

Pohlad family maintains diverse business interests

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There are few Twin Cities industries in which the Pohlad family hasn't done business.

From banking and baseball to airlines and beverages, the Pohlads are woven tightly into the fabric of the Twin Cities economy.

The family holds a stake in:

- Marquette Financial Cos., a real estate investment banking, commercial finance and commercial banking business with assets totaling \$2.4 billion;
- PepsiAmericas Inc., the 18th-largest public company in Minnesota;
- United Properties, the seventh-largest real estate developer in the Twin Cities;
- Minnesota Twins;
- International Jet Inc., which provides services for corporate jets; and
- Stanton Group Inc., a benefits and compensation provider selling products including insurance, trust and broker dealer activities to clients nationwide.

"Our goal is to continue to invest in businesses that we're active in," said Jim Pohlad. "We don't want to be passive or put our money in funds or passive types of investments."

The Pohlads also are some of the biggest philanthropists in town, operating two charitable entities: The Carl and Eloise Pohlad Family Foundation and The Minnesota Twins Community Fund.

A second generation

Carl Pohlad, 91., assembled the Pohlad empire decades ago.

After serving in the army during World War 11, Pohlad returned to his home state of Iowa to work with his brother-in-law, a bank owner. In 1949, Pohlad and his brother-in-law took control of Marquette Bank in Minneapolis. Pohlad took full control of the bank when his sister's husband died a few years later.

Pohlad and his late wife, Eloise, gave birth to the first of their three sons, Jim, in 1953. Jim and his two brothers, Bob and Bill, are business leaders in their own right, both locally and nationally. All three live in the Twin Cities.

Though he's in his 90s, Carl remains involved in the family's business dealings.

"We still know that he's our boss," Jim said. "No decision of any significant nature gets made without his input."

Jim, 53, the eldest, is executive vice president of Marquette Financial Cos. In that role, he's helped lead several acquisitions of specialty finance organizations that have broadened Marquette's portfolio.

He's also a member of the executive committee of the Minnesota Twins.

He serves on the boards of the Pohlad Family Foundation, The Minneapolis Foundation and Park Nicollet Health Services. He also has served on the boards of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce.

The middle son, Robert, 52, is chairman and CEO



FILE PHOTO

Even in his 90s, Carl Pohlad remains involved in his family's business.

of PepsiAmericas Inc. in Minneapolis. PepsiAmericas makes, distributes and markets primarily Pepsi-Cola and Cadbury Schweppes brands in 18 states and in a handful of foreign countries.

Robert also is president of Pohlad Cos., which owned interests in and managed several Pepsi-Cola bottling companies that were later rolled up into PepsiAmericas.

Bill, 50, is the owner of Minneapolis-based River Road Entertainment, which he founded in 1987 to make independent films. In the 1990s, he founded Hi-Wire, an audio/video production house also in Minneapolis.

In the past few years, Bill's River Road Entertainment has started to finance big-budget Hollywood films including Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* and Robert Altman's *A Prairie Home Companion*.

The Pohlad legacy extends beyond Carl's three sons.

John Pohlad, Carl's 41-year-old nephew, is CEO of Marquette Asset Management, Inc. Like his uncle and cousins, John is deeply involved in the community. He serves on the board of regents at St. John's University in St. Cloud, the board of trustees of Twin Cities Public Television and the board of Minneapolis-based Youth Frontiers Inc.

A third generation appears to be on its way. Carl has seven grandchildren. One of Bob's kids, Tom, is already working for one of the family companies, NorthMarq Capital.

While all three of Carl's sons maintained ties with the family businesses, Jim suspects that won't be the case with the future generations.

A history of giving

In 2006, The Carl and Eloise Pohlad Family Foundation will distribute between \$7 million and \$9 million to organizations that aim to improve the lives of economically disadvantaged children and youth, and participate in projects that positively impact the quality of life in the metropolitan area.

The foundation began in 1995. Over the years, it's given money to dozens of organizations such as the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Greater Twin Cities United Way, Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Orchestral Association and the Walker Art Center.

During 2005, Marquette Financial Cos. dedicated 3.5 percent of pre-tax profits — more than \$1.2 million — to support community organizations and programs. At the beginning of this year, the company upped that commitment to 5 percent of pre-tax profits.

The Twins Community Fund, established in 1991, is an independent public charity and doled out \$1 million in community support during 2005.

Separately, the Twins organization provided \$2.3 million in community support during the same year.

But the family endeavors to do more.

"We need to do more," Jim said. "We just feel we do."

If you have any questions about this article, contact Special Reports Editor Kin Johnson at kkj@bizjournals.com or (612) 288-2114.