exciting construction projects currently happening at The Forks, according to John Buhler.

"Our investment gives us the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing development and changing landscape of The Forks, and we see it as a chance to support the families and children in our community through the renewal of this much-loved public institution," Buhler said.

The couples' passion for the Children's Museum's approach to childhood learning and mission of sparking kids creative learning is a passion embraced by members of the extended Buhler family, as demonstrated by one of their grandchildren who is a current volunteer at the museum.

"The Children's Museum encourages positive family relationships," says Bonnie Buhler, and she cites her grandchildren and the couple's relationship with their family as another large factor that influenced their donation.

"When we were approached to become the lead donors for the Welcome Centre, I was excited at the thought of being able to give something back to the community in honour of our grandchildren," says Bonnie Buhler. "Our grandchildren are our greatest treasure," she said. "John has been on numerous boards over the years and has bought and sold a lot of companies, but the accomplishment we are both most proud of is our family."

The *Under Construction Capital Campaign* is the first large-scale renovation of the Children's Museum since its move to The Forks in 1994. The Buhler's donation will help the museum pursue its plans to renovate and expand the museum through the development of 12 new galleries, an Arts & Exhibition Centre, and the Buhler Welcome Centre addition.

With \$1.3 million remaining to be raised of the original \$10 million goal, Lawrie Pollard, Chair of the museum's Capital Campaign and Chairman of Pollard Banknote, praised the couple for their investment to the museum and to the children in Winnipeg. "John and Bonnie Buhler's donations to the Children's Museum and to other local organizations have been instrumental in contributing to the growth and prosperity of Manitoba. By supporting the capital campaign, Mr and Mrs Buhler are setting an example and calling on our community to invest in our children by investing in the Children's Museum."

The Children's Museum is currently closed for construction and will re-open to the public on Saturday, June 4, 2011 which coincides with the museum's twenty-fifth anniversary. Donations to the *Under Construction Capital Campaign* can be made by calling 956-KIDS or visiting [childrensmuseum.com](http://childrensmuseum.com).

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**A respect for and belief in the potential of all children is the vision of the Manitoba Children's Museum. As a registered children's charity, the Museum provides an environment which nurtures the power of the imagination and the spirit of exploration and self-discovery.**

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About John and Bonnie Buhler**

John and Bonnie Buhler are renowned Winnipeg philanthropists who continue to support health, education, and cultural organizations. For more than a decade the couple has donated to a wide variety of community organizations and capital campaigns in an effort to make a difference in the lives of Manitobans.

Examples of the Buhlers' commitment to the community are The Bonnie and John Buhler Centre at Seven Oaks Hospital, The Buhler Gallery at St. Boniface Hospital, The Buhler Cancer Centre at Victoria Hospital, The John Buhler Research Centre at the University of Manitoba, the Buhler Commons and Library at Red River College, and The Buhler Centre - home to the University of Winnipeg's Division of Continuing Education and the Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art.

John Buhler is a prominent Winnipeg businessman, and his company, Buhler Industries Inc., is one of the largest manufacturers of farm implements in Canada today. Buhler was awarded the Manitoba Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 1997, the Manitoba Citizen of the Year Award in 1998, and the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2000.

John and Bonnie were first introduced in 1979. They married in October 1985 and have five children and 10 grandchildren.

### **Community Impact**

The Children's Museum first opened its doors in 1986 in a 4,000 sq. ft space in a warehouse building. In its first year, the museum welcomed 65,000 visitors. More than 500 families became members and over 800 school groups, nurseries and daycares engaged in hands-on learning in the museum's galleries.

Twenty-five years later, the museum offers a 33,000 sq.ft facility that welcomes 135,000 visitors and 15,000 children through schools, nurseries and daycares annually. The museum has 1500 member families. All of these numbers are expected to grow as the next phase of the museum becomes a reality.

### **Under Construction Capital Campaign**

The *Under Construction Capital Campaign* is the first large-scale renovation of the Children's Museum since its move to The Forks in 1994. This \$10 million campaign will raise funds to develop twelve new galleries, a state-of-the-art Arts & Exhibition Centre, and The Buhler Welcome Centre addition.

Of the \$10 million campaign goal, \$8.7 million has been raised to-date, including a federal and provincial infrastructure contribution of \$5 million towards the project. The museum is looking to the community for financial support to reach their goal.

Further details and ongoing updates to this project are available at [www.childrensmuseum.com](http://www.childrensmuseum.com).



MANITOBA  
Children's Museum



WELCOME CENTRE - VIEW FROM THE PLAZA