

# PEOPLE OF ACTION

## David Baum

First Vice President – Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors

*(Member since 2009)*



Dave Baum's path to working with his dad, Clair, managing stocks and bonds for individual and family accounts with the Wells Fargo Advisors was rather circuitous. (Clair Baum, now retired, had worked with Loewi & Company back in the 1960s ultimately ending up with Wells Fargo because of the financial institution's series of mergers and acquisitions). Having

worked with outdoor learning concepts in college Dave thought that was his life path.

Dave's creativity, independent streak and eclectic interests surfaced early as a student at Kenyon College in Ohio. He became one of Kenyon's first graduates with a synoptic major – essentially, he created his own path of study, defending his interests to two senior professors as well as the college dean which ultimately gave him as he calls it "the multi-disciplined epitome of a liberal arts education." His education included a focus on U.S. agriculture ecology impact as well as government policy. Those interests also stem from his family background.

His father was raised on Dave's grandparents small sustainable farm in Minnesota. The reality that 2% of the population makes food for 98% of the country's population is thought-provoking. Dave laments the changes in rural America during the last decades. The environment for agriculture isn't great. "I have always preferred the family farm model; it is concerning when something as important as food is being delivered from often great distances when it isn't necessary."

Dave traces the current state of agriculture back to President Nixon who was then encouraging "cheap" food which didn't bode well for rural America. "We don't see anyone clamoring to farm now. Farm economics are touchy; small farms are doing okay; huge corporate farms are doing okay; the middle-sized farmer, not so much. Right here in Wisconsin, we were once a huge producer of produce, but with the advent of corporate farming, Wisconsin lost that footing." Dave, however, is encouraged by the resurgence of organic farming in Wisconsin. He admires the sustainable farm to table model area restaurants are adopting.

The roots of agriculture run deep in the Baum family. Dave's only sibling, his older sister operates a small foundation in northern Minnesota with the mission of repairing original settlers' cabins and vintage cemeteries within the state. Most funding comes from the state of Minnesota.

While his ancestral roots come from Minnesota, Dave is a Milwaukee native. He is a proud graduate of Rufus King Baccalaureate High School and lived in just one home throughout his childhood and until graduation from college. After college graduation, Dave took some time to work in Chicago and San Francisco and in rural Tennessee teaching teenagers to appreciate environmental issues. After those rejuvenating experiences, Dave's ah ha "what am I going to do now," lead him back home to work alongside his father.

Dave is married to his wife, Jill (interestingly, his sister's name is also Jill. You can imagine what fun friends and family have with the name game.) The couple has an 11-year-old son, August, who attends an MPS school. They live on Milwaukee's east side.

Dave's appreciation for the outdoors hasn't waned. He's been sailing since he was kid and is a competitive Soling racer. Dave has won many a race skippering his boat USA 845. (His boat's name harkens back to the Olympic numbering system, USA, of course is the country of origin and 845 is the number in the manufacturing line, so Dave's boat is the 845<sup>th</sup> Soling produced.) He also enjoys skiing and bird hunting. He was once an avid runner of five to 10 miles several times a week. Jill and Dave's family also includes two dogs, both Vizlas (Hungarian Pointers).

The late George Mosher introduced Dave Baum to Rotary. George and Clair Baum were the very best of friends. Their families shared many meals and adventures together. At most get-togethers George would extoll the advantages and benefits of being a Rotarian. (Clair was unable to join when George did because of "classification" constraints. Back in the day, Rotary membership was limited to job title, for example, there could only be one financial advisor, etc. Once those parameters were lifted, Dave was ready to join).

George instilled in Dave that Rotary is a participation-driven organization. Under the aegis of Rotary, Dave has long been an active and dedicated tutor at Brown Street Academy. For more than 10 years, he has volunteered every Wednesday morning to help third graders learn to read.

"As an MPS graduate, I wanted to give back and Rotary gave me that opportunity. I think kids have a better chance at a better future, the more attention we can give them.'

'Rotary is a great organization. I appreciate the attention RCM gives to good works as well as the active community building we help to drive. I enjoy hearing about what is happening in the community at the lunch table and through our speakers. Our Club is well organized administratively, thus members can concentrate on doing good works. The size of our membership is very appealing to me; it's an effective City Club.'



Editor's Note: *We feature the popular Rotary People of Action series bi-monthly. The November 1st edition will profile Keith Butler. Rotary People of Action is written by RCM Board Member (and its Sargent at Arms) Barbara Velez.*