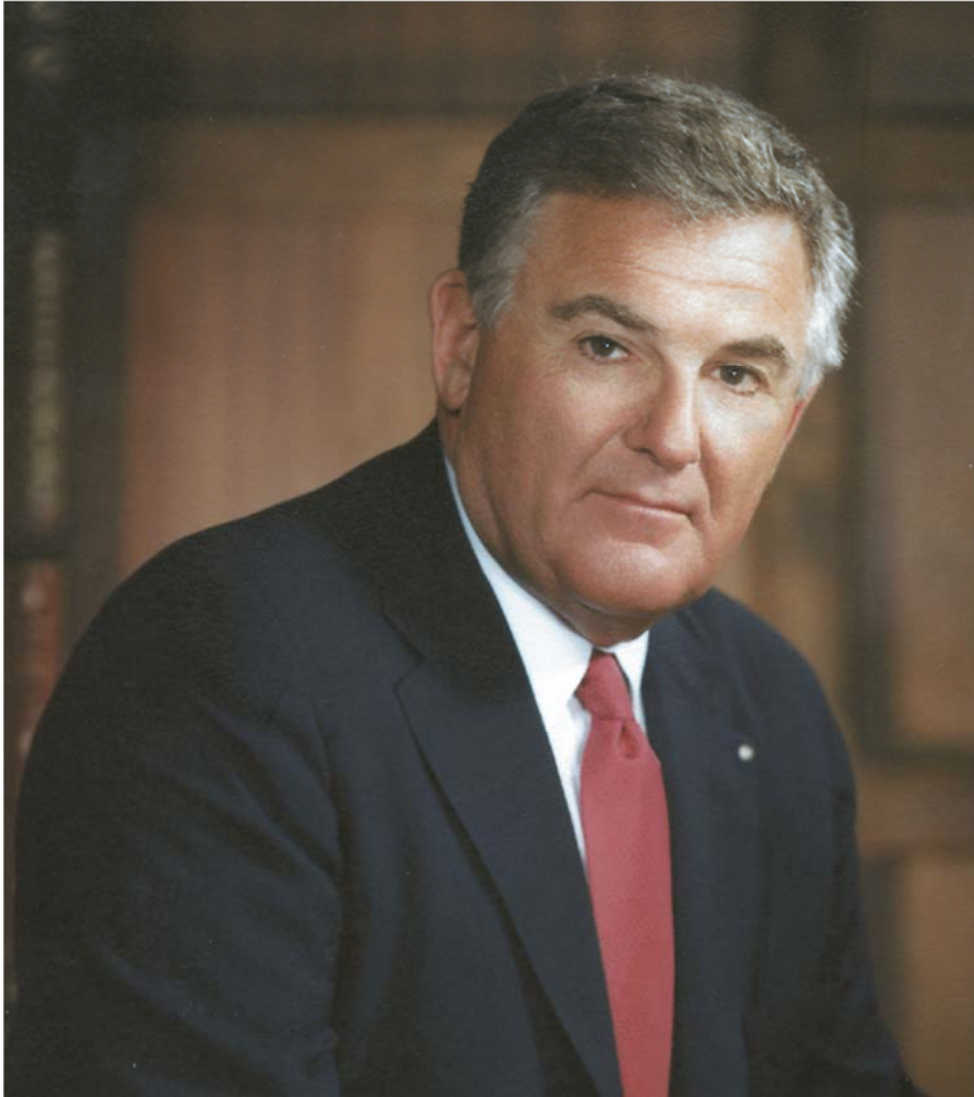


2014 – Bernard J. Peck



Bernard (“Bernie”) Peck has enriched the lives of people in Wisconsin and beyond. As the fourth Peck family generation to lead the Peck Meat Packing Corporation in Milwaukee, he is one of Milwaukee’s great civic-minded and public-spirited philanthropists.

Bernie Peck was born in Milwaukee on March 24, 1927 to Milton and Lillian Peck. He attended high school at St. Johns Military Academy in Delafield. Following his two year tour of duty with the U.S. Army, Bernie began working in the Peck family’s business, while also attending the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He married Miriam Beck on June 19, 1949. They have two daughters, Karen Peck Katz and Jodi Peck, six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

With the guidance of his father, 1997 Hall of Fame inductee Milton Peck, Bernie’s career started at the basic entry-level, working on the kill floor and in the hide cellar where he developed his skills on the production line while building relationships of mutual trust and respect with fellow

plant workers. This relationship with his employees was very important to Bernie throughout his career.

Over his forty years in the company, Bernie led their extraordinary growth through acquisitions and expansions. The family purchased Ideal Packing Company in 1951, and in 1956 built a boning plant in Milwaukee's Menomonee River valley. Over the next twenty years, there were six more acquisitions creating a forty-acre Peck Meat Packing complex of slaughtering, boning, processing and value-added operations. Plants in Nebraska and Michigan were acquired to increase the slaughter and boning capacity. Bernie was responsible for managing the meat operations in the three states, with 800 employees in Milwaukee and 1500 employees overall.

Bernie led with an aggressive interest in innovative customer satisfaction. In 1983, he co-invented and U.S. patented a re-structured meat product for roasting, and the method of processing the product on a high volume basis. With this new, pioneering technology, the Emmer's "Lean N' Tender" product line was created for supermarkets, restaurants, delicatessens, catering companies and fast-food chains in 32 states within the Eastern United States. Bernie actively promoted the new products with a variety of innovative sales and marketing initiatives.

Peck Meat Packing Corporation grew to become one of America's larger privately owned slaughtering, boning and value-added processors, and one of the largest, oldest and most respected meat operations in the Midwest for integrity and high standards. In 1985, the company was sold to the Sara Lee Meat Group, and Bernie continued as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. After forty years, having earned the respect and admiration of his employees and industry peers, Bernie retired in 1987, one hundred years after his great-grandfather, Bernhardt Peck, founded the initial Peck meat company. The forty-acre meat complex in the Menomonee River valley is now part of Cargill Corporation, and is the last meat slaughtering operation in Milwaukee.

Bernie has always been generous to share the successes of the family business with members of the community. The family's charitable foundation bearing the Peck name was established to "promote and support educational, scientific, cultural, medical, charitable and similar civic enterprises."

The Peck Foundation is recognized for support of the Fine Arts in the Greater Milwaukee Area, and in his winter home near Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Bernie gives his time and leadership through board service and financial support to a diverse list of civic and community organizations which cross religious, cultural, and geographic borders. He can be found where he is needed, not just where he might most comfortably fit in. The behind-the-scenes impact this man has had on Milwaukee, in addition to his very visible initiatives, re-enforce the fact that Bernie's contributions to an improved quality of life in Milwaukee are profound and deep.

In recognition of Bernie Peck's achievements and industry contributions during his career in the meat industry, his impact on greater Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame is proud to induct Bernard J. Peck.