

BELOIT BUSINESS FINDS NEW HOME

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Ryan Silvola/Beloit Daily News Mid-City Guns and Thorns Golf Carts has opened for business in its new location at 6137 South US Highway 51, Janesville. The longtime downtown Beloit business has moved out of the city after 57 years.

JANESVILLE - A longtime downtown Beloit business has moved to a new location after 57 years.

The former Beloit Sport Center, which used to be on Grand Avenue, has moved north between Beloit and Janesville, to a site at 6137 South US Highway 51. The building, which opened on Jan. 2, houses two businesses: Thorns Golf Carts and Mid-City Guns.

Laurie Mattison, office manager, said she and her father, Mick, knew they needed more space. They've now doubled in space, from 5,000 to 10,000 square feet. She said they previously stored their fleet of golf carts at the Janesville site, and they eventually decided to purchase the building for both the retail space and five acres of land that can be used to store the carts.

They closed the store in Beloit on Dec. 29 and opened at the new location about 10 minutes away just days later.

Mattison said the move already appears to be paying off.

"It's January, and I've already had people stopping by to look at golf carts," Mattison said. "January also is typically a slow time for gun sales, and those sales also are doing well."

She said there's a huge market for golf carts. Thorns has 100 carts in a fleet that's rented to golf courses and a semi-truck to transport the carts within a 100-mile radius. In total, they have about 200 carts on-site.

"They go all over starting in about May, and they don't come back until September. It's pretty crazy," Mattison said.

Mattison said she likely will take over for her father when he eventually decides to retire.

However, she said a little more help might be needed soon.

The business also is in need of semi-truck drivers and mechanics, which Mattison said can be difficult to find. Also, as the gun store employees get closer to retirement age, she said they also may be in need of gun experts to work in the store.

For more information, go to thornsgolfcars.com.