Let it be said that getting pulled around in a wagon never gets old.

Which is partly why, even as it turns 100 this year, Radio Flyer remains more than a childhood totem for past generations. It’s among that rare set of brands that continues to be a rite of passage for successive generations.

Not that the company, one of the last family-owned independent toy makers in the country, is resting on its laurels. Last year, Radio Flyer struck an unlikely deal with Tesla to make the Mini Model S. It even comes with an MP3 sound system. Your grandfather’s Radio Flyer this isn’t.
Except that it is. It still sells a ton of classic red wagons, with sales accounting for as much as a third of the business, by last count. Robert Pasin, the company’s "Chief Wagon Officer," inherited the company from his grandfather Antonio Pasin and is credited with sustaining the company through some lean years in the 90s, as cheaper suppliers and shifting sensibilities threatened to squeeze Radio Flyer out of the picture.

Today, the brand is as healthy and relevant as it’s ever been.

Mr. Pasin took the Founder Questionnaire for a spin.

1. **When did you first know you were going to be an entrepreneur?**

When I was in 6th grade, my history teacher gave us the assignment to write about a significant event in Chicago’s history. My mom suggested that I write a report about my grandfather’s exhibit at the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair. I learned that he constructed a giant 45-foot-tall boy riding a Radio Flyer wagon. It was a huge success and introduced Radio Flyer to the world. That’s when I fell in love with Radio Flyer and knew that I’d work there someday.

2. **What inspires you to succeed?**

When I was growing up, my mom often quoted John Kennedy, “To whom much is given, much is required.” As the grandson of the founder of Radio Flyer, I joke with our team that I was born with a silver wagon handle in my mouth. I feel I am incredibly lucky to be part of the family that owns Radio Flyer and with that comes the responsibility to use this opportunity to continue growing it into something truly great for generations to come.

3. **If you could hire your younger self, what job would it be for?**

I actually started working for Radio Flyer at a very young age – first in the warehouse in the summertime and then in sales. I think sales was the perfect job to start out in – it was the best way for me to get out in the field, gain feedback and really understand how customers view you.

4. **What’s the best part of coming to work every day?**

Being able to work with such an amazingly creative and committed team whose mission is to bring smiles and create warm memories by developing awesome kids’ products that inspire outdoor active play.

5. **What are you most excited to work on at the moment?**

I’m super excited about our 100th Anniversary this year. We have all kinds of celebrations, activities and new products planned to commemorate this incredible accomplishment.

6. **What’s your biggest fear as a company leader?**

One of my biggest fears as a leader is becoming complacent. I never
want our assumptions to prevent us from making good decisions. One of the ways we work really hard to ensure this doesn’t happen is by staying very close to our consumers through in-home research. We closely watch and listen to families and are constantly evaluating how people use our products.

7. What is the ideal workspace for you, personally?

My ideal workspace features plenty of natural light and is designed to foster teamwork and interaction. We recently completed a LEED Platinum renovation of our 100-year-old building in Chicago to create a one-of-a-kind workplace that includes these features among others – such as informal gathering places for impromptu meetings, sit-to-stand desks for everyone, ample outdoor spaces and an open floor plan. For the first time in my 25 years at Radio Flyer, I’m not in a private office and I love it!

8. What is your favorite feature of your current office?

I also recently got a sit-to-stand desk, which is my favorite feature of my new office space.

9. What is the ideal form of relaxation for you?

Running is one of the key ways that I have managed stress and maintain a healthy lifestyle. In my 20’s I put on quite a bit of weight due to lack of exercise and poor eating habits. I decided to run a marathon for my 30th birthday to set a big goal to work towards. I thought I would run one and cross it off the list, but I was hooked on the energy of the event and the health benefits. Twenty marathons later, I still love running.

10. What do the words “company culture” make you think of?

One of my favorite Peter Drucker quotes is, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” We intentionally designed our culture to reflect our values, which we call the ‘Little Red Rule.’ Every time we touch people’s lives they will feel great about Radio Flyer. I believe that all of our Flyers exemplify this through their work and in their attitudes every day. Our performance management system weighs demonstration of values equally to delivering business results.

11. When was the last time you laughed uncontrollably?

My kids and I like to play practical jokes on each other and recently, my youngest and I have been taking turns scaring each other at home.

12. If you weren’t doing this, what would you be doing instead?

There is nothing else I would rather do. This is my life’s work and I hope to do it for many years to come.

Jonathan is CEO and Co-Founder of SquareFoot, a real estate platform empowering businesses with the commercial space they need to succeed. You can follow him on Twitter @jmwass.