

P.T. McEwen leads the way for the Boys & Girls Clubs

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He wanted to be an astronaut when he grew up. More specifically, he said, "I wanted to be the chief engineer of the first intergalactic starship and travel the universe."

P.T. McEwen is a self-proclaimed "Trekkie."

He is also the chief executive for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Redlands, where he has helped lead the way through construction of a new clubhouse and continues to help grow the program that serves children in Redlands and the surrounding communities.



*Boys & Girls Clubs of Redlands Chief Executive P.T. McEwen in the clubhouse.
(JESSE B. GILL/Redlands Daily Facts)*

Born: Education: About P.T. McEwen January 1973, and raised in the small town of Exter in Central California.

Earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology with a minor in marketing from Indiana State University - "the Mighty Sycamores - go Trees! This is also the alma mater of Larry Bird, who I have met and shaken hands with."

Earned a master's degree in human resource development from Clemson University. "Go Tigers GRRRRR!"

Parents: "Papa George is a pest control adviser - telling people what they need to spray on their trees to kill pests - and his hobby is farming about 120 acres of oranges. Mama Linda is a small business owner of a womens' clothing store - she sells treasures for you and your home."

Military experience: "Closest I have been to the military is marrying my wife, who is an Air Force Academy graduate, and time wearing a Boy Scout uniform."

Family: "Married Wendy on July 7, 2001. We have one cute collaboration named George Calvin - using my naming convention of being named after both grandfathers."

Pets: "We are a multi-species household with four, four-legged children. Francesca, a tortoise calico cat; Ogden, a Siamese mix cat; Lola, a beagle mix dog; and Betty, a huge pug mix."

Past lives: "After graduation, I spent time doing lighting for independent film companies in Los Angeles, and worked on five films."

The biggest name I worked with is Portia de Rossi in a film called 'The Invisibles.'

"After projects ended and with little prospect of more jobs, I moved back home and began to substitute teach."

"After about three months, I was called by the board president of the local Boys & Girls Club and asked if I would be interested in being their interim executive."

Current occupation: Chief Executive for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Redlands, serving the communities of Loma Linda, Mentone, Redlands and San Bernardino.

Claims to fame: "One of my hobbies is short story writing and I was published in the Indiana State University annual."

"In the movie I worked on, 'The Invisibles,' I am in the open shot and the final shot of the film."

Awards: Advance McCabe Fellow, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 2006; Robert Woodruff Fellow, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 2004; Proclamation of Outstanding Service, Tulare County Board of Supervisors, 2000; Target 2000 Strategic Planning Award-Youth Cluster, United Way of Tulare County, 2000; Founders Award, Order of the Arrow, Boy Scouts of America, 1992; Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America, 1991

Bookshelf: "I think I am a reader, but compared to my wife, I turn the pages very slowly. Mostly the books I read are work related - building better boards, raising

money in hard times - things like that. I also read the local papers and some trade publications."

Small screen: "All my shows are being cancelled, like 'Boston Legal,' 'Battle Star Galactica,' and 'Pushing Daisies.' Other shows are 'Psych,' 'Brothers & Sisters,' 'Star Wars Clone Wars,' and whatever my wife is watching at the time."

iPod: "I listen to my iPod in my office all day long. I can hit play on my iPod and it will play for 11 days without repeating a song. I listen to almost everything. My favorite musical artist is David Byrne, the former lead singer for Talking Heads."

Greatest adventure: "Climbing Mt. Everest - just kidding. Having a kid, my gosh, that little guy is amazing. Each day is a new adventure for him and his parents."

Hobbies: "Writing short stories. I am also a big gamer, both computer games and Wii."

"I love strategy games, board games, poker. And listening to music."

Hero: "Master Yoda. He has some great pearls of wisdoms and when needed he whips out that light saber kicks some butt."

Pet peeve: "I am sure I do, (have one) just can't think of it right now."

Philosophy: "Do or do not, there is no try" - Yoda

Retirement: "I am a workaholic and plan to never retire. I will most likely volunteer at a Boys & Girls Club a few days per week. And do whatever my wife asks me to do."

How did you get involved? "If I am not out in the community, then I am not really doing my job."

"There are two groups that help me with getting involved. The first is the (noon) Kiwanis Club of Redlands. I was brought in by Joe Walloch and Perry Henderson, both members of the Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Clubs at the time."

"The other is the Redlands Chamber of Commerce. I am a proud graduate of the Leadership Redlands program - Kathie Thurston said we were the best class ever, but I hear that she says that about every class."

What is the mission? The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs is: "To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens."

How is that mission carried out? "We serve kids and teens daily at five different locations using our Youth Development Philosophy, which is based off of decades of research.

Every young person needs these things to succeed:

A sense of belonging - a place where young people know they fit and are accepted.

A sense of influence - a chance for every young person to be heard, to lead, to take part in decision making and feel that they have control over their lives.

A sense of usefulness - opportunities to do something of value for others, to assume responsibility and do real work.

And a sense of competence - the feeling that there is something each young person can do well.

Is the mission successful? "Everyday you will see kids that rush to get to the clubs and be greeted by a staff member who knows their name - think of `Cheers' and everyone shouting `NORM!"

"Also, if parents come to pick up their kids early, they are faced with negotiation to have mom or dad come back later - they just don't want to go home - a sense of belonging.

"We have groups of young people that do service projects, and it is up to them to decide what project they would like to do - a sense of influence and usefulness.

"There is a teen who was not doing well in school, she and some of her associates would skip school and worse - she was losing interest in her education.

"She got caught for ditching class, and doing some other stupid things, and was assigned 40 hours of community service. She did her service at the Boys & Girls Club and discovered the teen center.

"After completing her hours, she joined the Club. She got help with her homework and got involved in the Clubs' programs. Her failing grades from her freshman year went to As and Bs and with some hard work, she will be graduating on time. She will be attending a local community college in the fall of 2009 - a sense of competence."

What are the challenges? "Every not-for-profit can use more money. And we are no different.

"We do a good job at raising programs funds, but we have two special projects that we are putting together.

"The first is a transportation fund - looking at purchasing two 36-passenger buses, estimated to cost about \$100,000 each, plus \$40,000 a year to operate.

"With several locations and the various community events that we are involved in, as well as the use of the Burrage Mansion, transportation has become vital to our operations - helping us provide more opportunities to impact kids.

The second is Outcome Measurement - we are just starting to put together some measurement indicators, but to do this right, we are going to need to contract with a researching firm to help us develop and measure our indicators.

"Once this is done, we can show the community the true impact that we have on the young people in our community. I am sure it will be something like "for every dollar that the Boys & Girls Club spends, the community saves \$5 in keeping kids out of the justice system, helping keep teens from dropping out of school, and helping them gain employment."

What is in the future? "The Club has been around for more than 40 years and we are looking at conducting an endowment campaign. We currently have a small endowment, thanks to the generosity of several individuals over the years, but we have never had a formal campaign to encourage people of the community to leave a legacy through a bequest to their favorite charity - like the Boys & Girls Clubs.

This project is a few years down the road, but some ground work can be done now."

If you had a magic wand, how would you use it? "Having a magic wand can be cool, but can cause problems, as we have seen with the Harry Potter series.

"I would wave that wand and restore the budgets to our schools. We are only deferring the costs. Our kids need a good foundation on which to grow. We can pay for it now or we will pay more later."