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## Firm Steps Up Pro Bono Work

Pro bono publico is Latin, meaning “for the public good.” Normally shortened to simply “pro bono,” it typically describes professional work provided as a public service for those who may not be able to afford it. It is an excellent way to give back to the community and Rothman Gordon relishes the opportunity to contribute to various groups that make Western Pennsylvania such a wonderful place to live. We wanted to share with you three clients with very different missions (charitable, civic and the arts) to give you a snapshot of what our attorneys have been up to.

### Habitat for Humanity

In 2003, long-time client Marc Kossman recommended us to Habitat for Humanity and the firm committed to become Pittsburgh Habitat’s pro bono real estate counsel. Along the way, we have been thrilled to assist them in making the dream of home ownership a reality for people in need who simply want decent housing where their families can live and grow. “Working with a highly reputable firm like Rothman Gordon provides Habitat with service reliability and accuracy. We know that legal work performed by the RG attorneys passes any litmus test for quality work with results that are most beneficial to our organization and program families,” says Executive Director Maggie Withrow. Tom Solomich, Paul Yagelski, and Patrick Regan have spent numerous hours handling various real estate-related issues on behalf of Habitat.

### Dick’s Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon

The Pittsburgh Marathon was cancelled in 2004, when UPMC pulled out as the primary sponsor and the city was on the verge of bankruptcy. The dream of reviving the event was made a reality last year and Rothman Gordon is proud that our own Louis Kushner was instrumental in bringing it back. Louis served as Chair and President of the Marathon board until it was up and running and continues to serve as Chair. To further show support, Rothman Gordon is providing pro bono legal advice to re-establish the race. Bernie Puzzuole, Mark Weis and Lisa Gaiser helped to draft their 501 (3)(c) application to obtain charitable exemption, and continue to attend the board meetings and review and/or draft sponsor contracts. Rothman Gordon attorney Louis Kushner will be running the race and we are proud of our role in reviving this prestigious event for the City of Pittsburgh.

### Highcroft Learning & Performance Center for the Arts

Frank Salpietro was only with the firm a couple of months when a neighbor approached him about possibly donating legal services for the Highcroft Learning & Performance Center for the Arts. Highcroft is the dream of founder Robert Boudreau, who is also founder of the American Wind Symphony. His vision is to provide a venue for high quality performances, arts education and accommodations for visiting artists in the North Hills. The first phase, a huge stone amphitheater built into the hillside, has already been completed, but the Board anticipates it will need to raise \$7 million to complete the facility. Frank and associate Lisa Gaiser have agreed to provide pro bono counsel to assist Highcroft in formalizing their plans and corporate documents as they move onto Phase II.

Thinking of running the Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon or Half-Marathon? Be sure to visit Rothman Gordon at the 2009 Health and Wellness Expo! We'll be in Booth #55 - very easy to remember since the firm is 55 years old this year!



### About Pittsburgh Habitat for Humanity

Pittsburgh Habitat's mission is the elimination of substandard housing in Allegheny County. Since 1986, 60 families, who were living in substandard conditions, have moved into their own homes.

Their building of neighborhoods in Pittsburgh include East Liberty, North Side, and Hill District; in Allegheny County - Braddock, Duquesne, Etna, Homestead, McKees Rocks, North Braddock, Rankin, and Wilkinsburg. Pittsburgh Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with volunteers and low-income families in need, to build homes, which are then purchased by these families through no-profit, no-interest mortgages.

[www.pittsburghhabitat.org](http://www.pittsburghhabitat.org)



### About the Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon

The 20th running of the Pittsburgh Marathon, now renamed the Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon, will be held on Sunday, May 3, 2009. The new course will be very like the old course,

with minor adjustments to accommodate for new start and finish lines. Surprisingly, the course is relatively flat for a region noted for its hilly terrain. According to Race Director Patrice Matamoros, "With the addition of the new Philips Respironics Half Marathon and the National City Kids' Marathon, the Marathon has something for everyone."

[www.pittsburghmarathon.com](http://www.pittsburghmarathon.com)

### April is Scouting for Food Month

Rothman Gordon is pleased to be a participant in Scouting for Food month. According to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, 10% of PA households experienced food insecurity in 2006 and that number is rising. Between April 1-30, we will be collecting non-perishable food items and household goods to contribute to the Boy Scouts' efforts.



### About Highcroft Learning & Performance Center for the Arts

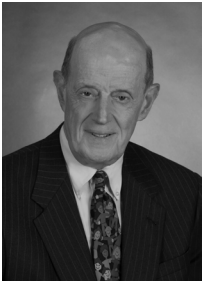
Highcroft will be a truly unique and majestic multi-purpose facility enveloped in and reflecting its natural setting on 98 acres in Pine Township in Northern Allegheny County. It will encompass an intimate outdoor amphitheater built on a natural stone foundation (Phase I completed) folded into the wooded hillside for summer performances. Three joined rustic "green" buildings will form an indoor theater and house exhibit space, classrooms, and living spaces for visiting artists. The adjacent working farm provides additional learning opportunities and ambiance.

## New Faces



**Frank G. Salpietro** has joined the firm. Frank's practice centers on civil litigation and corporate and transactional work. His concentration will be on complex commercial/business disputes as well as advising closely-held, family businesses and start-ups. Prior to joining Rothman Gordon, Frank was the chair of the Business Litigation Group at Meyer Unkovic & Scott.

Frank received his B.A. in Political Science from Emory University. He was graduated, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1986, where he was an editor of the Law Review and received the Benjamin Teplitz Memorial Award for having the highest grades in his graduating class. He resides in Pine Township with his wife, Janice, and his four children.



Retired Court of Common Pleas **Judge Lawrence W. Kaplan** has joined the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Practice Group and will mediate and arbitrate in the areas of family law, estates & trusts, and commercial disputes.

Judge Kaplan served on the Board of Directors of the Academy of Family Mediators from 1982 – 1987 and is the founder and president emeritus of the Mediation Council of Western Pennsylvania. He also served on the editorial board of *The Mediation Quarterly* for over five years. His contributions to the field of mediation were honored by the combined efforts of the Allegheny County Bar Association's Dispute Resolution Committee, the Pittsburgh Mediation Center, and the Mediation Council of Western Pennsylvania in 2004, who initiated the annual Lawrence W. Kaplan Lecture in Conflict Resolution. In October 2008, Judge Kaplan was named Family Division Judge Emeritus by the Allegheny County Family Division for his 30 years of dedicated service to the families of Allegheny County.

Judge Kaplan is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and holds a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. Active in the community, he currently serves on the boards of Alpha House, Carriage House Children's Center, and Pittsburgh Parental Stress Center. He also serves on the advisory boards of Contact Pittsburgh, Bethlehem Haven, Pittsburgh

Area Jewish Committee and WQED Multimedia. He resides in Oakland with his wife, Natalie.

## RG Gets Into the Spirit of the Season

As economic times get harder and many charities are seeing a drop in donations, Rothman Gordon felt it was important to continue our tradition of giving. The firm continued its tradition of an annual donation to Habitat for Humanity and Bethlehem Haven but in addition, the attorneys and staff wanted to add a new and more personal twist. Thus the Rothman Gordon Toy Drive Committee was formed.

The committee first had to choose a charity. While there were many worthy candidates, the group ultimately choose The Bradley Center. The Bradley Center provides residential treatment services, therapeutic foster care and school-based programs to children and adolescents suffering from emotional and behavioral health issues. Community Relations Coordinator Karen Zimmerman provided tags with the name and gift suggestion for 50 children, which were hung on the reception area Christmas tree. Very quickly, the tags began to disappear and were replaced with bags of toys piling up under the tree. By mid-December, gifts for all 50 boys and girls were collected and delivered to the Bradley Center and the committee is already looking forward to planning next year's toy drive.



The First Annual Toy Drive Committee  
 Back row: (left to right) Diane Vogelsberger, Joyce Meyers, Lauren Tomlinson, Anne Parys, Bernie Puzzuole  
 Front row: (left to right) Cami Davis, Tracy DeMarco, Lisa Gaiser, Charlene Canty, Jane Parkhurst  
 Missing from picture: Nikki Lykos

## Pro Bono work provides Rothman Gordon means to thank soldier



Sergeant Ronald Heitzenrater

Rothman Gordon is known among its peers for serving clients in labor or employment disputes. Whether negotiating a contract, a severance package or dealing with work place discrimination, our attorneys counsel the clients through what can often be a stressful and bewildering process.

For Sergeant Ronald Heitzenrater, the stress was compounded by the fact he was half a world away, serving his third tour in Iraq. Although Sergeant Heitzenrater made no request, his employer paid thirty days of military leave pay and continued his health insurance benefits during his previous tours but suddenly decided, not only would they not continue his health insurance benefits, but

demanded previously paid monies be returned. Sergeant Heitzenrater's wife, Kim, was rightfully concerned and contacted Jim Carroll as to their options.

Jim consulted with the firm's Fee Committee, which agreed to take the case on a pro bono basis in recognition of Sergeant Heitzenrater's service. After working with the employer's counsel, the employer agreed to retract their request for reimbursement and have graciously agreed to continue to support Sergeant Heitzenrater as he completes his tour.

Sergeant Heitzenrater was recently home on leave and stopped into the Rothman Gordon offices to present a flag flown on a combat mission. We are proud to have him as a client and thank him and his fellow soldiers for their service.

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