

PORTS UNKNOWN ISSUE

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DEFINING THE LUXURY EXPERIENCE

Great  
ESCAPES

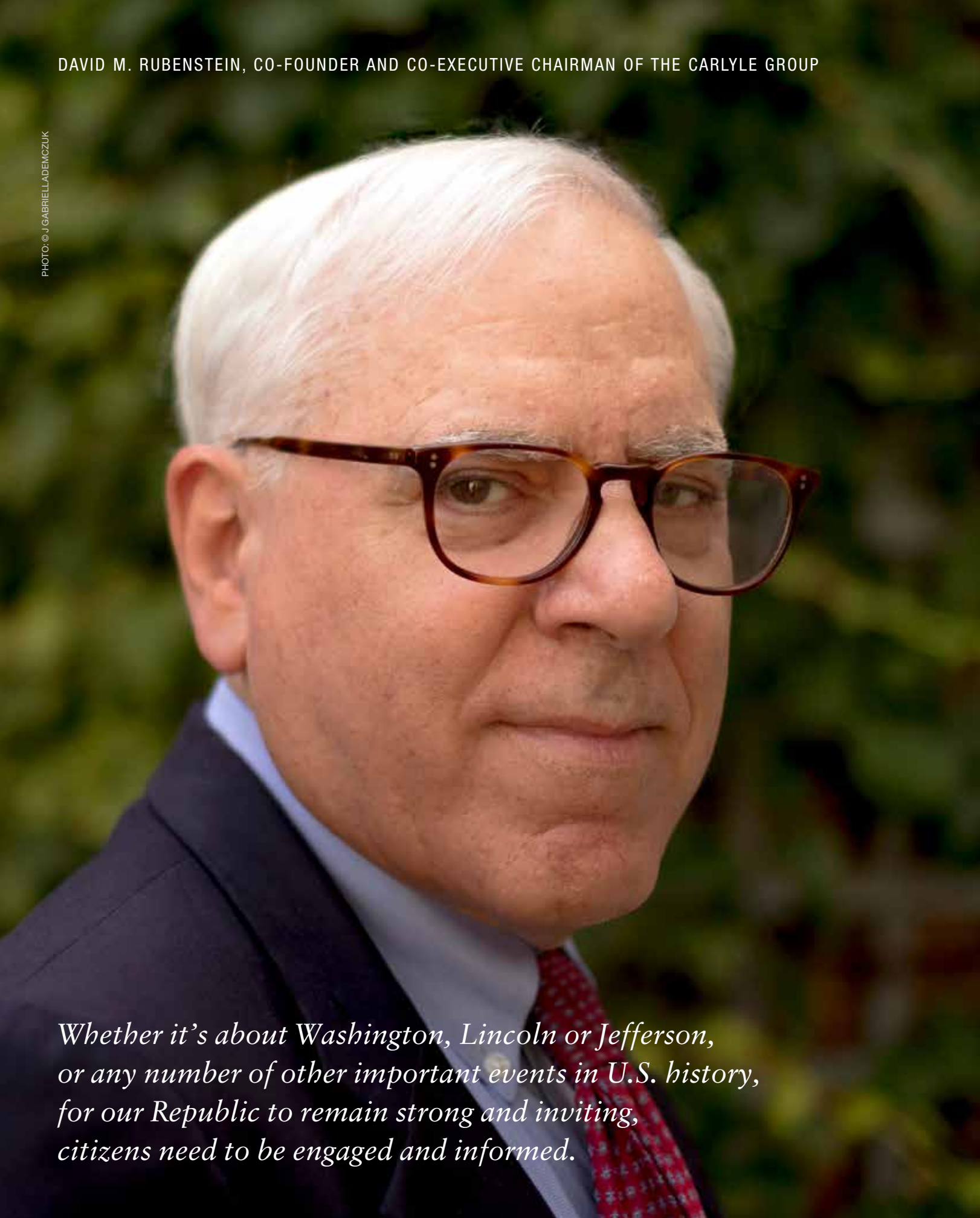
FARAWAY  
YACHTING

WELLNESS  
AT HOME

PRIVATE JET  
EXPLORATIONS

MEXICAN RETREAT | AQUATIC TIMEPIECES | ARTFUL VINEYARD  
ADVENTURE BIKES (THREE DIFFERENT ONES) | AN ASTON MARTIN TO LUST OVER  
CAVIAR'S NEXT TOP MODEL | MONEY TALKS | SMARTENING UP YOUR SMART HOME





*Whether it's about Washington, Lincoln or Jefferson, or any number of other important events in U.S. history, for our Republic to remain strong and inviting, citizens need to be engaged and informed.*

## Improving Our Democracy

The untapped power of patriotic philanthropy by David M. Rubenstein

THE MESSAGE FROM A FRIEND WAS UNLIKE ANY I'D EVER RECEIVED: THE MAGNA CARTA WAS FOR SALE AND WAS I INTERESTED IN BUYING IT? Businessman Ross Perot owned the only copy of a Magna Carta in private hands and had decided to sell it. I went to Sotheby's in New York City the next day and viewed the 710-year old charter of freedom, which inspired the Founding Fathers as they prepared for independence and then created our governing Constitution.

The following day, December 18, 2007, I won the auction and became the new owner of the 1297 version of Magna Carta, one of only 17 extant copies of Magna Carta in the world, and the only version that actually became the law in England. I told the assembled news media that I would return it to the National Archives, on a very long-term loan, ensuring that this foundational document of rights and freedoms would remain on display in the U.S. for all to see and appreciate.

Soon after my purchase of Magna Carta, I embarked on a journey to honor and remind Americans of our history (the good and bad). I've done this through the purchase of important original documents, the restoration of the homes of America's Founding Fathers, the rehabilitation of important monuments and memorials, and the support of institutions that tell the American story, such as the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution. I began to call my efforts "Patriotic Philanthropy" in 2012, and the phrase seemed to resonate with people because it captures two sentiments that are important to Americans – our country and our desire to help others.

Philanthropy is a word that derives from an ancient Greek word that means love of humanity. It's not just wealthy people writing checks. It's really about people using their time, energy and ideas to help fellow humans and institutions in their communities. Americans are incredibly generous. In 2017, Americans gave \$390 billion to U.S. charities. And annually volunteer for eight billion hours.

And as for the *patriotic* part of the phrase, the idea of supporting one's country seems to appeal to most Americans. Our greatest patriots,

of course, are those who risk life and limb in defense of our country. Patriotic Philanthropy is at a different level of commitment to our country, but it does have an important role. Indeed, there are countless people across the past 244 years since our founding who have supported worthy causes with their time and money.

In my case, I've funded the restoration of memorials in Washington, DC. Some say this is the federal government's job, but with annual deficits now well above \$1 billion, the government needs all the help it can get. When the Washington Monument was damaged in an earthquake in 2011 I joined with the government in funding the refurbishment. And I am helping now to restore the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial in DC.

Whether it's about Washington, Lincoln or Jefferson, or any number of other important events in U.S. history, for our Republic to remain strong and inviting, citizens need to be engaged and informed. And the best way to do this is by making history tangible through documents and artifacts, and relevant by showing the impact of history on people's lives. The National Archives has an outstanding permanent exhibit, which I supported, called the *Record of Rights*. This gallery shows how Magna Carta served as a foundation for the Declaration of Independence and Constitution and how the rights enshrined in these documents have impacted the struggle for women, minorities and immigrants to achieve equality in America. This exhibit is even more relevant today as our nation confronts racism and inequality.

Since that day when the auctioneer declared "sold" in the Magna Carta auction, I have had the time of my life trying to help bring the unique and complicated history of America to life and making it more accessible to all people. My hope is that America's already generous people will step into the breach and commit time, energy, ideas and financial support to *patriotic philanthropy*. This would enable us to revel in our strengths, learn from our weaknesses and continue to be a beacon of freedom for the world. ☼