

• 40 Under 40 •

Barton Stern runs large property-management firm

SINCE JOINING Ventura Investment Company in 1992, Barton Stern has assumed the



role of president and sole owner of the company. Ventura Investment Company, located in Camarillo, specializes in management, acquisition and development of commercial income property in both Cali-

fornia and Nevada.

Stern's firm manages approximately 400,000 square feet of commercial space and more than 2,500 residential units. In 2002, Ventura Investment Company has brokered approximately \$15 million in real estate sales.

Stern graduated from the University of Southern California and is a licensed California and Nevada real estate broker. As a licensed California general building contractor, Stern has been able to involve the firm in residential and commercial construction and property maintenance.

Stern, 33, served as the president of the Camarillo Rotary Club in 2001-2002 and as the president of the Camarillo Chamber of Commerce in 1998-1999. Since his appointment in 1994, Stern has served as commissioner of the Rent Review Commission of the Camarillo City Council. This year he was also appointed by the Ventura County Board of

Supervisors as a commissioner on the Assessment Appeals Board. He resides in Camarillo with his wife and two sons.

What is the most unusual job you've ever had?

I was an assistant meat cutter/deli manager at the Pines Market in Bass Lake during a summer. For the first time, I was able to make independent decisions that affected people, and it was fun! My proudest achievement was highlighting Oscar Mayer's new line of cheese-filled hotdogs, one of the pitfalls of giving control to a 15-year-old.

What is the last book you read for pleasure?

"Jack," the autobiography by Jack Welch, former GE chairman. An open-minded and logical-thinking business executive. His ability to hire and read people and comments about interpersonal communication were of great interest to me.

Who has been your most influential business mentor?

Kevin Sweeney and Bob Ostengaard have been instrumental in my development, but the most profound was Robert Stern, my father. He showed me the power and importance of honesty, creativity, mental toughness, and the greater importance of family. In his illness and death, he showed his ultimate ability to be positive and brave while maintaining a sense of humor under the worst possible conditions.

—Kate Hersberger