LORI ROTHMAN:
FROM SMALL TOWN LOCAL TO FINANCIAL NEWS PHENOMENON

by Alisa Weinstein

You may know her as Lori Rothman, financial anchor and journalist, however, she is also a native and resident of our very own Agoura Hills, CA community. Every day she is in the spotlight at Fox Business Network (FBN); a job she handles with ease and class. While you count on her to deliver detrimental financial news, such as the fixed income areas of the market, people from the Conejo Valley best know her as the sweet girl who made it big while still holding on to her hometown roots.

Agoura Hills is known for its picturesque views, tight knit community and fantastic school system, which can account for why families seek out this bedroom community. Rothman attributes her success as a network financial journalist to its hometown feel and opportunity and diversity in the neighborhoods.

“I was really thinking about what my Agoura upbringing has meant to me and how it’s sustained me and guided me right and why it’s such a huge part of my life, my roots are there. It is a very small town, the people are down to earth and there’s a still a worldly feel to it. Since the early 80’s Agoura Hills has literally exploded.”

This bright and energetic journalist credits her strong family ties and values to her ability to juggle such a hectic schedule as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend and career professional. She and her sister, a Veterinarian at the Westlake Village Animal hospital, were born and raised in Agoura Hills by their mother and father, who is currently a practicing Orthodontist. Rothman enjoyed the comfort and feel of a hometown community that also helped expose her to a world of possibilities. She has described herself as the “black sheep” of the family leaning toward journalism rather than the medical profession in which so many thought she would be a natural. Her curiosity and desire to tell a compelling story that informed people while making it interesting, was a talent that news directors could not ignore, helping her make the transition into network news.

“My first job was in June, Alaska; I covered salmon fishing and the tourist industry. I then went to Colorado to the CBS affiliate as a weekend anchorwoman; getting my feet wet learning about all aspects of the industry and being a “one man band” shooting, reporting, editing, anchoring – I did the weather a couple of nights. It’s when I moved to Plattsburgh, New York as the morning anchor when I answered an ad in Broadcasting and Cable magazine from Bloomberg Television looking for someone who had local news experience who could do stock market updates for local news casts.”

The move was a boost to Rothman’s career as well as a life-changing event that had her quickly grounded in the East.

“I learned on the job [all about] stocks, bonds, M&A, deal flow, economics, Federal Reserve System and all the ins and outs of financial journalism. I guess I gravitated toward it because...
I feel that if you understand the economy [then] you understand really what's important and what's going on in the real world.”

“Growing up in a small Southern California town, I had big aspirations and curiosity about working in New York and seeing what all the fuss was about. It was everything I thought it would be - I had such a great time especially since I met my husband who is from Long Island, so I’m entrenched.”

Rothman and her husband have two young daughters, and while both have careers in the financial market, the East is where they plan on calling home and raising their daughters. Rothman says making the trip out to California regularly is a must.

I miss my mom and dad, my sister and friends. My one daughter says she is a “California granddaughter” because she gets to go on the airplane to visit her grandparents. My mom still hopes I’ll move back to California but the reality is that I love covering the financial markets and my husband's career is largely based in the Northeast, so moving back would be difficult. We’re kind of locked-in. We have the best of both worlds, we have my husband's family and a lot of cousins for the kids here and we have this wonderful community to go back to when we're in Agoura and [other parts of] Southern California.”

Business never sleeps and after talking to Rothman, one might wonder if she gets an opportunity to turn it all off and relax. She’s up early, analyzing financial reports and stock trends, interviewing CEO’s from major corporations, and making sure her family is prepared for the day at school/work. All of this Rothman accomplishes before the average person has finished their morning cup of coffee.

“It’s nonstop definitely, frenetic and chaotic, but I thrive on it. I do enjoy my yoga and gym time and I’ve gotten involved in rock climbing - truth is, I find work is pretty relaxing to come into my office and take a deep breath and read the news.”

Rothman is a striking beauty that has the intelligence to match; you won’t find her resting on her laurels, as this powerhouse has her finger on the pulse of America, investigating what financial expectations can be had for 2011.

“The good news; companies, small and regional like mom-and-pop shops are adding employees because of the tax policies for the next couple of years. Small-business owners are hiring faster, but on the national level don’t look for the numbers to dip from what they are now. We’re really parsing through every bit of economic data that Washington sends out. We’re really splitting hairs. Growth will continue at a slow grinding pace for 2011.”

Rothman is also one to watch in 2011. She just joined Fox Business Network and already the number one network operation is looking for ways to capitalize on her talents.

“I really feel like I’m being challenged as a reporter and I’m feeling very stimulated here. There’s a lot of growth potential. I’m so lucky and I’ve been pleasantly surprised. It’s a wonderful place to work!”