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Outside the Box: Real estate, rock 'n' roll, and a Right Turn

By Greg Walsh
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As a 17-year veteran at New Boston Fund, Gary Hofstetter has been involved in many of the firm's legacy projects throughout the East Coast, including the soon-to-be constructed 295-unit residential project at Parcel 24 in Boston's Chinatown neighborhood.

But when he's off the big stage of commercial real estate, Hofstetter rocks his nonprofit side with Right Turn. Dubbed "a creative place for recovery," Right Turn (www.right-turn.org/productions.html) provides creative people — mostly musicians — assistance recovering from drug and alcohol addictions while nurturing their creative and expressive environments.



W. Marc Bernsau

Gary Hofstetter serves on the board of directors for Right Turn, which helps artistic people overcome drug and alcohol addiction.

Hofstetter negotiates Right Turn's real estate needs such as its office and clinical space in Arlington, its new sober residence in Watertown and future expansions into the New York, Nashville and L.A. markets. He also the treasurer for the nonprofit with a quickly approaching \$1 million budget, and co-produces its annual super group fundraising event that in the past has included rock n' roll super stars such as Alice Cooper, Chuck Berry and Ace Frehley of Kiss.

Hofstetter spoke with the BBJ's Greg Walsh about his involvement with Right Turn.

Tell us how you started working with Right Turn?

A mutual friend, Simon Kirke (drummer for the classic rock band, Bad Company) asked me to join him on the board of directors for Right Turn and to meet Woody Giessmann (drummer for Del Fuegos), the founder.

Does Right Turn only work with "creative" people?

Typically Right Turn clients are creative people working to overcome addiction. The client's identity as artists, musicians, comedians and poets take shape through performance. The "creative place for recovery" hallmark of Right Turn's innovative addiction services are a combination of evidence based treatment and unique creativity groups.

How many people can Right Turn treat at a given time?

There are no set number of people that can participate in Right Turn at any given time, since so many varied programs are offered. These include intensive outpatient programs,

supported housing for men, Intervention services, an outpatient clinic, expressive therapies and many performance opportunities through the Right Turn Live events

So I heard you attended Rock n' Roll Fantasy Camp, three times!

Yes, it was supposed to be a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity but I enjoyed the camaraderie and friendship of the classic rock stars, the other novice participants and the amazing venues so much that I returned many times. Where else could a strummer from the '70s like me play alongside of Roger Daltrey (The Who), Dicky Betts (Allman Brothers), Jack Blades (Night Ranger), Simon Kirke (Bad Co.), Brian Wilson (Beach Boys) and the list goes on. All of these camps took place in Los Angeles at the various famous recording studios with a final show at the House of Blues on Sunset Blvd.

Who is the biggest rock star you have ever met?

Probably Roger Daltrey.

What instrument do you play?

You are being generous assuming I can still play — but I do like to strum an acoustic guitar best these days.

Do your colleagues in real estate know how much of a rock and roller you are?

Well, they do know how much I love classic rock as I am often joining my "camp" friends at their concerts in the Boston area. One year we had a couple of the guys from Bad Co. play at the New Boston Fund CEO's 50th birthday party, here at the Hard Rock.

Have you gotten any of your other colleagues at New Boston Fund involved with Right Turn?

Oh yes, many of my colleagues here attend the Right Turn golf tournament, the annual Super Groups concert and other fundraising events throughout the year. Also many have gotten to spend time with their rock idols, had photos taken and have had memorabilia signed for their collections.

What's on your iPod?

Over 5,000 tunes on my iPhone right now; favorites are Dylan, Neil Young, Bruce Springsteen, Pink Floyd and more Dylan.

Do you have a mentor?

Retired professor, Frank Robinson of Northeastern University. Frank inspired me toward formulating a "balance of life" — connecting the dots of family, community and work in a socially responsible way.

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?

If I could have, it would have been John Lennon. Alive today — probably Bob Dylan.