

# The Barrington



## Introducing THE BARRINGTON

A large and dormant corporate campus on Route 14 comes back to life with Ortho Molecular Products as its first anchor tenant

BY LISA STAMOS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM PRISCHING

*The lobby of newly reopened The Barrington.*

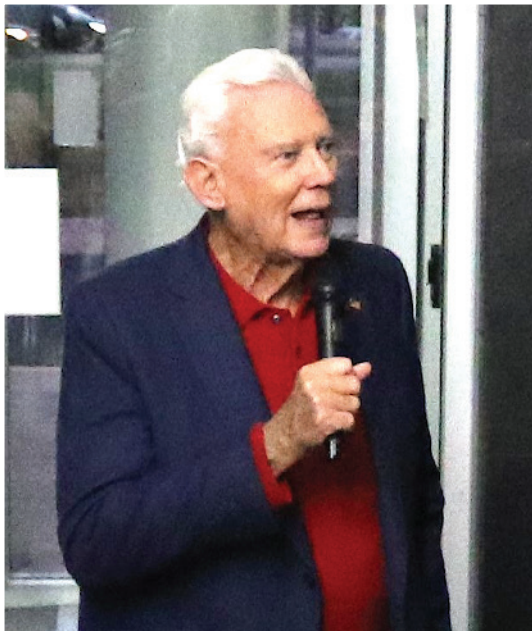
## MEET ORTHO MOLECULAR PRODUCTS PRESIDENT AARON BARTZ

ORTHO MOLECULAR PRODUCTS President Aaron Bartz and his wife Danelle have lived in Barrington for 20 years. They've raised three children who have all gone to Barrington schools and have attended Willow Creek Church since 1992. Until now, Bartz traveled to Woodstock to work at Ortho Molecular Products' headquarters. The company's manufacturing facility and lab is in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and they had rented office space in the medical building near Pepper Road in Lake Barrington. The company was founded in Walworth, Wisconsin more than 30 years ago by Gary Powers, its CEO.

Ortho Molecular Products has experienced explosive growth, especially around the pandemic years. "We added 75 new employees last year, and 90 the year before that," Bartz said. For the first 10 years, the team and their employees focused on the Midwest as a territory. They had enough space in Woodstock to expand their footprint yet found hiring IT and sales executives difficult in the far



Aaron Bartz



Rush Hill, Bourns' head of real estate, addresses the crowd at the ribbon cutting ceremony for The Barrington and Ortho Molecular Products.



Gary Powers, CEO of Ortho Molecular Products, and his wife, Patti with Aaron Bartz, president of Ortho Molecular Products, and his wife, Danelle.

suburbs. While driving through Barrington, Bartz noticed the large corporate campus that formerly housed GE Health Care and before that, Recon/Optical. "I called Dave Fernekes, the facility director at Bourns, Inc., the firm that owns the property. He called right back and after a walk-through, I felt it was perfect for us," Bartz said.

### Transforming the Practice of Medicine

Bartz explains that their company partners with health care providers—medical doctors, osteopathic physicians, chiropractors, naturopathic practitioners, and pharmacists—to provide nutritional solutions that offer the highest possible efficacy. They also provide educational tools and support for their medical clients about their products and best practices for use. "Our vision is to transform the practice of medicine, which we think is deeply broken," Bartz said. "Many people become doctors because they want to help people, and most people like their doctors, but they need more time with them on appointments. The average medical visit in this country is 7 to 10 minutes as their doctors are controlled by the insurance system."

Bartz says the company works with many doctors who have left this system or have created their own business model. "Most of the doctors we work with will spend 30 to 60 minutes with their patients to discuss lifestyle, nutrition, and exercise," he said. Bartz notes that the pandemic has resulted in people becoming more proactive in their health care, which is better than waiting until you become ill, looking only to treat the symptoms.

### Healthier Nutritional Products

Nutritional supplements are easily available and Bartz notes that the marketing behind them is powerful. Additionally, consumers do not know the proper dosages to take or for how long. He also mentions that the FDA's Office of Nutrition, Labeling and Dietary Supplements is under-funded, which means that some products on store shelves may use inferior or adulterated materials as they slip through the regulatory cracks. "If you look at



Aaron Bartz with The Barrington's Director of Facilities, Dave Fernekes.

the skyrocketing use of elderberry through the pandemic ... elderberry is an herb that takes several years to grow. That creates an opening for adulterated products when there's a rush to market," Bartz said.

Ortho Molecular Products purchases from reputable suppliers around the world for their botanicals, minerals, and vitamins, and their lab in Stevens Point tests the raw materials to confirm that they are clean. Their products are used by more than 40,000 health care professionals in the United States and Canada. Chicagoland is a large market for them, and they just opened a distribution center in Southern California. "Our next market will be Europe once the pandemic settles down," Bartz says.



*The cafeteria will have an executive chef to focus on healthy meal preparation.*

## A Physician's Point of View

Dr. Frances Baxley is a board-certified family physician with certification in Functional Medicine through the Institute for Functional Medicine. She earned her medical degree from Harvard University. Dr. Baxley works on the North Shore including Glenview. We asked her to share thoughts about Ortho Molecular Products.

"I am a family physician specializing in integrative and functional medicine. An important focus of my practice is helping patients learn to use lifestyle practices to support the body's innate capacity to heal. I believe that with these practices it is possible to improve quality of life and restore function regardless of the degree of impairment. I prefer the term integrative to alternative medicine because I value being integrated into my patients' care team, working alongside their other providers to provide strategies that complement and enhance the effectiveness of conventional approaches."

"I recommend Ortho Molecular products for several reasons. I trust their quality and purity. If one is recommending that patients put something other than food into their bodies on a daily basis, it is important to be able to trust that the product is third-party tested, reliably pure and standardized, and that is not the case with many products on the market. I trust these qualities with Ortho Molecular. I also find that Ortho's blends suit the needs of many of the common conditions that I treat. I also like that they're a homegrown local company, with excellent customer service. Ortho's knowledgeable staff provides literature supporting the mechanism of action of their products, and I see the results in my practice. I've found their botanical anti-microbial blends for gut flora imbalances to be particularly useful and well tolerated. I also frequently use their digestive enzymes, and bone mineralization supplements."



*The lobby at The Barrington.*



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: JIM PRISHING

*Dave Fernekes is the director of facilities for The Barrington.*

## A WELCOME SIGN

### The 50,000 Foot View

The Chicago Aerial Survey Company was founded in 1922 by Eugene W. Fuller, and was later known as Chicago Aerial Industries, or CAI. Fred T. Sonne was the company's vice president and later, the president of CAI. The company started out in Chicago and then Melrose Park before finding its way to Barrington in 1960 to build and assume its large facility.

In March of 1965, Rosemary and Marlan Bourns acquired CAI, and in 1978, formed Recon/Optical as one of its divisions (Recon is derived from "reconnaissance"). As a subsidiary of Bourns for many years, Recon/Optical was purchased by Goodrich Corporation in 2008, which later sold it to UTC Aerospace Systems, closing its Barrington office on Northwest Highway. GE Capital/Health Care occupied the large corporate campus for 20 years, gutting the 540 building to shift it from manufacturing to a modern Class A office space. They left at the end of 2017, leaving the Bourns facility empty, yet still maintained.

Starting out as an early 1900s aerial camera business, Recon/Optical grew into a military defense manufacturer that engineered critically important airborne cameras (first film, then digital) and lens. They manufactured their parts and did the assembly for U.S. and foreign allies in Barrington, providing end-to-end intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems, Force Protection Technology (FPT), and optical components for military and government use.



*A conference room in the tech center.*



*A high-tech center at The Barrington.*



In 1922, Eugene W. Fuller founded the Chicago Aerial Survey Company.



Fred T. Sonne was vice president of Chicago Aerial Survey Co., and later, the president of CAI.



Top Right: Fred Sonne and a pilot prepare for flight in a 1923 Curtiss Jenny airplane—a World War I training airplane used for barnstorming and it was the first plane owned by the company.


Right: This sign was erected in July 1959 at the proposed new site for Chicago Aerial Industries on Route 14 in Barrington. Pictured are (left) Tony Swetonic of the facilities group and Mike Maggio, billboard designer. The company moved to Barrington, and in 1978, changed its name to CAI, A Division of Recon/Optical Inc.

Recon/Optical's technology helped the U.S. gather camera footage from the air showing missiles onboard warships staged near Cuba, during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Other applications were used in Vietnam and other wars.

## Introducing The Barrington

Bourns, Inc. is a global manufacturer of automotive electronic components based in Riverside, California that owns the three buildings that now comprise "The Barrington". Director of Facilities Dave Fernekes, who has worked for Bourns for 40 years, started as a janitor expecting to only work for one summer. Within one year on the job, his role greatly expanded. In addition to managing the three buildings at The Barrington, he also works with the firm's real estate team to manage the Bourns' facility in Switzerland.

"Our vision for The Barrington is to attract health care, child care, and clinical-based businesses," Fernekes said. "We have three buildings that can be subdivided as needed with the capacity for several units both large and small. On the east side of the building, we plan for public retail units including a gym, a coffee shop, and various food services with the possibility of a drive-through option," Fernekes said.

Ortho Molecular Products is the first tenant at The Barrington, and one Fernekes is thrilled about. "We love having them here; their people are amazing. Now the community can see life in the building, with flags flying, cars in the parking lot, and an exciting future ahead." 



Senator John F. Kennedy is seen speaking to employees and Barrington officials in CAI's northeast parking lot in 1960. Kennedy's last-minute visit in mid-October was part of his presidential campaign. He also stopped by Barrington High School that day. He was elected in November 1960. Also present in this photo are Senator Dirksen (behind and to the right of Kennedy facing the camera), Gov. Otto Kerner (foreground, talking to Senator Dirksen), and Fred Sonne, president of CAI (extreme right of the photo, wearing khaki trench coat).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOURNS, INC.