

PERSONAL & PRACTICE:

Faegre Baker Daniels Attorney Profiles

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INTERVIEW DATE: April 3, 2014

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PERSONAL:

WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

- ▶ Sailing is my only hobby. Sailing my Catalina 42 on Lake Michigan on a summer day is my idea of at least temporary perfect happiness.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

- ▶ Since I was a little boy, I've been fascinated by cars. I currently have a modified 1996 Porsche 911 Twin Turbo that I drive in the spring and summer.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JOURNEY?

- ▶ For the last four years, my wife and I have vacationed on a private island in the British Virgin Islands called Peter Island. The island has capacity for only 50-100 guests on its 1,800 acres. It's an amazing getaway each February — a totally relaxed environment with wonderful people.

WHICH TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

- ▶ I would love to be able to sit down at a piano and effortlessly play music. I'm so impressed by people with musical talents because I have none. When I was in grade school, the nuns told me not to sing during performances, just to move my mouth.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT YOURSELF, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

- ▶ I would like to be a little more adventuresome. I have a son who has traveled around the world and done amazing things like hiking alone in the Himalayas. There are many things I'd like to do and see, so having more of that adventuresome spirit and being willing to get out of my comfort zone more easily would be nice.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

- ▶ My sailboat. I bring some of my obsessiveness to sailing — I'm notorious at my marina for being meticulous about the preparation of the bottom of my boat every spring to assure I can get that extra tenth of a knot of boat speed.

WHAT DO YOU MOST VALUE IN YOUR FRIENDS?

- ▶ Loyalty. I've been fortunate to have many long-time friends. Those relationships are effortless. As life changes and you move into different career phases, it's nice to know you can rely on those friends to be there for you. It's an attribute I try to bring to friendships as well.

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE HERO OR HEROINE OF FICTION?

- ▶ Don Quixote. My sailboat is named "Rocinante," after his horse. Somehow I made a connection between a delusional guy with a white beard tilting at windmills and sailing.

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

- ▶ People who aren't genuine or sincere. I've had the good fortune not to encounter many people like that, and none at FaegreBD.

PRACTICE:

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PRACTICE LAW?

- ▶ I graduated from college in 1969 and decided to go to law school at a politically volatile time in the country. Most of my college friends took one of two paths: becoming a lawyer or pursuing a Ph.D. with a goal of teaching. I didn't have a refined idea of what I wanted to do with a law degree, but I felt there were more activist opportunities in the practice of law than in teaching.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST CLIENT ACHIEVEMENT?

- ▶ Gaining the confidence of clients and becoming their trusted adviser. Sometimes lawyers are viewed as simply a necessary evil, so having relationships where clients actively seek my advice and counsel as they make important decisions is very gratifying—especially when those decisions are in the public realm and have a wide-ranging impact.

IN WHAT AREA WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE OR IMPROVE?

- ▶ In municipal finance, there are many frequently changing technical issues I work hard to stay on top of and would always like to know more about. Given the opportunities we've been able to generate in public-private partnership (P3) transactions, a personal goal is to gain experience in the more complex variations of those transactions.

WHICH OF YOUR COLLEAGUES DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

- ▶ In practicing with legacy Baker & Daniels, I always felt blessed to be surrounded by so many colleagues who were both wonderful people and extraordinarily skilled lawyers. With the combination of firms, I've had the opportunity to work with legacy Faegre & Benson colleagues who exhibit exactly these same qualities. I feel so fortunate to learn from, practice with and collaborate with people who operate at such a high level on a daily basis. Anywhere I go in the firm, I see the same quality of people and level of enthusiasm for perfection.

WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT WORKING AT FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS?

- ▶ Being part of a culture of high performance in which you always feel challenged to excel. Being part of a firm that seeks to exceed client expectations.

WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU COULD CHANGE ABOUT THE LEGAL INDUSTRY?

- ▶ I think quality is undervalued because there is such an emphasis on cost. This emphasis is often misplaced because clients don't realize how costly ineffective counsel can be. A bargain hourly rate can be very expensive for a client if it doesn't achieve their goals. Several times recently we've been brought in to replace existing counsel whose rates were lower than ours — but with us, the client was finally able to achieve the positive results they could not with the prior law firm.

WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST CHALLENGING AND REWARDING ABOUT YOUR AREA OF FOCUS?

- ▶ In a complex public project or P3 project, there are no rote answers and there's rarely a model to follow. The challenge is deciding what shape the project should take and what the solutions are. Addressing that challenge ends up being the most rewarding part of the practice. We're developing first-time solutions to help clients achieve their goals.

HOW HAS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON LAW CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

- ▶ Early on, I presumed there was an answer to every question and that if I didn't provide a client with a quick answer, I was failing. Now I understand that there are fewer and fewer easy answers and clients respect a thoughtful approach that really empathizes with what they are confronting and dealing with. I spend more time ensuring I'm thinking like our clients as opposed to providing advice solely from my perspective.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED?

- ▶ There are no easy answers, and easy answers are seldom the right answers.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE YOUR AREA OF FOCUS, WHAT WOULD YOU SWITCH TO AND WHY?

- ▶ I wouldn't change it. Public finance has evolved and I've enjoyed having different emphases in my practice at different times. I really enjoy the intersection between local government and private business. I think we do a better job for business clients because of our understanding of government and vice versa.

WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG PROJECT YOU'D LIKE TO TACKLE?

- ▶ We have our sights set on another P3 transaction. We'd love to work on one that has a national profile and is outside the areas where our past projects have been. We're enthused that the footprint of the firm has given us enormous opportunities to take this practice to a true national level.