

### Wharton Leader

### Henry Posner III, WG'82

#### Railroad Developer, Adventure Capitalist

Henry Posner III's preference for bowties gives him a distinctive early-20th-century look. It's fitting, as he straddles the railroad-powered culture of yesteryear America and the daring, forward-thinking global endeavor that *Forbes* magazine, in a profile, called "adventure capitalism."

As the child of a prominent businessman and philanthropist growing up in Pittsburgh, young Posner caught train fever, and the fever never broke. The company he founded in 1987, Railroad Development Corporation (RDC), now owns railroads on four continents.

Soon after Congress created it in 1976, Posner joined Conrail and worked for 10 years in the operating, marketing, and sales departments. He met his wife, **Anne Molloy**, WG'79, at Conrail.

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review called Posner, who also earned a B.S. in civil engineering from Princeton University, "one of the world's few experts in resurrecting broken-down freight rail lines in Third World countries," one who has helped privatize railroads in Mozambique, Malawi, and most recently, Estonia.

"We usually don't understand the culture or politics, but we do understand the railroad business. We work with local partners to integrate the best practices of railroading with the local culture, economy, politics, etc.," Posner told the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 2005. In fact, the staff of RDC numbers fewer than 10. The boss is very hands-on, and travels internationally upwards of 20 times year, often driving the trains he deals in.

The multilingual Posner has often lectured and published on his favorite subject, trains, with a particular emphasis on developing countries. And his knowledge is much in demand — Posner serves as chairman of RDC, Iowa Interstate Railroad, and Ferrovias Guatemala; director of America Latina Logistica-Central in Argentina, Eesti Raudtee in Estonia; alternate director of the Association of American Railroads; and as vice president of the Hawthorne Group, a private investment and management firm. He is active in welfare programs for the Jewish community in the former Soviet Union and is the recipient of a Paul Harris Fellowship from Rotary International for his civic work in Guatemala.

