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Committees

- **Design:** Kathy Parsons
- **Economic Revitalization:** Diane Smith
- **Organization & Finance:** Julie Clement
- **Promotions & Marketing:** Nikki Sunstrum

- **Board Chair,** Joel VanSlambrouck

Farmers' Market

Starts June 4. Stop at the Red Mill every Saturday from 8am - 1pm -- celebrating 11 years!

On the Street

It's summertime! Enjoy it as much as you can:

- ▷ June 2, 6:30-8:00pm: Thursdays on the Grand (TOG), Two Rivers Park, Northern Lights
- ▷ June 4, Red Mill Opens (8am - 1pm, every Saturday)
- ▷ June 6, 4-6pm: Community Dinner, Congregational Church
- ▷ June 9, 6:30-8:00pm: TOG
- ▷ June 13, 4-6pm: Community Dinner, Congregational Church
- ▷ June 16, 6:30-8:00pm: TOG, Pat White
- ▷ June 18, Cruise-A-Thong
- ▷ June 20, 4-6pm: Community Dinner, Congregational Church
- ▷ June 23, 6:30-8:00pm: TOG, Royal Ramblers

Downtown Happenings

- ▷ June 27, 4-6pm: Community Dinner, Congregational Church
- ▷ June 30, 6:30-8:00pm: TOG, Northern Lights
- ▷ July 4: Independence Day. For information on the Chamber of Commerce activities, go to www.portlandareachamber.com
- ▷ July 7, 6:30-8:00pm: TOG, We Three Strings
- ▷ August 19-21, Riverfest
- ▷ October 15, Oktoberfest
- ▷ November 18-19, HolidayFest on the Grand

What's New?

the project committee acknowledges that the building could have other purposes in the future. "The main reason our committee is exploring the preservation and reuse of this building is for economic development purposes," said Diane Smith, chairperson of the Main Street Economic Revitalization Committee. "We would like to see an adaptive reuse that would bring economic activity to downtown Portland."

Preservation of the Opera House Building

The former Portland Opera House in downtown Portland is being considered for historic preservation. Even though it was formerly used as an opera house,

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Some ideas include a reception hall, a brew pub with a balcony overlooking the river, or a restaurant. "It's really up to the public whether this building will be preserved and how it will be used if restored," said Smith. The committee held a public meeting on May 14th, where they presented a history of the building, followed by a tour. The next meeting is June 28, 6:30pm, at the PCMI office below the Opera House building. Interested members of the public are welcome to attend.

2011 Cruise-A-Thong

Downtown Portland hosts the 3rd annual Cruise-A-Thong--a triathlon for the average Joe! Check out www.portlandcommunityarts.com for more information on this and other fun events to be held on June 18.

Meet Your Neighbor: Bernie Pelc

Each business owner is motivated to succeed for different reasons and seeks guidance throughout the journey from different sources. But does every business owner thrive on challenges, study successful people, and look to a higher power for guidance and strength? For Bernie Pelc, Jr., owner of PCMI in downtown Portland, that is absolutely the case.

Bernie's history starts in Port Huron, where he grew up with two sisters and eventually attended Eastern Michigan University. At EMU, Bernie "crammed a four-year program into five years," which he looks back at now with a grin. He walked onto the EMU Division 1 soccer team, achieving a goal he had throughout his childhood. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Ecosystems Biology and completed an internship at the US Geological Service. At the end of his internship, he continued at the USGS for another two years as a research fisheries biological technician and co-authored a research document concerning Great Lakes fisheries.

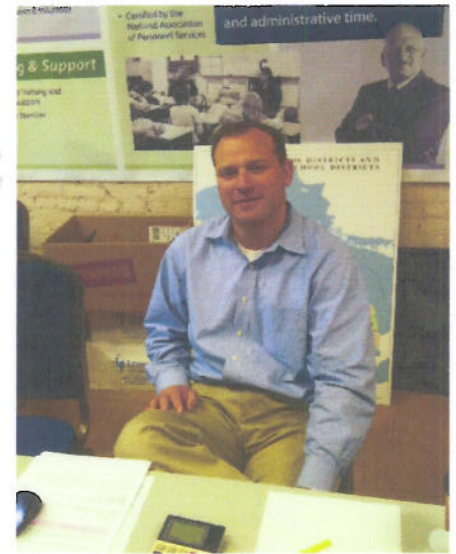
Bernie made Portland his home after marrying Portland native Michele Brown, daughter of Susan and the late Jeff Brown. Bernie started out owning and managing rental property while also serving as a substitute teacher in the area. Working in the area of education seemed to be a family tradition for the Pelc family. Both of his parents were educators, his two sisters are educators, and his wife, Michele, is employed by the Ionia Intermediate School District. Later, as you'll see, his dad founded the very business Bernie owns today--a business that can save schools money by using the staffing and HR solution PCMI offers.

After working as a substitute teacher and landlord, Bernie started to realize that he wanted more than a job . . . he wanted something different. "I decided that, if I was going to work that hard, I might as well do

something that I can capitalize on," said Bernie. "I like the challenge of building a business," he said. His biggest challenge, as he describes it, was learning how to build a company to support the services he wanted to offer. "What value am I really creating for other people?" is a question Bernie often asks himself to keep focused as he works to achieve his goals, and as he uses time-management and goal-management tools every day to stay on target. As I heard him describe this process, I thought to myself that this is the mind and spirit shared by true entrepreneurs . . . the entrepreneurs that end up starting one successful business after another. It is no wonder that he was recognized as one of the Entrepreneurs of the Year of the Greater Lansing in 2009.

In 2004, Bernie started learning the PCMI business as he worked full time for his dad, who founded and owned PCMI in Marine City. In 2006, he bought a portion of his dad's business and opened what is now PCMI West in downtown Portland. Finally, in 2008, Bernie became the sole owner of PCMI, and PCMI West became the PCMI headquarters. Bernie operates the PCMI headquarters out of the same location where Michele's uncle, Jerry Brown, operated Brown's Pharmacy for many years. In addition to his Portland location, Bernie manages the Marine City, Petoskey, and Bay City branches of PCMI. He looks back and laughs as he remembers the conversations he had with his dad in his earlier years where he insisted that he wasn't interested in being a part of his father's business.

Bernie's dad, Bernie Pelc Sr., a retired school superintendent, and an obvious entrepreneur himself, worked with other superintendents to create the PCMI concept back in 1994 when he recognized he could provide a service that would save schools money and reduce the brain-drain created when



administrators left the school system. His dad laid the foundation for his business by working with the Office of Retirement Services in the Attorney General's office to confirm that it conformed with the state rules and regulations governing school employees. Bernie Pelc Sr. then started PCMI to employ part- and full-time administrative positions, better known as retiree positions, and built the foundation for company that PCMI is today.

Bernie Pelc Jr. has grown PCMI today to employ full- and part-time substitute teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals for public and private schools, charter schools, academies, colleges, and universities. Bernie acquired another education staffing firm to obtain the technology WillSub, an automated employee-placement system that is a key component of his business. His business services more than 315 client school districts and employees 27,000 throughout Michigan. At his headquarters in Portland, the PCMI team is made of more than 15 employees from the greater Portland area and another 35 employees located in his other three Michigan branches.

In addition to PCMI, Bernie has developed and is co-owner of two other

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Meet Your Neighbor, cont.

subsidiary companies that provide complete program operation services. One company, called METS, provides transportation program operations including bus drivers, bus aids, routing, busses, and other transportation positions within the education system. The other company, called FEATS, provides operations for facilities including custodial services, maintenance, and energy services. "These programs were created at the request of our client districts. They allow us to round out the PCMI "family" of educational contracting services. These programs are growing fast and were developed with the help of Chad Brown of Portland, Kim Badder of Midland, and Ed Dollin of Cincinnati Ohio," Bernie told me. "The programs were designed to meet the unique needs of schools' operations."

Bernie attributes his success to his wife and his employees' character and integrity. "we have been able to recruit great local employees," said Bernie. "I don't know everything, so I try to surround myself with those that do. The PCMI team is made up of highly qualified people, and they, too, surround themselves with people that add to what they need to know. "Any perceived success is not mine but the collective effort a great PCMI team. My wife has also been instrumental to my success as we have learned to set big goals together. She supports me with the short-term sacrifices necessary to attain these long-term goals."

Bernie and his wife Michele have three children: Caiden, age 8; Isaiah, age 6; and Maizie, age 3. They are members of the Portland St. Patrick Catholic Church, and his two sons are enrolled in the Portland St. Patrick School. Bernie likes his Portland location for PCMI. "I like the small town atmosphere. Everyone is friendly, helpful, and generally and genuinely kind. The City has great infrastructure and has been supportive," said Bernie. "I do as much local business as possible. Many of the local business owners have been phenomenal in helping me through referrals, recommendations, or just the opportunity to share ideas. I like to see other business owners and their families out in the community after hours and on the weekends. This provides a great sense of community

When he's not working, Bernie's interests lie with his family and his love of the outdoors,



which is where he chooses to be above all else. He enjoys playing with his kids, fishing, gardening and raising chickens with this wife, and spending time at his in-laws cottage with family. In the community, Bernie serves as a volunteer on the Main Street Economic Revitalization Committee, as a Trustee for the Portland Wrestling Club, and as a member of the Knights of Columbus.

On a serious note, Bernie said he finds

that most guidance in how to build his business comes from God. As a member of the Christian Business Men's Connection in Lansing (CBMC), Bernie meets and counsels regularly to share and receive business guidance. "I've noticed that the times when I am bogged down and struggling for solutions are the same times when I'm trying to operate my business without God . . . I have a saying: when in doubt, pray it out," said Bernie.

As I look back on the interview now, I see the characteristics and pattern of a true entrepreneur that started as a child. Throughout his life, Bernie has set goals and implemented a system to achieve those goals. Today, he uses that same approach to be a successful entrepreneur and member of the community.

From Diane Smith, Main Street Economic Revitalization Committee Chair

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Thursdays on the Grand

"Sit a Spell"

Are you ready for Thursdays on the Grand?
Join the Portland Community Arts Council at the band shell at
Two Rivers Park every Thursday, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

June 2 - Northern Lights

June 9 - To be announced

June 16 - Pat White

June 23 - Royal Ramblers

June 30 - Northern Lights

July 7 - We Three Strings

July 14 - El Kabong

July 21 - Blue Jello

July 28 - Grand Ledge Bums

August 4 - Bailey's Comet

August 11 - Jeff Speas

August 18 - Rush & Julie Clement

August 25 - All-Star Jam*

* Want to participate? Leave a message at 517 647 6545

Any day now, you'll start to see Adirondack chairs throughout the downtown. Painted by area artists, these chairs are for sitting . . . and for buying during the Portland Community Arts Council's summer silent-auction event. Throughout the summer, chairs will be displayed throughout the downtown.

Want to bid on one? Stop in that place of business and register your silent-auction bid. Want to vote for your favorite? Stop in that place of business and place a quarter (or more) in the canister. All proceeds benefit the Portland Community Arts Council. The artist who paints the favorite chair will receive 1/2 of the vote revenue.

Want to enter a chair? Want to sponsor a chair and display it outside your business? Go to www.portlandcommunityarts.com for more information and an application form.



Here are just two of the chairs to be displayed in downtown Portland this summer



New Summer Hours at Cheeky Monkeys

Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Stop in on Thursdays for a Brown Bag Lunch to enjoy at
Thursdays on the Grand**

Try our fabulous BBQ Pulled Pork or Chicken Salad