

## Dan Fetterley

Of Counsel, Andrus Intellectual Property Law, LLP  
Member since October 1981

Daniel Fetterley is a navigator. On water and more.

Indeed, Dan's private, professional, and public life have all the marks of a skilled navigator who uses data, technology, observation, and instinct to serve crew, clients, and citizens. He has a good navigator's attributes of being able to see ahead, balance facts and assumptions and continuously learn.

The obvious application is on water. A long-time member of the Milwaukee Yacht Club, Dan spent untold hours with his wife Pat and children, Will and Beth, on their 28-foot sailboat, off Door County and Milwaukee. But it was his four ocean-crossing experiences on Richard Pieper's 54-foot sailboat where he earned his rank.



"Dick had this great goal to sail around the world, which, sadly, was a lot safer in the 1990s than now" Dan said. "So, I gladly signed up" spending a month a year for four years at sea with Dick and his crew of three who divided duties in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. "Someone else was a better cook, and I became navigator," he chuckled, a most interesting and challenging task on a sailboat on the vast, and invariably vacant seas.

Off the water, Dan practiced navigation of a different sort as an intellectual property law attorney. The legal and technical complexities of getting IP protection for clients required foresight, vision, data analytics, intellectual curiosity, and instincts of a good navigator. Not to mention navigating the bureaucracy of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. In practicing IP law, Dan used his Purdue engineering education to research and draft patent applications for products and services that included electric motor controls, EKG and magnetic resonance imaging equipment, anesthesia machines, undersea oil extraction gear, and more.

"My engineering training was immensely helpful," Dan explained. Further, he kept up with advances in physics, biology, electronics, and mechanics through reading, listening and self-learning in order to work with clients from Finland, United Kingdom, Germany, Taiwan, and Japan.

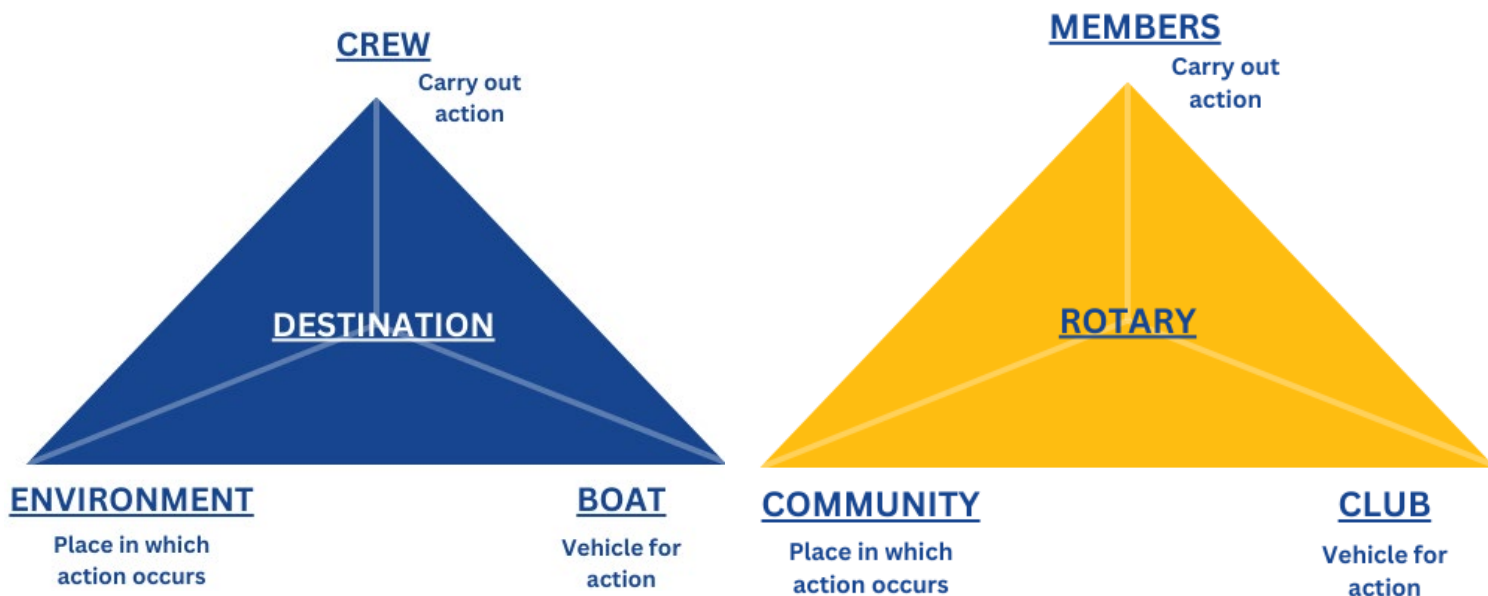


Dan was on the board and secretary of the International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property and president of the Wisconsin Intellectual Property Law Association.

Turning to Rotary, Dan offered a schematic suggesting similarities between sailing and Rotary. Sailing has its destination. Rotary has service. Each has a vehicle for action: Boat and Club. How each uses its crew/members to carry out actions determines success in navigating the water environment and community environment.

Simply staying afloat is not enough if the boat crew reaches the wrong destination or Rotary does not carry out meaningful projects, he noted.

**(Flip over for Dan's schematic sketch)**



Dan's pride in Rotary is palpable in his family's Rotarian history. "My father, Ray Fetterley, joined Rotary Toronto in 1946 and RCM in 1980," Dan says. Daughter, and RCM Vice President designee, Beth Fetterley Heller, became a Rotarian 2010 and served on the Board 2018 – 2021.

Joining RCM in 1981 Dan has served on the Program, Ambassadorial Scholarship, Social, and World Community Service committees. As an RCM Board member from 2001-2004, he was part of the team that helped select a new executive director. Later he set the course for grants from the Phillip Orth bequest that launched the Club's Guatemala projects.

Over 43 years as a Rotarian, he's seen RCM navigate from an all-male "by the book" organization with rigorous vocational classification adherence and attendance monitoring and "make-up" days for truants to its current form.

In his early days of Rotary, "The Program committee met over drinks at the University Club and the Club held "smokers" with steaks, cigars, and famous athlete dinner speakers," he recalled, adding that things necessarily changed, and for the better, with the relaxation of classification and attendance requirements and the inclusion of women members in the Club. Rotary's important core values to Dan remain: meeting new and different people, exposure to interesting and stimulating speakers and programs, and community and international service opportunities, he added.

Currently for RCM, he is pleased to see the Club attracting more new generation members by being relevant to their views, interests, and values. RCM's benefits and service traditions are definite assets that need to be emphasized, he said. Where to start? "I would like to see the Club continue to offer impactful projects," Dan said; "ones that excite new generations."

In addition to his engineering degree from Purdue, Dan has a law degree from Indiana University and a Masters of laws degree from the University of Illinois-Chicago. He served in the National Guard from 1954 to 1962 and first came to Wisconsin with the Indiana Guard.

Dan has been married to Patrica Ann Shier for almost sixty years. Along with Rotarian Beth and her husband Fred, they have a son, Will, who is an alternative energy senior construction manager, a daughter-in-law, Sarah, and two grandchildren, Kate and Meg.

Dan and Pat live in Cudahy Tower across the street from the War Memorial Center. "From the 7th floor. I can see the waters of Lake Michigan in its many moods, as well as the rising of the sun, moon, and stars, all reminders of time spent sailing and navigating.

**Editor's Note:** *Rotary People of Action* is a bi-monthly series written by a group of Rotarians. This feature was written by Jeff Smoller.