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The contents of this newsletter are intended
for general information purposes only, and
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Rothman Gordon Accepted to Primerus, an International Law Consortium

Managing Shareholder Bill Lestitian recently announced that Rothman Gordon has joined the Primerus International Law Consortium. Primerus is an international network of top-rated, independent mid-sized law firms. Candidates for membership must have the maximum AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell and submit to a rigorous evaluation which includes candid assessments from judges, fellow attorneys, current and former clients, and bar associations. Once a law firm has gained membership, Primerus ensures consistency of quality among members through annual auditing processes for every firm. Firms must also attest to their commitment to the exacting standards of the Six Pillars of Primerus Quality: Integrity, Excellent Work Product, Reasonable Fees, Continuing Legal Education, Civility, and Community Service. It is because of an unwavering commitment to these values that Primerus has been able to attract and retain only the best mid-sized firms.

Primerus has grown more since late 2008 than ever before, despite the struggling economy. With over 1,700 lawyers, Primerus is the size of some of the world's largest law firms. According to Primerus President and Founder John C. Buchanan, companies in need of legal services can call upon any Primerus lawyer with complete confidence that he or she is reasonably priced, highly competent and most importantly, worthy of its implicit trust.

The Wall Street Journal called Primerus, "A good way to pick the good (lawyers) from the bad, a sort of Good Housekeeping seal of approval." Primerus prides itself on taking the time and guesswork out of finding high quality legal service-providers in multiple jurisdictions (and other countries) for busy corporate executives and in-house legal departments.

"We believe our affiliation with Primerus will enable us to better serve our clients. We are now linked to top rated mid-sized firms across the country, which means we can connect our clients with law firms in multiple jurisdictions," says Managing Shareholder Bill Lestitian.

"The Primerus membership allows us to expand our goal to be "just right". The network we have entered will enable us to provide our

clients with resources across the country, and even internationally, at reasonable fees,” says Marketing Director Anne Parys.

Rothman Gordon is part of the Business/Corporate/International (BCI) Group. In addition to standard corporate issues, such as shareholder agreements, mergers & acquisitions, etc., there are also focused sub-groups in which our attorneys will participate, including bankruptcy, labor & employment, real estate, and commercial law.

Primerus law firms are located in over 135 cities throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom and offer expertise in hundreds of practice areas. Bill Lestitian, Bob Galanter, Chad Tomosovich and Anne Parys attended the annual conference of Primerus members in October, giving the firm valuable face time with our new colleagues. The lawyers within the alliance have depth of knowledge in hundreds of specialties. Rothman Gordon is committed to interfacing with our new colleagues so we can assure our clients that they will receive the same personalized attention, excellent responsiveness, and extensive legal experience that they have come to expect from our Firm.

We invite you to visit www.primerus.com to see more. The Primerus site may also be accessed through the Rothman Gordon website at www.rothmangordon.com.

Images from the 2009 Pittsburgh 100



Dave Bluemling of Malin Bergquist and Stevan Ferguson of Pro Sport Image, Inc.



Bill Lestitian, Xiaoyan Zhang of KIT Solutions LLC and Cami Davis



Bill Lestitian, Dianna Massetti, Gene Massetti, Gregg Massetti and Chris Massetti, (all of Donwil Company) and Frank Salpietro

Doug DeNardo recently joined Mark Lumley, VP, Trust Administration for NexTier Wealth Management for a podcast on *Choosing Beneficiaries: Opportunities, Pitfalls and Fact vs. Fiction*. You can access the podcast via the Rothman Gordon homepage or at www.thebank.com/B801.php.



In the News...



Colleen Ramage Johnston Named Equity Partner

The firm is pleased to announce that Colleen Ramage Johnston has been named an equity shareholder of the firm. Colleen joined Rothman Gordon in October 2005 as a non-equity partner in the Employment Litigation Department. She primarily represents plaintiffs in litigation involving employment matters including age, gender, and disability discrimination, as well as the Family Medical Leave Act.

Eight Rothman Gordon Attorneys Named Pennsylvania Super Lawyers

Eight attorneys at Rothman Gordon P.C. have been named Pennsylvania Super Lawyers for 2009. Recognized lawyers include Doug DeNardo, Jim Ummer, and Casey Neuman for Estate Planning and Probate; Tom Solomich for Real Estate; Shelley Elovitz for Workers' Compensation; and Jim Carroll, Steve Jordan, and Louis Kushner for Labor & Employment.

Louis was also named one of The Top 100 Pennsylvania Super Lawyers. Lou and Tom were both listed on The Top 50 Pittsburgh Super Lawyers.

Bob Galanter and Doug DeNardo Recognized for Best In Satisfaction Wealth Managers

Bob Galanter and Doug DeNardo were awarded the Five Star: Best in Client Satisfaction Wealth ManagerSM distinction for 2009. More than 41,000 consumers and 6,100 financial services professionals were asked to evaluate wealth managers in the Pittsburgh area. Fewer than 500 were selected by a blue ribbon panel of local financial services experts. Bob was recognized for Business Planning and Doug for Estate Planning. They were featured in the July issue of *Pittsburgh Magazine*.

Louis Kushner travels to Ramallah to lecture on mediation

Louis Kushner was recently invited by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to lecture on mediation to an audience of Palestinian lawyers, judges, contractors and engineers.

Louis was invited to participate in the inaugural workshop on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), conducted by the Nethem Project, which is funded by USAID. Nethem's chief of party, Mr. Nabil Isifan, introduced Louis, emphasizing that ADR can save time and money and ease the burden on Ramallah's already overburdened court system. Any reservations Louis, who is Jewish, may have felt about lecturing his Palestinian colleagues were quickly overcome by the atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement in which his workshop was received. Louis has mediated over 350 cases, but as his career takes new twists (he lectured in war-torn Liberia and Ghana in 2008), he has come to relish his role as a champion of the benefits of ADR, both in our own backyard and across the globe.



Jim Carroll To Be Inducted as a Fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers

Jim Carroll was elected a Fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers. Election as a Fellow is the highest recognition by one's colleagues of sustained outstanding performance in the profession, exemplifying integrity, dedication and excellence.

The fourteenth installation of Fellows was held in November in Washington D.C., coincident with the American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law Section's Continuing Legal Education Conference.

Eleven Rothman Gordon Attorneys Named to Best Lawyers In America

Eleven Rothman Gordon attorneys have been selected by their peers to be included in the 2010 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. They include: Tom Solomich and Sam Douglass for Real Estate Law; Shelley Elovitz and John Zatkos for Workers' Compensation Law; Casey Neuman, Jim Ummer and Doug DeNardo for Trusts and Estates; and Steve Jordan, Alan Blanco, Jim Carroll, and Louis Kushner for Labor & Employment Law. Louis was also listed for Alternate Dispute Resolution and Sam was also listed for Natural Resources Law and Mining Law.

Will There Be Estate Tax Relief?

Congress has a full plate with health care and the economy, but another issue needs rapid attention - the federal estate tax. President George W. Bush signed tax legislation early in his administration that includes estate tax reform measures. Currently, every taxpayer has a credit that allows him or her to transfer up to \$3,500,000 free from the federal estate tax. Additionally, the maximum estate tax rate is 45%. The law then provides for a complete repeal of the federal estate tax in 2010, and then a return to 2001 laws in 2011 wherein the maximum rate goes back up to 55% and the credit is reduced to a level that only allows a taxpayer to transfer \$1 million free from the federal estate tax.

This creates an issue not only for the very wealthy. For example, land, equipment, inventory, etc., of a family owned business are all included in the valuation of the entity, so many, many family businesses will exceed the \$1 million threshold. Because federal

estate tax would then be imposed on the transfer of the business from the senior to junior generations, the business would potentially need to be sold to meet the estate tax obligations (rather than letting it be passed to the next generation). Moreover, since the death benefit of life insurance is taxable for federal estate tax purposes, a greater number of families will be subject to the estate tax (since even the death benefit of term and employer provided insurance is included in one's estate for federal estate tax purposes).

As of now, the status of any legislation is uncertain. It is our belief that we will most likely see a simple, one year extension of the 2009 laws into 2010 to avoid the one-year repeal. After 2010, however, it is anyone's guess as to the final resolution.

Rothman Gordon is continuously monitoring activity in Washington and we will apprise our clients of any decision which may impact their family and/or business.

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