Waste Management: its History, Growth, and Development

by

Peter H. Huizenga
IN ORDER TO TIE-IN MY SUBJECT—WASTE MANAGEMENT, ITS HISTORY, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, TO THE PURPOSES OF THIS CONFERENCE, I SHOULD TALK ABOUT THE PEOPLE AND RELATE THEM HISTORICALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR OCCUPATION, FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENUERSHIP IN THE NEW WORLD TO A LEADING AMERICAN AND WORLD-SPANNING CORPORATION.

PERHAPS A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON MYSELF AT THIS TIME WOULD BE APPROPRIATE. I AM BETTER KNOWN AS HEIDI'S HUSBAND, SINCE MY TALENTED WIFE (WHO ISN'T DUTCH) UNFORTUNATELY IS REFERRED TO AS MY BETTER HALF. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN 4 BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN, BETSY AND GRETA, WHO ARE TEENAGERS, WITH TIM AND PETER, JR. (PJ) WHO ARE STILL IN THE GRADES. THEY ALL ATTEND TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, WHICH I ATTENDED THROUGH MY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YEARS. I GRADUATED FROM CHICAGO CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL IN 1956, HAD A BRIEF YEAR AT CALVIN COLLEGE AND COMPLETED MY UNDERGRADUATE WORK AT HOPE COLLEGE IN 1960. I THEN WENT TO LAW SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AND WAS CONFERRED MY J.D. DEGREE IN 1963. AFTER PASSING THE BAR EXAMINATION AND SPENDING ACTIVE DUTY TIME IN THE ARMY RESERVES, I PRACTICED LAW FOR 8 YEARS. IN 1972, I BECAME EMPLOYED WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT ON A FULL TIME BASIS AND CURRENTLY SERVE AS ITS VICE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY AND A DIRECTOR. WE ARE MEMBERS OF CHRIST CHURCH OF OAK BROOK. I HAVE SERVED TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN AS SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT FOR TWO TERMS AND CURRENTLY SIT ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HOPE COLLEGE.

I AM THE SON OF PETER HUIZENGA AND BETTY BOVENKERK AND THE GRANDSON OF HARM HUIZENGA WHO MARRIED ALTJE KREMER AND JOHANNES CASPER BOVENKERK WHO MARRIED DINAH TENINGA. ALL OF MY GRANDPARENTS WERE BORN IN THE NETHERLANDS AND CAME FROM GRONINGEN, EXCEPT MY MATERNAL GRANDFATHER, WHO WAS FROM WEESP, A SUBURB OF AMSTERDAM. I HAVE 3 SISTERS AND A BROTHER. MY OLDEST SISTER BETTY JO, BETTER KNOWN AS B.J., MARRIED DEAN BUNROCK, A GERMAN, NORWEGIAN WHOM SHE MET ON THE CAMPUS OF ST. OLAF COLLEGE, FROM WHICH THEY BOTH GRADUATED. SISTER SUE MARRIED HERMAN KANIS WHO SHE MET AT CALVIN COLLEGE. SISTER GINGER MARRIED JIM JURRIES FROM GRAND RAPIDS AND BROTHER J.C. MARRIED LAURA MAATMAN ALSO FROM GRAND RAPIDS.

SPEAKING TO YOU TONIGHT GIVES ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON MY ROOTS AND HONOR MY FOREFATHERS AND ALSO RECOGNIZE THE EFFORTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE DEDICATED PEOPLE WHO ARE WASTE MANAGEMENT.


FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DO NOT KNOW WHAT WASTE MANAGEMENT IS, IT IS THE GARBAGE COMPANY WITH THE BURGUNDY TRUCKS AND CONTAINERS, NOT TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE COMPETITOR WHO HAS THE BLUE TRUCKS. IT IS A COMPANY IN A CONSTANT STATE OF EVOLUTION AND EXPANSION WHICH CAN IDENTIFY ITS HUMBLE ORIGINS AS A SCAVENGER
COMPANY, AND IS NOW THE LARGEST COMPANY IN THE WORLD PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, AND ONE OF THE LARGEST SERVICE COMPANIES EVER CREATED. REVENUES THIS YEAR WILL BE IN EXCESS OF $2.5 BILLION AND AFTER-TAX PROFITS WILL EXCEED $325 MILLION. IT EMPLOYS OVER 26,000 PEOPLE AND ITS STOCK COMMANDS A MARKET VALUE OF OVER $10 BILLION.

OVER 70% OF THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS INVOLVES THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF GARBAGE. IT OPERATES IN 47 STATES, HAS 120 LANDFILLS, RUNS MORE TRUCKS THAN ANY OTHER COMPANY, AND IS THE LARGEST CUSTOMER OF CATERPILLAR CORPORATION. INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS ARE IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, ARGENTINA, VENEZUELA, AND SAUDI ARABIA.

IN ADDITION TO BEING THE LARGEST COMPANY IN THE SOLID WASTE BUSINESS, IT IS ALSO THE LARGEST IN CHEMICAL WASTE SERVICES, NUCLEAR WASTE SERVICES, AND PORTABLE TOILETS. IT IS THE SECOND LARGEST PROVIDER OF LAWN CARE SERVICES, THIRD LARGEST PEST CONTROL COMPANY, AND SECOND LARGEST PROVIDER OF MODULAR OFFICES, LARGEST PRIVATE OPERATOR OF MUNICIPAL SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANS, AND A PROVIDER OF A HOST OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES INCLUDING HIGHWAY SAFETY LIGHTS, POWER POLES, TEMPORARY FENCING, STORAGE TRAILERS AND PROBABLY A FEW THAT I DON'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT. WASTE MANAGEMENT IS ALSO THE LARGEST COMPANY INVOLVED IN RECYCLING OF MUNICIPAL WASTE AND A MAJOR PROVIDER OF ELECTRICAL AND GAS ENERGY THROUGH ITS LANDFILLS. WASTE MANAGEMENT IS NOW THE 364TH LARGEST AMERICAN COMPANY AND RAPIDLY RISING ON THAT MEASUREMENT SCALE. 17 YEARS AGO THE COMPANY WAS ONLY $10 MILLION IN SIZE.

I AM RECITING ALL OF THESE STATISTICS NOT TO IMPRESS YOU BUT TO GIVE A PERSPECTIVE ON THE SIZE OF THIS COMPANY AND THE MAJOR IMPACT IT HAS ON THE ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OF THIS NATION. IT SETS THE STAGE FOR ANOTHER ASPECT OF THIS TALK, WHICH IS THE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS OF THIS BUSINESS AND THE PEOPLE WHO GAVE BIRTH TO IT.

I WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON THE ORIGIN OF "THE GARBAGEMEN". THIS TO ME MEANS MY FATHER, UNCLE'S, GRANDFATHER AND A HOST OF OTHER NAMES WHICH WERE FOR DECADES, SYNONYMOUS WITH THE GARBAGEMEN OF CHICAGO'S WEST SIDE.

THERE WERE THE HOVINGS, HOEKSTRAS, HUINERS, OTTENHOFFS, DeBOERS, EVENHOUSES, VAN THOLENS, VANDEMOLENS, IWEHAS, MULDERS, BLAUWS, DeVRIES, TAZALAARS, LANINGS, HAMSTRAS, GROOTS, VANDERVELDS, BOERS, AND BOSMANS, JUST TO RECITE A FEW OF THE NAMES WHICH SHAPED THE DUTCH GARBAGE CULTURE.

MY GRANDFATHER, HARM HUIZENGA, WAS BORN ON MAY 11, 1869, IN GRONINGEN. HE WAS ONE OF 8 CHILDREN OF SIERT HUIZENGA, WHOSE OCCUPATION WAS THAT OF A COOPER. HE GRADUATED FROM THE EIGHTH GRADE AND WENT TO WORK AS A BLACKSMITH APPRENTICE IN UITHUIZEN. THIS WAS TOUGH PHYSICAL WORK FOR A SMALL YOUNG MAN WHO ONLY GREW TO 5'5" OR 6" TALL. DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS HE WOULD RISE AT 3:00 A.M. AND WORK TO 6:00 P.M. HE MUST HAVE WORKED AT THAT OCCUPATION FOR 8 TO 9 YEARS, WHICH WAS DESTINED TO BE A GOOD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TRAINING GROUND FOR THE RIGOROUS LIFE AHEAD OF HIM AND HIS FUTURE VOCATION AS A GARBAGEMAN. AT THE AGE OF 23, HE COULD SEE NO FUTURE FOR HIMSELF IN THE NETHERLANDS AND DECIDED TO IMMIGRATE TO AMERICA. HE CHOSE CHICAGO, SINCE HIS MOTHER, TRIENTJE
Dekker Huizenga, had a cousin, Mrs. Harry Wierenga, who lived there at 14th and Ashland.

The Colombian Exposition was still in progress when he arrived and it was difficult finding work. After 6 weeks of searching, he finally found a job for $5 a week on 22nd Street. Out of the $5, $3.50 would pay for his room and board, and $1.50 was left each week to splurge. That included his laundry and church money, which I understand was 4¢ a week.

Obviously, he wasn't doing too well, so the next year he decided to strike out on his own and enter the garbage business. He bought a wagon and a horse and would haul a load of refuse away for $1.25.

How Harm decided to enter the garbage business is unknown. In 1894, he obviously wasn't the first of his kinsmen to do so. It was a logical choice of occupations for that small ethnic community and particularly for Harm. There must have been a great demand in the growing city of Chicago for carting goods, discards and burden. Small horse drawn wagons were probably as numerous as the swarms of new immigrants. Rather than compete as a common carrier of goods, the Dutch found another use for the horse and wagon, which was getting rid of waste material this new city was generating. The rural economy of Friesland and Groningen taught these people how to work with teams of horses, including Harm, the blacksmith. Their meager economy taught them to work hard and live frugally. Their Calvinistic beliefs instilled them with a dignity and respect for manual labor and a strong sense of independence, while their strange language forced them into occupations which did not require English communication, and their cultural identity provided them with a sense of community and an ability to discuss their common business interests among themselves. These people came to America to find a better economic life. They didn't want to work for the Americans, they wouldn't work on Sundays and didn't want to lose their culture and faith in the American mainstream. The garbage business was an occupation waiting for them. A lowly occupation which was distained by most people but honored by these hard working Boers, who saw their new business as the American dream. The work was steady, was not subject to the normal ups and downs of business cycles, and the growing city eliminated the strong competition to which other businesses were subject. They only needed to know enough English to collect their bills, and could live among their people without financial worries, so long as they were strong and healthy enough to do the work.

After 5 years, Harm had established himself and made enough money to go back to Holland and find himself a wife. While in the Netherlands he went to Uithuizen to visit with relatives of Mr. & Mrs. Henry Kremer, whom he met in America. During that visit he met his wife to be, Altje Kremer, and within a few months they were married. After visiting friends and relatives for a few additional months, Harm returned to the west side of Chicago with Altje. I don't know what happened to Harm's garbage business during this period, but I suspect that he sold it. On his return he probably started another business, picking up where he left off. Harm and Altje had four children. Siert (Sam) was born in 1898 and named after Harm's father. Tamme or Tom was born 3 years later and was named after Altje's father, Tamme Kremer. Other children
INCLUDED, TRIENTJE OR TENA WHO WAS NAMED AFTER HER PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER, AND MY FATHER PETRO, WHO WAS NAMED AFTER HIS MATERIAL GRANDMOTHER, PETRONELLA KREMER.

IN 1913, AT THE AGE OF 48, HARM'S WIFE ALTJE, CAUGHT A COLD WATCHING A FUNERAL PROCESSION ON ASHLAND AVENUE, AND DIED A WEEK LATER OF PNEUMONIA. HE TRIED TO MANAGE HIS FAMILY WITH A HOUSEKEEPER BUT SOON REALIZED THAT WASN'T GOING TO WORK. HARM'S BROTHER, WHO LIVED IN HOLLAND, INFORMED HIM THAT HE KNEW A WOMAN, ALTJE KEIZER, 42 YEARS OF AGE AND SINGLE WHO WOULD MAKE A GOOD WIFE. HE CORRESPONDED WITH HER AND WAS ENCOURAGED ENOUGH TO SELL HIS BUSINESS AND HOUSE, PACK UP HIS FAMILY AND RETURN TO THE NETHERLANDS TO GET MARRIED. WORLD WAR I WAS NOW RAGING BUT THEY MOVED TO T'ZANDT AND HARM WAS MARRIED AGAIN WITHIN 6 MONTHS. ALTJE AND HARM HAD THEIR ONLY CHILD, HARRY, WHO WAS BORN IN BEDUM IN JUNE 1916. THE DEPRIVATIONS OF THE WAR AND HARM'S PRODDING FINALLY CONVINCED ALTJE TO MOVE TO AMERICA, WHICH THEY DID IN THE AUTUMN OF 1916. ONCE AGAIN, HARM MOVED BACK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 14TH AND ASHLAND AND REPURCHASED HIS FORMER GARBAGE BUSINESS, WHICH WAS FOR SALE AGAIN. THE SMALL BUSINESS PROSPERED. IN 1928, HARM MOVED TO CICERO SINCE 2 DUTCH CHURCHES WERE BEING BUILT THERE. HARM REFUSED TO TRAVEL ON SUNDAY. HARM DIED AT HIS HOUSE OF A HEART ATTACK IN 1933 AT THE AGE OF 64.


MY FATHER, PETE, WAS A BRIGHT STUDENT BUT SOMEWHAT MISCHIEVOUS IN SCHOOL. IN 1924, AT THE AGE OF 16 HE MADE A DECISION HE REGRETTED THE REST OF HIS LIFE, HE QUIT SCHOOL. HE WAS LURED BY THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE MONEY ON THE GARBAGE WAGON, AND WASN'T GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT AT HOME TO CONTINUE HIS SCHOOLING. WHILE AT SCHOOL HE WAS GREATLY MOTIVATED IN LITERATURE BY DR. JOHN DeBOER, AND BECAME AN AVID READER OF THE CLASSICS AND POETRY AND A CREATIVE WRITER THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE. AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF WORKING HE ATTENDED JUNIOR COLLEGE NIGHT SCHOOL AT CHICAGO CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL IN 1932 WHERE HE MET HIS WIFE-TO-BE, BETTY BOVENKerk. FIVE CHILDREN WERE BORN OF THIS MARRIAGE, BETTY JO, SUZANNE, MYSELF, VIRGINIA AND JOHN CHARLES. PETE WORKED FOR HIS FATHER AND THEN HIS BROTHER TOM.
IN 1942, PETE WAS WORKING 3 DAYS A WEEK AS A SALESMAN FOR C & S DISPOSAL, AND MANAGED ACE SCAVENGER SERVICE FOR 2 TO 3 DAYS A WEEK. HE WAS PAID $30 A WEEK AND GIVEN A 1/6 INTEREST IN ACE SCAVENGER FOR HIS EFFORTS. PETE HAD 3 CHILDREN AT THAT TIME WITH A 4TH ON THE WAY. HE WASN'T ABLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET AND HAD A FALLING OUT WITH HIS BROTHER TOM, WHO WAS THEN POCKETING $150 PER WEEK. PETE SPLIT HIS ONE ROUTE OUT FROM TOM'S BUSINESS AND STARTED HIS OWN BUSINESS WHICH HE CALLED ARROW DISPOSAL. HE WORKED ON THE TRUCK, SOLICITED NEW BUSINESS AND DID THE OFFICE WORK AT NIGHT. THE WAR YEARS WERE VERY DIFFICULT SINCE LABOR WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO HIRE AND THE WORK DAY WAS LONG, HARD AND FILLED WITH PROBLEMS. SHORTLY AFTER THE WAR ENDED AS PETE'S BUSINESS BEGAN TO PROSPER, TOM DIED. PETE HAD TO TAKE OVER TOM'S BUSINESS INTEREST SINCE HE WAS ACQUAINTED WITH THEM AND FELT A RESPONSIBILITY. C & S HAD AN EXISTING MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE SO THAT WAS NOT A PROBLEM. TOM'S INTEREST IN METRO WAS SOLD TO TOM'S BROTHER-IN-LAW, JAKE BILTHUIS OVER THE OBJECTIONS OF TOM'S WIDOW, AND PETE DECIDED TO MANAGE ACE FOR HIS SISTER-IN-LAW, SO THE FAMILY COULD PROSPER, RATHER THAN FORCING A BUY-OUT.

IN 1950, PETE GRASPED ONTO AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND ACE SCAVENGER AND PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT FOR THAT BUSINESS. ROUTES WERE CONTRIBUTED BY C. GROOT, METRO, C & S AND PETE'S COMPANY, ARROW. A GARAGE AND OFFICE WERE PURCHASED AT CICERO AVENUE AND HARRISON STREET FROM WHICH NOT ONLY ACE BUT ALSO ARROW AND THE GROOT COMPANY WERE OPERATED.

THE 1950's WERE THE "RENAISSANCE DAYS" OF THE CHICAGO GARBAGEMEN. THEY HAD FINALLY EMERGED FROM TIMES OF HORSE AND WAGONS, AN IMMIGRANT SOCIETY, DEPRESSION, WAR YEARS AND BACKBREAKING PHYSICAL WORK. NEW TRUCK BODIES WERE BEING DEVELOPED WITH LOADING DEVICES ELIMINATING THE NEED TO CARRY DRUMS AND CANS ON YOUR BACK UP A LADDER, THE INTERSTATE EXPRESSWAY SYSTEM WAS BEING BUILT EXPANDING THE TERRITORY A BUSINESS COULD OPERATE AND TRAVEL. AIR TRANSPORTATION MADE DISTANT COMMUNICATION AND TRAVEL ACCESSIBLE. NEW KINDS OF DUMPS WERE BEING DEVELOPED IN OLD CLAY PITS, AS A BUSINESS, WITH ENGINEERING AND A NEW NAME CALLED "LANDFILL".


PETE'S DAUGHTER BETTY JO (BJ) BEGAN CALVIN COLLEGE IN 1952. HER FRESHMAN YEAR WAS NOT POSITIVE AND AT THE SUGGESTION OF VIRGINIA GROOT (CORNELIUS' DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND WIFE OF LAWRENCE) SHE TRANSFERRED TO ST. OLAF COLLEGE IN
MINNESOTA, WHERE VIRGINIA GROOT HAD PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED. IN HER SENIOR YEAR, BJ MET DEAN BUNTROCK AND THEY WERE MARRIED SHORTLY AFTER GRADUATION IN 1955. THEY MOVED TO BOULDER, COLORADO WHERE DEAN FINISHED THE COURSES WHICH WERE REQUIRED FOR HIS DEGREE AND BECAME AN INSTANT SUCCESS IN SELLING MORTGAGE LIFE INSURANCE. PETE HUIZENGA HAD TAKEN AN INSTANT LIKE TO DEAN AND PROVIDENTIALLY TOURED HIM THROUGH CHICAGO AND IMPARTED AS MUCH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HIS BUSINESS TO DEAN AS HE COULD IN THE SHORT NUMBER OF DAYS THEY SPENT TOGETHER. WHEN PETE HUIZENGA DIED IN 1956, DEAN WAS ASKED BY LAWRENCE GROOT AND BETTY HUIZENGA TO RETURN TO CHICAGO TO RUN THE ACE AND ARROW BUSINESSES. HE SEIZED AT THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RUN THE BUSINESS WHICH HE HAD THOUGHT ABOUT CONSIDERABLY OVER THE PAST YEAR, EVEN THOUGH THE SALARY OFFERED WAS ONLY $5,200 A YEAR.

DEAN BUNTROCK WAS A GERMAN AND NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN, ORIGINALLY FROM SOUTH DAKOTA. HE WAS EXTREMELY BRIGHT, TENACIOUS, EARNEST AND CONVINCING. HE COMMANDED RESPECT AND WAS HONEST AND GENEROUS. HE HAD ALL THE ATTRIBUTES OF LEADERSHIP AND BROUGHT A NEW VISION AND PROFESSIONALISM TO A RATHER INBRED AND PAROCHIAL BUSINESS. OPPORTUNITY TO GROW IN CHICAGO WAS LIMITED SINCE THE FIELD WAS CROWDED AND COMPETITION WAS STIFLED. WITHIN A YEAR, HIS MENTOR, LARRY GROOT WOULD DIE, AND HIS PREDECESSOR, CLARENCE HUIZENGA, WOULD MOVE TO GRAND RAPIDS, LEAVING DEAN WITH A GROUPING OF WIDOWS AND PASSIVE PARTNERS TO SUPPORT. DEAN REASONED THAT THE ONLY RESPONSIBLE WAY TO BE COMPENSATED PROPERLY WOULD BE TO EXPAND THE BUSINESS. IN 1959, THE ITALIAN MAFIA NOW SHOWED INTEREST IN THE CHICAGO GARBAGE BUSINESS, STRIKING SOME APPREHENSION WITH THE DUTCH. BUNTROCK USED THAT CONCERN TO EXPAND OR DIVERSIFY THE BUSINESS LOCATION INTO MILWAUKEE.

DEAN POSSESSED AN UNUSUAL ABILITY TO SEE FUTURE POTENTIAL AND HE WAS EXCITED ABOUT WHAT HE FORSAW FOR THE BUSINESS. HE TREATED EVERYONE WITH FAIRNESS, EQUITY, FRIENDSHIP, AND MADE THEM FEEL WORTHY. HE MADE DECISIONS AND TOOK RISKS WITH CALM SELF-CONFIDENCE AND FOLLOWED THROUGH TENACIOUSLY. HIS THINKING WAS ALWAYS ONE STEP AHEAD OF EVERYONE ELSE AND HIS QUESTIONS PROBED THE HEART OF AN ISSUE. THE BUSINESS GREW AND PROSPERED UNDER DEAN’S LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT THE NEXT DECADE.

SEVERAL GRANDCHILDREN OF HARM HUIZENGA HAVE ALSO TAKEN PART OF THE GARBAGE BUSINESS. SAM’S SON CLARENCE WAS DEAN’S PREDECESSOR AT ACE SCAVENGER SERVICE. HE MOVED TO GRAND RAPIDS IN 1957 AND BEGAN A GARBAGE BUSINESS WITH HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW. WASTE MANAGEMENT ACQUIRED THAT BUSINESS IN 1973. SAM’S SECOND SON, HARRY, HAS OWNED AND MANAGED SEVERAL SMALLER GARBAGE BUSINESSES THROUGHOUT HIS WORKING CAREER.


WAYNE HUIZENGA IS THE SON OF HARRY HUIZENGA. HE MOVED TO FLORIDA IN THE LATE 1950′S AND IN 1963 ACQUIRED A TWO TRUCK GARBAGE BUSINESS FROM THE WELL-KNOWN CHICAGO GARBAGE KING, HERMAN MULDER, WHO’S EMPIRE WAS CRUMBLING FROM PERSONAL NEGLECT AND EXCESS. THE BUSINESS WHICH WAYNE BEGAN IN POMPANO BEACH QUICKLY EXPANDED INTO THE OTHER AREAS OF BROWARD COUNTY.
Wayne and Dean Buntrock became close business confidants. Wayne needed Dean's advice and experience and Dean admired Wayne's abilities, aggressiveness and the growth potential of his marketplace. When Wayne and his first wife were divorced, his father-in-law was pressured to terminate his business relationship as Wayne's partner. Pete's old business, Arrow Disposal, was traded for an interest in Wayne's company.

When I graduated from college in 1960 there was only one good job in the family business and my brother-in-law Dean had it, and was doing a great job with it. Since my father had urged me to continue my education and become a professional, I entered law school and became a lawyer in downtown Chicago. My specialty was business and tax law and soon became occupied full time with the business growth needs of both Dean and Wayne.

Wayne was experiencing exceptionally fast growth and his business had an insatiable demand for capital. Our family resources became exhausted and our debt capacity reached its limit. We were deeply at risk and still needed additional capital resources.

In order to continue to participate in the exciting growth opportunities, it was decided to put all of our garbage business interest under one company, seek better markets for credit, and look to raising equity capital from outside sources. In 1970 and 1971 the businesses were put together. Larry Beck and Tom Tibstra, also of Chicago, liked what they saw was happening and put their company Atlas Disposal into what was the formation of Waste Management. In June 1971, $5,120,000 of equity was raised through a public stock offering and a new era was born. The era of environmental awareness, governmental regulations, Wall Street financial transactions and LaSalle street lawyers had now become a permanent part of the garbage business.

Next to Dean Buntrock, Wayne Huizenga was the most influential participant in the development of Waste Management. He is a tireless, aggressive deal maker who lightens his personality with a good sense of humor. Wayne put the acquisition program of the company together and immersed himself in the growth and expansion of the company, from 1971 until the time he left the company in 1984. Wayne was also a strong operations manager and served as president of the company for 6 years. Wayne was a Floridian who did not want to live in Illinois and run the company. His restless nature and entrepreneurial skills could not be tamed or confined solely to a public company which he did not own or dominate. When Wayne left Waste Management, he wasn't able to go back into the garbage business, and instead acquired and built-up a number of other service businesses. Wayne is still a material influence with Waste Management, having sold to us his portable toilet business (Port-O-Let) 2 years ago, his pest control business and his lawn care business, Tru-Green, last month.

In the company's history there were strategic decisions that were made and the presence of extraordinary people which contribute to its success. Two of these exceptional people who strongly contributed to the company were Phil Rooney, the president and Don Flynn, the chief financial officer, both Irish.
Phil Rooney was the college son of a Cicero police captain who Jim DeBoer and John Groot hired during the summer of 1965 as a favor to his father. They were so impressed they introduced Phil to Dean, who gave Phil part-time employment prior to his two-year tour of duty as a marine officer in Vietnam. In 1968 after Phil's discharge, he returned to Dean Buntrock and for 20 years has been one of the major principals in the development and management of the company.

When we needed a comprehensive overhaul of our accounting and administrative systems, we chose Arthur Andersen in 1969 to be our auditors and consultants. Fred Steggerda became the A&Co partner on the account and chose some extremely bright and capable people to assist him. His account manager was Don Flynn, who became our chief financial officer in 1972 and the architect of every major aspect of our financial organization and strength.

You will still hear names such as DeBoer, Evenhouse and Groenboom, Lenderink, Kamps, Haveman, Van Poolen and Slager with the operations of the company. You will also see familiar names such as Vander Velde and Stoub who are the head chemists for the company. And Vander Laan, Steenhoeck and Kloppeen who are known outside the company as clergymen and known inside as counsellors and employee assistants, particularly in the area of alcohol and drug abuse. Among the 26,000 employees, the Dutch are a true minority, with other ethnic groups far surpassing them in numbers.

It is questionable and rather hypothetical whether the Dutch from the northern provinces of the Netherlands could have led the development of a waste management. The reason being that small businesses fit well with that small Dutch society. There was not much incentive to expand a business much larger than two hands full of trucks, or the immediate family needs. A business that operates for the public well-being and is co-owned or managed by cultural strangers was not a concept familiar to the Dutch community. Waste management grew making equity partners of its acquisition candidates and committing itself as a company to build value for all of its owners. This too was a strange concept for the Dutch, whose entrepreneurial selfishness was part of their rigid concept of property ownership.

The garbage business has been as vital a part of the West Side Chicago Dutch community as its schools and churches. It has provided financial stability and opportunity for charity. So many people have been involved as either owners or employees, that the humbling nature of the business has marked the character of its community. But suddenly the business is no longer a repository for low, mediocre educational achievers nor an excuse for perpetuating poor communication or elocution. Waste management is now the high tech provider of employment opportunity for accountants, data processing and information specialists, engineers and lab technicians, human resource experts and managers. It no longer thrives on immigrant labor, but on the bright achievers and communicators of our society. It contributes high goals and leadership objectives for the people who are close to it. And it contributes financially through its people to the support of its institutions.
WASTE MANAGEMENT TODAY HAS EMERGED FROM ITS ETHNIC ORIGINS TO BECOME THE IDYLLIC OF AMERICA. FROM HUMBLE IMMIGRANT BUSINESS TO NOBLE HEIGHTS OF SUCCESS. IN SPITE OF WALL STREET'S DESIRE TO GLITTERIZE AND GLAMORIZE THE INDUSTRY THE COMPANY MADE FAMOUS OR THE ATTEMPTS OF GREENPEACE TO SMEAR VERBAL POLLUTION ON THE WASTE INDUSTRY AND PARTICULARLY OUR COMPANY, WE TRY TO COMMUNICATE A BASIC SENSE OF VALUES TO THE PUBLIC WHICH WERE HELD BY HARM HUIZENGA, HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND DECEDETS. ONE OF OUR RECENT TELEVISION COMMERCIALS SHOWS A BLACK TRUCK DRIVER, ANNIA GREENBAY, PROUDLY DRIVING HIS TRUCK SAFELY THROUGH THE STREETS OF CHICAGO. THE MESSAGE RINGS OUT - A MAN IS WHAT A MAN DOES. WE BELIEVE THAT AWARD WINNING COMMERCIAL DIGNIFIES FOUR GENERATIONS OF GARBAGEMEN WHO ARE ITS CULTURAL EQUIVALENT.