

Schnitzer: His only marriage ended in divorce in 2005

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The woman

That woman is Cory Noel Sause, 37, an executive at her family's Coos Bay barge and tugboat company.

Sause and Schnitzer's baby emerged from the genetic material of two Oregon business dynasties.

In Portland, the Schnitzer family's two branches — one in the steel business, the other in real estate — have been outsized players in economic and philanthropic circles for a more than a century.

In Coos Bay, the Sause Bros. operation is nearly as old. The family runs a fourth-generation tugboat and barge business that stretches from Alaska to Mexico.

When Schnitzer and Sause decided to try a surrogate pregnancy, Schnitzer left nothing to chance, employing a controversial approach to select the sex of the child.

He also took legal precautions.

His attorney drew up a contract specifying Schnitzer would not accept just any baby — he'd only take a boy.

"Schnitzer hereby relinquishes any claim to or jurisdiction over any female embryo from Sause and any resulting female offspring that might result from the use of Sause's eggs," reads the contract, dated June 2, 2014.

On Dec. 22, Schnitzer's dream came true: his son arrived.

On March 3, that dream turned into a nightmare when Sause challenged him in Multnomah County Circuit Court, saying he was violating their contract by denying her parentage of their son.

Filings in that case provide much of the information presented in this story.

Parentage in dispute

Sause declined to comment. Schnitzer, however, sat down for a two-hour interview during which he often grew emotional. He proudly displayed cellphone photos of

his young son and of himself as a baby. The two are nearly identical. "This is a wonderful story and one people can learn a lot from," Schnitzer says.

Schnitzer and Sause's experience shows that for people with financial resources, science can reduce the uncertainty and physical challenges of pregnancy.

Despite the sophistication of the boy's genetic parents and the legal precautions they took, however, the issue of the baby's parentage is now in dispute.

That disagreement, pitting powerful family against powerful family, may have the trappings of private planes, massive ocean-going vessels and multimillion-dollar estates, but at its essence, is still about primal human impulses.

For Sause, it's the desire to be a mother to a child whose genes are half hers. For Schnitzer, who already has two daughters, the imperative is to have a son he can raise without interference and who can carry on his family name.

Selecting the sex of a baby for nonmedical reasons, although possible, is controversial. People who study the ethics of surrogacy are uncomfortable with Schnitzer's approach.

"It seems like a really unfortunate situation brought about by new technology and a man harking back to a previous era of male progenitor rules," says Marcy Darnovsky, director of the Center for Genetics and Society in Berkeley, Calif. "What can you say? It's just bizarre."

Schnitzer Steel

Samuel Schnitzer, an immi-

grant from Russia, founded the Alaska Junk Co. in 1906 and brought his five sons into what is now one of the nation's largest scrap metal businesses, publicly traded Schnitzer Steel, based in Portland.

In 1950, one of those sons, Harold Schnitzer, split from the scrap business and started Harsch Investment Properties. By the time of his death in 2011, Harold had amassed 21 million square feet of commercial real estate in five states — the equivalent of 21 Big Pink towers. He also owned 1,000 apartment units.

Harold's widow, Arlene, is a longtime patron of the arts. Her name adorns the city's best-known concert hall. She and her husband gave more than \$80 million to charity during his lifetime.

Harold and Arlene had one child: a son named Jordan.

Jordan Schnitzer inherited his mother's passion for art. The Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon bears his name, and he owns a collection of 9,500 prints, which have been exhibited at 75 museums across the nation.

Schnitzer's board memberships and civic contributions are too numerous to list. In 2009, he honored his maternal grandparents by donating nearly \$2 million toward the construction of Director Park, just west of Fox Tower in downtown Portland. His alma maters, the University of Oregon and Lewis & Clark Law School, have heaped awards on him.

He spearheaded the renovation of the Astoria Column, helped find a new home for the Pacific Northwest College of

Art, and is a major benefactor of the Portland Art Museum and Oregon College of Art and Craft.

In 2014, when Schnitzer gave \$5 million toward a new art museum at Washington State University, the school named him commencement speaker and awarded him an honorary doctorate in humanities.

Being a dad

But Schnitzer says that the accumulation of wealth, art and accolades pales in comparison to the joy he felt when his daughters were born — and that he wanted to feel one more time, with a son.

"I loved the emotion you feel when you have a little baby and they put their little fingers around yours," he says. "I loved being a dad."

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Marcy Darnovsky

director of the Center for Genetics and Society in Berkeley, Calif.

As a young man, Jordan Schnitzer struggled to prove himself as independent from his family.

A toy company he bought in 1981, Northern Specialty Sales, flopped, causing the loss of about \$30 million. In 1989, he bought Casablanca Industries, an electric fan company, for \$60 million. The company declared bankruptcy two years later.

Eventually, he came back into the family fold, working alongside his father at Harsch's headquarters on Southwest 11th Street. He's continued to build Harsch's holdings across the West.

Schnitzer's only marriage ended in divorce in 2005. Since then, he's squired a succession of women around town.

An odd couple

When he and Cory Sause started dating in January 2014,

they were in some ways an odd couple.

He was a Democrat and a leading benefactor of Jewish causes. He belonged to the ultra-exclusive Bohemian Grove club in California and often flew in his 16-seat Bombardier Challenger 300 jet to his home at the Vintage Club in Indian Wells, Calif., where his neighbors include Bill Gates and Charles Koch.

Sause, 27 years Schnitzer's junior, had never been married. A graduate of a Catholic high school and college, she was a Republican living in a small town far from Schnitzer's West Hills world. A keen distance runner, she kept a low profile, hiding behind oversized sunglasses in the few pictures available on social media or online.

so friends could hear his voice.

When Sause and Schnitzer met, she'd been out of prison for five years and coming out of a relationship with Chuck Engle, a Coos Bay man who's won more marathons than any other runner. Schnitzer had recently broken up with Sally Hopper, a mysterious ex-Playboy model whom a former boyfriend had accused of being an art thief.

Schnitzer recalls their first date being at the Portland Brewing tasting room in Industrial Northwest Portland. "She was lots of fun," Schnitzer says.

Next generations

For all their differences, Schnitzer and Sause did share a bond: the desire to create their families' next generations.

Sause recalls in her March 3 court filing that her thoughts were focused on the future: "I had recently turned 35 years old, and although having a child was not part of my immediate plan, I believed it was in my best interest to freeze genetic material in case I or one of my siblings had difficulty conceiving a child in the future. I paid OHSU for the retrieval and storage of my eggs."

For Schnitzer's part, he had two daughters from his marriage. One daughter is in high school and one in college. He was eager to add a son. "I have two wonderful girls, and I thought it might be nice to do some balancing," he says. "And, frankly, being a divorced dad was complicated. The idea was that I'd have this son without complications."

Schnitzer had already begun exploring less traditional ways of obtaining a son, working with doctors at OHSU to mix his sperm with eggs from an anonymous donor.

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Together, we weathered the storm.

On March 9, a storm with hurricane-force winds pounded the Oregon Coast, knocking out power for thousands of customers in Clatsop County. The power line serving Warrenton, in particular, sustained significant damage. We immediately sent out 50 Pacific Power crew members, who worked through the stormy night and the following day to restore power. Thank you for your patience and support while we turned the lights back on.

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