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## Beene Garter buys downtown building

Accounting firm likes the more visible location. **DAVID CZURAK**

**N**ow that the deadline for state and federal tax returns has passed, the accountants at Beene Garter LLP can start packing up their green eyeshades and digital calculators and head over to their new home at 56 Grandville Ave. SW.

Beene Garter recently bought the 61,000-square-foot, five-story downtown building, which is situated between the Bistro Bella Vita and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation. Managing partner Tom Rosenbach said everyone should be comfortably settled in the new location within three weeks.

**"We wanted to stay downtown ..."**

**TOM ROSENBACH**

The locally owned CPA and business consulting firm will leave its longtime address at 50 Monroe Ave., where it was stationed for 25 years. In a real business sense, the move came about because the firm followed the financial advice it gives its clients.

"If we got the right opportunity as an ownership group, we thought that it is going to make more sense in the long run for us to own rather than pay rent, and control our own destiny. We are out talking to our clients and recommending to them that they own their own. If we could get the right building in the right location with the right tenants, we thought it would work well," he said.

Rosenbach said the firm had spent quite a bit of time looking at potential locations and had checked out just about every large-enough available downtown address before choosing the Grandville building.

"We wanted to stay downtown and we went through that process of thinking, 'Do you move?' But we felt like that was our goal. Are we going to find a building that's 30,000 square feet downtown? Well, that would be unusual. So you realize if you're going to own, you have to potentially find a bigger building. Although we looked at some that would have fit just us, we worked hard to find this," he said.

As Rosenbach said, the company will occupy about 30,000 square feet in its new site, with space on the lower level and first and second floors for its 75 employees. Advantage Sales and Marketing will continue to lease much of the remaining space.

"Advantage Sales and Marketing has really done a lot for downtown.



**BEENE GARTER** Managing Partner Tom Rosenbach, center, stands with Gary Becker and Bonnie Morgan of Advantage Sales and Marketing, which will continue to lease space on the third and fourth floors of Beene Garter's new building. **Photography by Michael Buck**

They wanted to stay, as their lease was coming up. So I worked hard with them to get a deal, and they're great people. They sell a lot of hotel rooms," said Rosenbach.

"So it worked out with them on (floors) three and four. And ... we were able to work out a deal where we could share conference rooms with them and share a café in the basement that we would build," he added.

Clearwire, the firm that built the city's wireless 4G network, also has space on the lower level in the building that some might better recognize as having been the headquarters of U.S. Xchange. The firm made a big splash when it moved there in 1998. The communications company had just announced that it would bring more than 1,000 jobs to the city.

Rosenbach said the partnership feels the Grandville address offers more visibility and is a more convenient location for its clients. The company is making specific renovations to its space; new windows, fixtures and awnings also are being installed. The terms and price of the transaction were not disclosed. Beene Garter will hold a grand opening celebration in the fall.

"Our office space has been de-

signed with our team approach to superior client service in mind, and the location we have chosen is part of our long-term commitment to the area," said Rosenbach.

Beene Garter was founded in 1949 and offers a range of audit,

tax, business advisory and business support services. A subsidiary of the firm, BG Investment Advisory Services Inc., offers wealth management advice. At 50 Monroe, the company leased the entire sixth floor.

"50 Monroe has been a wonderful address and home to our firm, and we thank the ownership for helping us grow," said Rosenbach. "It was just time to expand into new space that allows us to have more public exposure."