

Hope Robinson interview
with
Paul Aresnault

me: Hope Robinson, December 9th, interviewing Mr. Aresnault.
Business Management on the Pioneer Square mall at the
Pioneer Square Mall.

me: When and where were you born?

Paul: I was born in Marquette, 1957, February 8th.

me: What are your parents names?

Paul: Donald and Opal.

me: How many people are in your family?

Paul: There was five in my family. I have two sisters and a
brother. They are all older than me. I am the youngest.

me: When did you get married?

Paul: I got married in 1979.

me: How many children do you have?

Paul: I have three children. I have two boys and a girl.

me: What are the names?

Paul: Jason, Shannon, and Richard.

me: What is your educational level?

Paul: My former educational level is twelve grade high school,
I also attended several business seminars and financial
seminars through community colleges through college and from
just professional people.

me: Did you go in business for yourself after high school?

Paul: No, I did not. I did a few other things before I went to
business

me: What did you do before you went in business for yourself?

Paul: I work as electrician on construction. I work with Cleveland Cliff Iron Company for 10 years. I also work by Ricco Explosives as a mechanic and truck driver hauling explosives over the road.

me: Oh! What lead you to go in business for your self?

Paul: I decided I didn't want a other company to control my life, if I going to be successful. I was going to be successful because of my hard work. I was ~~not~~ going worry about lay offs or if I failed it would be my fault. Not a companies

me: You own the Pioneer Square Mall. Can you give me some background history on the Pioneer Square Mall before you bought it?

Paul: Before I bought it. The Pioneer Square was called the Gossard Outlet. It was built before it was Gossard Outlet it was

_____ Department Store it was built in 1904 by a gentleman named Fred Bradfast. It was three stories at that time and the building was concerned the biggest department store north of Milwaukee. When Mr. Bradfast died in 1920. In 1921, the city of Ishpeming took over the building (Ahh) A group of businessmen got together recued the Gossard Factory or Gossard Outlet which took over in 1921 and they started a factory here and in peck times 1921 to 1973 employed 689 women.

me: wow!

Paul: They made lingerie that, this factory was solded all over the world including some of the top lingerie markets in Paris, France.

me: That exciting! (laugh) After you brought it what did you do to the mall?

Paul: When I bought the mall, it was empty. It had been converted into a mall by a company called Hemotic Development Cooperation it was unsuccessful in obtaining tenants and just before the city was ready to abandon the building, I bought the building and I did some minor regulations because most of the major ones were done and began to be recured and it this time, at the time I bought it was empty and at this time I have three floors that are filled with tenants such as Federal & Government, 96 district court and several retail and offices.

me: Like what kinda things did you remodeling the floors?

Paul: The basic remodeling on the first floor was done, but had to do on the second floor Apache Archery which is indoor shooting range. A pro shop is in there. We had ^{to} do remodeling there. When 96 district court come in, we remolded and put several offices in and public restrooms and now 1999 when Federal senses Ferbu come in again we had to intense remodeling on the third floor for office space, public restrooms, and added a new fully equipped elevator.

me: What stores or businesses was in the store before and after you bought it?

Paul: Before I bought it was nothing. The building was empty and now as I stated it got several service business and retail such as: liquor store, salon, clothing store, video store, a restaurant, and a computer store, financial planning firm, and an insurance agency among a few others.

me: How long have you own Pioneer Square Mall?

Paul: I bought it Pioneer Square in April, 1985.
me: (okay!) Is it easy to go in business for yourself?

Paul: No, it is very difficult. A lot of people only see the outside of the business. Business is very difficult thing. It is very stressful, but it can be rewarding.

me: What is an average day like to you?

Paul: A average day for me, I come in about 7:30 or 8 o'clock in the morning. I do some retain maintain checks on the building when I come in day before I sit night before I leave and write a list of things to do for the next day. It may be some retain mention, it may be some boiler work, it may be changing some lights, and I generally do that in the morning. After lunch, I take care of my banking activities and any correspondence or pay roll or book keeping that needs to be done. I take care of that. Then about 4 o'clock in afternoon again I will make some retain mentions checks and take care of any other errands and I generally go home between 6 and 6:30 in the evening.

me: How many hours do you work in a week?

Paul: A procently 60 to 70 hours a week.

me: Do you get tired because of it?

Paul: (Laugh) Yes, I get very tired, but you have to put that amount of hours. Business is very difficult and if you are not there. If the owner personally present to see what going on, you're business will not be a success.

me: Can you take off when you want?

Paul: I guess basically, you can take off when you want, but if you decided to take too much time off your business would run to the ground. So, ashyly you take time off if you want to leave, but the amount of ~~that~~ time that you want to take out would be very dependent on the successful of your business. Most of the time holidays and that normal people are off on weekends
page 4

Paul: and holidays and vacations most business people can't do that. They may be take one or two times off a year, but generally they don't get any nowhere near get the time off as someone works for other people.

me: You sound like a busy person. Do you have time for your hobbies?

Paul: The main hobby I have is bird hunting. I like bird hunting. I have also had good dogs to bird hunt with. I also like to do some fishing, but I don't have enough time to pursue my hobbies like I like to. Although in fall I make time for my bird hunting.

me: What was the most rewarding part of owning the Pioneer Square Mall?

Paul: The most rewarding part, that a fact I took a building that was literally was empty and ready to be boarded up and turn it to a successful place and new businesses were opened in Ishpeming that were never exist before. The building occurly has about 50 to 55 people making a living in here. So, between a fact that I felt to created new business and jobs and help to a stimulate the enomia of Ishpeming, It been very rewarding.

me: Would you passed it down from generation to generation?

Paul: I would never force any of my children to go in business because it's such a rough road, but I gladly help them, if anyone them was intense to following my foot steps.

me: (okay) Thank-you very much.

Paul: Your welcome!