

The Magic of Morey



David Morey, whose distinguished ancestor made the Christmas Day crossing of the Delaware River with George Washington, has made a name for himself as a global political advisor, business strategist, and author.

By TRACY ECCLESINE IVIE | Photos by JUAN VIDAL

David Morey looms over the railing to admire the Delaware River at his quaint stone home in Solebury, PA. At 6-foot-4, he is an imposing figure as he pauses to take in the view, which is just six miles northeast of his childhood home in Doylestown, PA.

It was there, in the mid-1970s, that this gentle giant distinguished himself in athletics at Central Bucks East High School, earning the nickname *Big Bird*, with his long, golden locks and even longer legs that eventually catapulted him to become a four-time All-American decathlon competitor and a member of a national team that beat the Russians.

“He was probably one of the best high school athletes ever. Anywhere. Not just mine, but everywhere,” says Marty Stern, who was later inducted into the Hall of Fame of the US Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association after being head coach at Villanova University. “He was really good,” he adds.

But Morey’s athletic prowess is only one of his many talents, whose resume reads like a *Who’s Who* of politics and business following his graduation from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and the London School of Economics, where he was a scholarship student and received a master’s degree.

*David Morey at his
Solebury home on the
Delaware River.*



Morey practices a magic trick with his wife, Xie, and daughter, Elizabeth.

As a global political strategist, he has guided twenty international presidential campaigns to victory, including Vicente Fox of Mexico, Corazon Aquino of the Philippines, and Boris Yeltsin of Russia. Morey also advised five Nobel Peace Prize winners and was an unofficial advisor to the campaigns of U.S. Presidents Joe Biden, Barack Obama, and Bill Clinton.

A frequent television commentator on politics and business for BBC, Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, and other networks—as an independent Democrat, he says—Morey is also a business coach, speaker, and author of four business books.

And then there's his magic (which Morey calls “a hobby way out of control”), including a monthly podcast, *Washington Magic*, and performing at President Obama's 2008 inauguration. ... Oh, and he climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Yet, despite all the accolades, all the name dropping he could do if he wanted, Morey is still humbled—and excited—by so many things, including

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— *U.S. Track & Field Hall of
Fame coach Marty Stern.*

the river that flows by the dock
at his 1939 home.

“Isn’t this gorgeous?” he
marvels, gesturing toward the
water with wide open arms.
“Look at that big crane. That
guy’s gigantic,” he says. “We
get eagles landing here. It’s
unbelievable. The natural beauty
of the Delaware River is just
amazing.”

Morey, sixty-five, lives in his
three-bedroom home with his
wife, Zheng Xie (pronounced
Jung She-a), an attorney
specializing in international
business who’s affiliated with
a Washington, DC, law firm,
and their almost two-year-
old daughter, the wide-eyed
Elizabeth. Their three-story
dwelling is nestled between
the river on one side and the
Delaware Canal towpath on the
other, where an intermittent
parade of walkers and cyclists
whiz by a third floor office
window. It’s in this cozy home
that the couple juggles the



Morey anchoring the state championship mile relay for Central Bucks East in 1974.



Portrait of Morey's ancestor, Revolutionary General Nathanael Greene, by Charles Wilson Peale.

roles of parenting, business, and living through the pandemic. They also have a condominium in Washington, two miles from the White House, but because of Covid-19 are conducting most of their work from their Solebury residence.

The river home is the realization of Morey's dream as a young man growing up in Doylestown, which is decidedly inland. "I always came and looked at these river houses and said, 'it would be great to live there someday,' and, lo and behold, someday is now," he says.

Morey has another reason to cherish the river. He's a direct descendent of Gen. Nathanael Greene, George Washington's chief strategist, who crossed the Delaware, along with Washington, on December 25, 1776, and successfully routed the British at the Battle of Trenton. "Nine, ten, eight miles down, Washington won the war," he says. "I feel like there's historic roots here."

Morey seems to relish the irony of following in his ancestor's footsteps as a strategic advisor, an ability he discovered early in his career. "Maybe I get it from Greene," he says, adding humbly. "He was a brilliant strategist."

Like Greene, Morey has played a key role in several historic events, most recently in the election of

President Biden, after participating in many phone calls, emails, and planning sessions with his campaign managers. Fresh off their victory, Morey ruminates on what the country needs during what he terms the worst health crisis in a hundred years, the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, and the worst political and civil division since 1968. "It needs someone like Lincoln, who can bring us together, and someone like Roosevelt who can take care of the people left behind, and someone like Reagan who can sell all this. And so I think Biden's got to heal the nation and bring the country together, lower the temperature, and get back to the essentials."

As for working behind the scenes, rather than running for office, Morey realized after several campaigns that there was an advantage to being an advisor instead of a politician. "These guys have their moment in the sun where they can, at their best, make a difference, but then they sometimes either retire or are defeated, while the strategic guys keep going."

Besides, Morey has many other opportunities to be in front of a camera, as a TV commentator, magician, and keynote speaker for Fortune 500 companies.

His first business client—of all people—was Steve Jobs in the 1980s, who contacted Morey because of his success with political campaigns. At the time,



The family loves to take its boat out on the river to enjoy the scenic views.

Jobs was an underdog trying to compete with Bill Gates of Microsoft. Everyone knows how that turned out, and over the past few decades Morey has coached many other business leaders through his company, DMG Global, which has about a dozen international consultants on call, depending on the needs of the assignment, and a handful of employees.

Morey says that over the years his team has added over \$100 billion dollars in revenues and market values to clients that included Samsung, Nike, Disney, and American Express. A case in point: helping Verizon gain international prominence. “It’s a global company now, but it started as Bell Atlantic of Pennsylvania way

back when,” he says, noting that for more than a dozen years his company handled all of Verizon’s branding, communication, and leadership strategies while working with three CEOs.

Along with consulting, Morey delivers many keynote speeches to businesses, where he always inserts a few magic tricks to highlight key points, while adding a bit of entertainment. “That’s a good balance,” he says. “If you do all magic, it’s too much of a show. If you do no magic, it’s too much of a keynote, like everyone else delivers.”

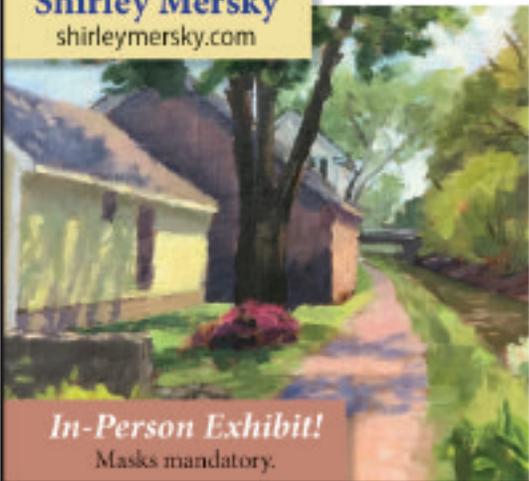
During the past decade, Morey also wrote four business books, including *Creating Business Magic*, with a forward by magician David Copperfield, which reinforces his belief in the power of

magical thinking to drive innovation and business growth. Taking his commitment to magic a step further, Morey dreamed up *Washington Magic* several years ago—dinner theater events in the District of Columbia, which he now broadcasts monthly from his long, narrow dining room in Solebury. Recent virtual guest magicians included Aryan Black, a Las Vegas headliner who has appeared all over the world, and the award-winning Bobby Torkova, a favorite among celebrities.

Being around people who are famous or powerful was never an issue for Morey, who says his mother taught him not to be

starstruck at an early age. “She would always say, ‘You’re no better, but you’re no worse, than those people,’” he recalls. “She had the epitome of confidence in that regard.”

His father also played an important role in Morey’s development, moving to Doylestown after a long career in electrical engineering because he felt the community had a superior school system. Like Morey, he was an older parent, and during retirement he took up bookbinding, donating many hours at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown. Both of Morey’s parents are gone now, and he has no immediate relatives in the area, but he



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has many friends from high school, including Coach Stern, whom he sees regularly when not in lockdown.

These days, Morey is pleased to be home with his wife and daughter, where he is enjoying the challenges of raising his first child during a pandemic. Although magic is his primary hobby, he and Xie are honing their culinary skills together and have completed more than 100 recipes from the cookbooks of Ina Garten (aka, the Barefoot Contessa).

Their compact home contains a repository of family treasures, trophies, and mementos, including a belt buckle with a hammer and sickle from a Russian athletic competitor; a black and white photo of protestors outside the home of a former client, President Kim Dae-Jung of South Korea, and a present from magician Uri Geller, a crystal believed to be on Albert Einstein's desk when he died. "I'm going with that," laughs Morey, saying that he really enjoys being surrounded by all his treasures and his family, where he's working on a new, semi-autobiographical book, among other projects this year.

"We're a happy home," he says. "I'm going to be hunkered down. If you're gonna' go through Covid-19, this is the place to do it. I mean, it's really meditation here." He adds, "I think there's a peacefulness to the river that is great for planning the future." 🌊

Tracy Ecclesine Ivie, a former editor of New Jersey Savvy Living magazine, also wrote the Dream Home article in this issue.

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