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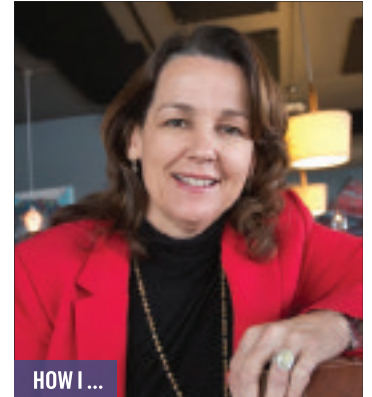
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MEET ROB.

At the Sobrato Organization, Silicon Valley's most storied real estate firm, Rob Hollister represents change. Let us introduce you. 4-5

STORY BY NATHAN DONATO-WEINSTEIN

PHOTOS BY VICKI THOMPSON



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Shooting to thrill like Angus Young



You might catch Case Swenson rocking out at San Pedro Square Market with his band.

VICKI THOMPSON

Case Swenson, president of Barry Swenson Builder, is the latest in a long line of Swensons to play a major role in the region's real estate scene. But he is no newcomer to the business. He managed his own firm, Swenson Development & Construction, for more than two decades before joining BSB a year ago. He admits to being busy since accepting the job. But he still finds time for some of his passions, including guitar.

You play guitar in a band. How'd you get started?

I was about 30 years old when I picked it up. I was into AC/DC and thought, why don't I have a guitar? I bought a \$100 guitar. It took a year and a half of working on it pretty hard before I realized, it's just like algebra. There's a formula, and you just have to learn it.

Say you could jam with any guitar great. Who'd it be?

Angus Young (the lead guitarist of AC/DC). I think he has the best style of any guitarist. Some people like Slash or Jimmy Page. I think Angus and the way he mixes the blues and rock is my favorite style of guitar.

What's on your iPod?

I'm listening to Michael Franti, a song called 11.59. And I love '80s music. That's when I grew up. So I'm in an '80s rut.

CASE SWENSON

Title: President
Age: 45
Hometown: Los Gatos
Current residence: Los Gatos
Family: Wife Lisa; daughter Sloane, 5; son Roark, 3
Education: University of Colorado

Best local place to listen to live music?

At San Pedro Square Market. That's the only place we play.

You grew up in a real estate family.

What was your first gig?

I've been in the business since I was 9. In the summers, I'd sweep. You're a go-fer. It wasn't even a thought that I would ever do anything else. In 1991, when I was 23, I started a business in college doing maintenance and construction and development.

You ran your own business. What was it like being in the same market as BSB?

Never once did I think I was competing with him (Barry, his father). But there would be some confusion. People would say, "Aren't you building that building on Bascom Avenue?" And I would say, "I'm not sure." I wasn't always sure what he was building.

You oversee BSB's agriculture holdings, which include cattle and farms. Do you have a green thumb?

We grew up with a big garden and never had to buy vegetables from March to September. That agriculture and cultivating and eating the fruits of our labor was something we did every year together as a family.

What's your best dish using Swenson ingredients?

It's the wild rice we make – that is my

favorite dish. If I'm going to do a big workout or run, I believe it's the best fuel on the planet.

Your father is known for his straw hat. What's your signature?

I don't have a style, though I did wear jeans and a white shirt for four years straight. I had to step it up once I got here. I do have a comment regarding the hat. My dad has the hat, but I'm the guy who reminds him which conference room he left it in (laughs).

Worst job?

No question: We did a seismic upgrade of 255 North Market St., and I had to drill holes in the side of the building with a RotoHammer for six weeks. It's all 16-inch-thick concrete and brick wall. I'm telling you, you don't even know about time going by slowly.

Alternate career?

I hope I'd be in the construction and real estate business. I love the smell of Sheetrock. I love the crane. I love the process and the complexity and the difficulty when it comes to construction. I like it because you have to solve problems and work collaboratively.

Dream building project?

An orphanage. That's a dream job to me to leave as a legacy.

–Nathan Donato-Weinstein,
 @SVBizNate