

# PEOPLE OF ACTION

## Todd Bentley

President, Bentley World Packaging

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*(Member since 2008)*



*Todd and his wife Sarah with their three children*

Todd Bentley will serve as President of Rotary with a term starting in 2021. He follows his father, Tom, who served as RCM President for the 1998-99 Term. (Tom continues to be an active member of Rotary and joined in January 1981.)

Professionally, Todd is President of Bentley World Packaging. Todd's great, great, great grandfather John was just 16 years old when he came to Milwaukee in 1848 from England armed only with his grit and determination, and started a small construction company. Todd is the sixth generation to lead a Bentley Company, albeit, previous to Todd, all Bentley male progeny since John were named Tom – including his father.

John Bentley's construction business thrived until the Great Depression. Business was tough for everyone, including the Bentleys, however, by the early 1940s, then Grandfather Tom understood construction was just not the place they wanted to be, so Bentley ingenuity took over. Bentley carpentry skills were well known, and the United States needed wood crates to ship aid and supplies to the Allies during World War II. The door that opened not only allowed the Bentley's the ability to keep the lights on, but it also enabled them to help with the war effort.

The family continued in construction before finally closing that aspect of the business in 2006. In the 1970s global markets began to explode and Milwaukee-based manufacturers needed dependable shipping opportunities for their international customers. That, coupled with Bentley's World War II experience, created the niche for Bentley World Packaging.

Today, Bentley World-Packaging is among the most trusted export and specialty packaging firms in the United States. Still headquartered in Milwaukee, Bentley World Packaging employs close to 100 people and they regularly work with nearly 300 international companies.

In addition to the usual and customary manufacturing and military shipping, Bentley also specializes in unique fulfillment needs. For example, they've moved a nuclear containment vessel that weighed 400,000 pounds; shipped a railroad locomotive to the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago; and one customer needed a live culture for sanitary septic systems shipped. Easy enough, right? However,

this culture's route included utilizing a dog sled transport, so the crate required internal heating to protect the culture during its arctic adventure.

Bentley Packaging has shipped all over the world including Russia, Mongolia, Chile and all points north and south, east and west.

Growing up in a family business completely prepared Todd to assume the mantle of leadership. He has been integrally involved in every aspect of Bentley Worldwide Packaging since he was a lad of six. He remembers arts and crafts activities including packing small items at the family's kitchen table. Weekends, school breaks and sometimes after school Todd could be found working at the family firm. (Todd has two sisters, one a psychiatrist and the other a counselor; neither is involved in the family business).

Todd graduated from UW-Madison with a triple major in finance, management and real estate and earned an MBA at Marquette University. Upon graduation from college, he worked for several years at Deloitte Consulting in Chicago before joining Bentley Worldwide Packaging full-time.

Married to Sarah, a fine jewelry buyer for Kohls Department Stores, the couple have three children, two middle school age girls and a fourth-grade boy. The family enjoys everything outdoors including downhill skiing and all three of the kids are active in soccer. Two summers ago, the family traveled to Colorado for a backpacking vacation. A vacation it wasn't, but an adventure for sure. It was wrought with challenges including pouring rain and the boy falling into a river. They can laugh about it now, but Sarah isn't keen on that type of "vacation" again any time soon. The Todd Bentley family also includes two German Short Hair dogs – one a recently adopted puppy.

Because Todd's father, Tom, has been an active Rotarian for 38 years, Todd has been aware of the good works of Rotary forever. "I'm amazed, though, how many people do not have a clear understanding of all the good Rotary does worldwide. I'm always surprised Rotary gets lumped in with other groups that don't have the global and regional footprint of Rotary."

Todd looks forward to assuming the mantle of leadership a few years from now. "I want people to know how great this Club is, and I am excited about being able to help the Rotary Club of Milwaukee remain strong and impactful."



*Editor's Note: This year we will feature the popular Rotary People of Action bi-monthly. The week of September 6th will profile Janet Protasiewicz. Rotary People of Action is written by RCM Board Member (and its Sargent at Arms) Barbara Velez.*