

BARRINGTON'S LANCE RODGERS OFFERS LEGAL ADVICE FIT FOR A PRINCESS

COUNTRY

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2015

BARRINGTON STYLE
& SUBSTANCE

*JOHN
HUGHES'S
ICONIC
CHARACTERS
—AND THEIR
TIMELESS
STYLE*

“All you need
for happiness
is a good gun, a
good horse, and
a good wife.”

—DANIEL BOONE

The MANE ATTRACTION

BARRINGTON HILLS'
CINDY GALLEY REALIZES HER
DREAM OF RIDING HORSES



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Lance Rodgers is a senior partner in the Chicago firm of Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg, as a business lawyer with an expertise in tax. And though he constantly declares the values of stability and structure, he's ended up interacting with a lot of wild characters from the entertainment world. Don't miss reading this story about his youth orbiting his father's entertainment career, or how his practice of business law has brought him into a working relationship with Princess Stephanie of Monaco.



class venue celebrating not only the excitement of the sport, but the refined lifestyle associated with it.

Our fashion story this month takes us down memory lane as we look at how Chicago's legendary filmmaker and director John Hughes captured the hearts and imagination of a generation. A special thank you to Grassroots who participated in this shoot.

When the Galley family moved from the city to Barrington Hills, there was no doubt in Cindy Galley's mind that they would take up horseback riding. Though Cindy and other members of the family thoroughly enjoy riding, it was eight-year old Olivia who really took to the sport. She now rides five days a week, competing on the A circuit in the short stirrup division. Discover all the ins and outs of becoming involved in the equestrian world, how much time the family spends traveling to competitions, and the costs involved with falling in love with this particular pastime.

Speaking of horses, it's time to get out and experience the return of the Sport of Kings as the 11th Annual LeCompte Kalaway Trail Owners Cup on September 12 at Oakwood Farms in Barrington Hills. Witness a polo battle of the sexes and as an all-female team takes on an all-male team before two more matches unfold. This event promises to display polo as the noble sport it was created to be, in a world

Flip to The Road to get the latest specs on the redesigned BMW 7 series available starting in September at Motor Werks in Barrington. From the inaugural iDrive 5.0 infotainment system that uses hand gestures to operate dashboard functions to its automatic monitoring of the cars all around you on the road, this thing combines the latest automotive technology with BMW's legendary flare for luxury.

As always, our Publisher's Profiles bring the best local businesses directly to your door. Find out how Baird & Warner's Kim Alden stays on trend. Terry Kenney from Insignia Kitchen & Bath Design Group shows us how their expansive showroom is a window into a larger world. Judy Gibbons of Jameson Sotheby's International Realty brings her designer's eye to our real estate scene.

Enjoy the pictures, and good reading.

J.W. Conatser, *Founder and Publisher*



SEEING STARS

Barrington's Lance Rodgers shares how his creative gene pool and commitment to integrity have been at the foundation of his storied career in law.

WORDS BY DONALD LIEBENSON / PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY CAROL FITZGERALD

We'll get to Orson Welles, Princess Stephanie, and the trainload of burlesque strippers soon enough. They are featured players in shaping Barrington resident Lance Rodgers' more than four decade career as a self-described "business lawyer with an expertise in tax."

That particular expertise literally put him on the map in the mid-1970s, when he was in the vanguard of establishing new structures that brought foreign money into the United States.

Rodgers, 66, is a senior partner in the Chicago firm Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg where he is the chair of the firm's Tax and Business Planning Group. He has been with the firm since 2006. "I am the hub of a wheel," Rodgers says. "I guide and envision how a transaction should proceed and call into play the substantive disciplines that are required to get a client from point A to point B. I find that very satisfying, because the clients perceive that during the important junctures in their life that I am acting more as a counselor than a lawyer."

Now; about those strippers. Rodgers' career arc plays out like that classic role-reversal *Monty Python's Flying Circus* sketch in which it is the son who is a coal miner and his resentful father an actor. In Rodgers' case, there was no father-son estrangement. His father, Sherwin Rodgers, was a child radio actor in Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s. As a teenager, he taught radio acting classes. He did eventually go on to graduate from Northwestern University Law School, but he opened his own advertising agency, Sherwin Rodgers & Associates. He created and produced a pioneering celebrity talk show featuring his wife, *Talking with Toni*, which aired on WCFL radio and later on

WGN TV. (Rodgers' mother passed away in 1960 at the age of 37; his father in 1991 at the age of 71).

Sherwin shuttered the agency in 1962 to form Hermes Productions, opening theatrical plays Off-Broadway. "It's a shame our careers didn't overlap professionally," Rodgers jokes. "Some of those plays would have made excellent tax shelters."

Sherwin also took Broadway shows on the road, including *This is Burlesque*. At the age of 15, Lance Rodgers rode the train carrying the cast of strippers, comics, and entertainers to Los Angeles. It was a transformative experience, Rodgers says discreetly. "Being the producer's son, I didn't take advantage of it the way I could have," he laughs. "But the experience probably motivated me to want more stability in my life and job situation. In my entire 41 years as a lawyer, I've been with only two firms."

Rodgers, a Chicago native whose family moved to Highland Park in 1951, became interested in law in part after reading, *Yankee from Olympus: Justice Holmes and His Family* by Catherine Drinker Bowen. The law, he says, seemed "a natural outlet for me, an intellectual challenge, but at the same time not an ivory tower (pursuit) like a college professor."

The Highland Park High School valedictorian attended Harvard College and then Harvard Law School. He began practicing law in 1974. He was 25 years old, coincidentally the same age as Orson Welles when he made his masterpiece, *Citizen Kane*. The connection: Rodgers' father befriended the precocious Welles, then a teenager, after Sherwin replaced him as the drama critic for the *Highland Park News*. "They were close for awhile," Rodgers says. "It culminated with my Dad having breakfast with Welles on May 6, 1941





Lance Rodgers

at the Ambassador Hotel in Chicago, after which they proceeded to the opening of *Kane* together.”

The name Hermes Productions, Rodgers believes, was an homage to Welles’ famed repertory company, the Mercury Theatre. And the connection gets heavier, Rodgers further notes tongue-in-cheek in reference to the famously plus-sized director. “Later in his life, my father gained 100 pounds.”

Rodgers started his own career at the time of the Arab oil embargo, retaliation by Arab oil producers against American support of Israel during the 1973 war with Egypt and Syria. It was a chaotic time of high gas prices (over \$1!) and long lines at the pump. The field of international tax had previously been an outbound practice, Rodgers says. “In the mid-1970s, there was this whole different paradigm; foreign capital was becoming preeminent. This manifested itself by creating the need to have funding come back the other way. There were whole areas of tax law involving inbound transactions from foreigners. I developed some creative and legitimate structures for them to invest in the United States.”

His first successes, he says, were helping “the Shah (of Iran’s) crowd that had left the country (following the revolution) and were looking for stability in their investments. At the time, there was nothing more stable than U.S. real estate.”

Rodgers gained a reputation as a lawyer in a single venue office in Chicago with expertise in representing foreigners. A client with connections to the Grimaldi royal family was his introduction to Princess Stephanie, daughter of actress Grace Kelly. She wanted to establish a perfume and bathing suit line in America, as well as pursue her fledgling music career. “My wife and I became quite friendly

with her,” Rodgers says.

But Rodgers is not “a lawyer to the stars,” he says. One of his most memorable and rewarding cases involved three World War II veterans who had served together in France and had raised \$250,000 to replace the stained glass window of an 11th century church bombed by the Nazis. They recruited Rodgers (who speaks fluent French) to help circumvent the “bureaucratic hassles” in getting the proper permits.

In his own way, he says, he shares his father’s creative streak, but he applies it to his practice. “I view the craft and structuring (of a business transaction) as an artistic endeavor,” he says. “I lament more and more that the law is becoming commoditized and less of a craft. The incremental differences are not appreciated. I like to push the envelope, but always put extra postage on it.”

Rodgers still thinks of his single office practice as part of a 100-lawyer firm as entrepreneurial. He compares it to eating at a Michelin three-star French restaurant. “I like to think that the chef is in the kitchen and not opening his newest place in Cabo,” he says.

Rodgers mostly credits his family and his Christian faith for helping him to keep fully engaged with the law and to keep things in perspective. He and his wife will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary this year. He has three children. One is in Los Angeles and is about to begin his first job after completing his MBA. The second is a senior at the University of Michigan. The third, 17, has Down syndrome. “That sure keeps me young,” he says.

“The Old Testament,” he continues, “taught me that there are limits to the law. It has made me a better lawyer in seeing that documents aren’t worth the paper they’re written on unless they are user-friendly and people have their hearts in them.”