

DECEMBER 2018 | COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Firm Highlights

RMWBH Attorneys on *Houstonia Magazine's* 2018 Top Lawyer List

Shareholder Frank Carroll and Associate Mia Lorick are listed on the 2018 Top Lawyers in Houston List by *Houstonia Magazine*. Frank and Mia will be listed in the December 2018 edition of *Houstonia Magazine*.

Frank Carroll Elected as a Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation

Shareholder Frank Carroll has been elected as a Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation. The Texas Bar Foundation is the largest charitably funded bar foundation in the nation. Membership is comprised of the most elite Texas attorneys.

Each year only 1/3 of the top 1 percent of Texas attorneys are admitted to the foundation because of their dedication to the administration of justice and high professional standing among their peers. The Texas Bar Foundation helps organizations educate the public about their rights and responsibilities under the law, provide legal services to the poor and assist those who turn to the legal system for protection.

Congratulations Frank!

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RMWBH Active in the Community

By Kyle Beam

The past couple of months have seen the attorneys of Roberts Markel Weinberg Butler Hailey PC. active in the community raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for charities across the state.

Houston

On October 30, RMWBH Founding Shareholders, Jeff Roberts and Marc Markel led a team, that included Shareholders Rick Anderson, Frank Carroll and Eric Tonsul, Executive Director Shawn Isakson and Marketing Director Cherie Wilson, at the IICF (Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation) Houston Chapter's Annual Sporting Clays Tournament.

RMWBH was a proud sponsor of the event, which raised over \$100,000 benefiting various charitable organizations in the Houston area.

In addition to attending the IICF sporting clays tournament, Shareholder Rick Anderson has had a very busy last few weeks as the chairperson of the Epilepsy Foundation Texas – Houston/Dallas-Ft. Worth/West Texas' Houston Safari Party 2018.

The event raised over \$300,000 to support programs and services, such as summer camps and weekend retreats, free specialty medical care, seizure recognition and first aid training for school staff, students and the public as well as support and advocacy initiatives, that benefit children and adults living in the Houston area with epilepsy.

Charitable events have not been exclusive to shareholders. Associate Mia Lorick recently went back to school to pay it forward for law students at the University of Houston Law Center. Speaking at the 2018 Scholarship Appreciation Dinner, Mia shared her experiences, with other UH Law Center Alumni and current students, of what earning a law school scholarship meant to her and the opportunities and experiences that it provided.

Many other RMWBH employees are looking

forward to additional opportunities to give back in the community. On December 8th, RMWBH employees are participating in the Ronald McDonald House – Houston Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital's Cookie Break. Employees will be baking and passing out cookies to the families of children who are in ICU.

San Antonio

Giving back in the community took a road trip down Interstate 10 to San Antonio and the campus of the University of Texas at San Antonio. RMWBH was a proud sponsor of the Lambda Gamma chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha's Pink Out. Pink Out is an annual event Zeta Tau Alpha hosts at one UTSA sporting event every year encouraging everyone who attends to wear pink to raise awareness for breast cancer research. Money raised goes to the Zeta Tau Alpha Foundation, which distributes money to Bright Pink, the NFL Crucial Catch Campaign and the American Cancer Society (Making Strides Against Breast Cancer.) This year the ladies of Zeta Tau Alpha pinked out the UTSA Volleyball game against Rice University.

Austin

RMWBH also volleyed up to the state capitol to continue giving back. Shareholder Clint Brown was proud to participate in CAI Austin's 2018 Toy Drive. This year, CAI Austin's Toy Drive supported the children



(L to R) Jeff Roberts, Cherie Wilson, Marc Markel and Eric Tonsul at the IICF Sporting Clays Tournament

of the “Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet Counties Early/ Head Start” program. Children in the program range from six months to five years old. During the toy drive, Clint also shared a presentation of what to expect in the 2019 Legislative Session with CAI Austin members.

Dallas

In Dallas, RMWBH employees hit the course at the SBB 10th Annual Golf Classic. RMWBH was proud to be an Beverage sponsor for this year’s event. The tournament raises money for the Children’s Cancer Fund. In the 10-year history of the tournament, the tournament has raised over \$700,000, including \$105,000 this year, to support pediatric cancer research in the North Texas area.

The communities where we live and work are important to the people of RMWBH. We take pride in helping those who need an extra hand. As the calendar turns to 2019, we are looking forward to continuing to give back any way we can.

To learn more about each of these causes and how you can help, follow the links below:

IICF Houston

<https://www.iicf.org/about-iicf/southeast/houston-chapter.html>

Epilepsy Foundation Texas – Houston/Dallas-Ft. Worth/West Texas

<http://www.eftx.org/>

University of Houston Law Center Scholarships

<http://www.law.uh.edu/giving/>

Ronald McDonald House Houston

<https://www.rmhhouston.org/donate/>

Zeta Tau Alpha Foundation

<https://zetataualpha.org/foundation>

Children’s Cancer Fund

<http://www.childrenscancerfund.com/make-a-donation/>





T'was the Night Before Christmas at RMWBH

By Eric Tonsul

T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, except for a spouse
Dangling from a ladder while hanging more twinkling lights
Not wanting to be outdone by Bob his neighbor on the right
The Decorations Committee had chosen poorly last year
How could the Board's Committee appointment process have been so cavalier
His assessments he paid early, his fence had nary a broken or missing picket
Yet Bob with an unapproved outbuilding won and figuratively told him where to stick it
On Facebook and Nextdoor the community lavished his nemesis with praise
Social media strikes again, contributing to his malaise
Not this year, he thought to himself, while Googling HOA laws
He heard Chapter 209.00 something or other would surely help his cause
Eureka! He exclaimed as he stumbled across a section
The Committee appointment process was flawed, such an indiscretion
What our protagonist failed to realize during his brief moment of joy

Is that 209.00 something or other wasn't applicable when the
committee was employed

Alas our hero, undeterred, was not ready to give up the fight
He recalled receiving notice of the next annual meeting in the mail
the other night

Where was that solicitation notice, his euphoria was growing and
reinstated

The Nominating Committee was a thing of the past, he no longer
needed to be nominated

He feverishly scribbled and filled in the form, while smiling with delight
Soon he'd be a candidate for the Board and bolster support for his plight

The night of the meeting came upon them and to most everyone's
surprise

Our hero had pounded the pavement and obtained more proxies than
anyone had realized

His neighbor Bob cried foul, while others' heads spun with the realization
That a candidate won a seat on the Board with a platform based on holiday
decoration

The moral of this story is very clear for all to see

Don't be surprised what can happen in your subdivision when you
subscribe to apathy

And now our hero sits gloating on his porch with eggnog in his hand
As he gleefully watches neighbor Bob dangle from a ladder looking for a
soft place to land

The time for family is rapidly approaching, may life smile on you and
yours daily

Happy Holidays from your friends here at Roberts Markel Weinberg
Butler Hailey!



Eric Tonsul

Eric Tonsul is a shareholder in the firm's Real Estate section as a leader of the Community Association Team. His practice includes representation of land developers, community associations, condominium associations and other common interest communities. Eric graduated from South Texas College of Law in 2000.

Stephanie Quade Transitioning to New Role at RMWBH

By Kyle Beam

Knowledge and experience are two hallmarks Roberts Markel Weinberg Butler Hailey, PC strives for in its attorneys. We are proud to have an entire staff of attorneys who exhibit these hallmarks daily. Perhaps no attorney has done this better in her almost 25 years of service to RMWBH than Stephanie Quade. That is why it is with immense gratitude we are proud to announce Stephanie is transitioning her role in the day-to-day operations of the firm to Of Counsel. In this role, she will continue to mentor younger attorneys and assist with complex client issues.

Stephanie's path to this point of her career has not been the straight path of a typical attorney. There have been twists and turns including a cross-Atlantic journey, parenthood and major career and life change after being a stay-at-home mom for 20-plus years.

After graduating high school, Stephanie embarked on a journey many high school graduates could only dream of when she moved to London with her parents.

"I worked for a while in London but missed the Texas sunshine and ultimately moved back to Houston and began working at a brokerage firm as a licensed stock broker," Stephanie said, but "Being a stock broker was a very rewarding but challenging career and did not leave much time or energy for a family."

And that family came along when her daughter Lisa, who many of you know as RMWBH Senior Counsel Lisa Gambrell, was born and Stephanie transitioned into being a full-time mom for the next 20-plus years.

But being a stay-at-home mom was not something Stephanie wanted to do forever. When her youngest child started school, Stephanie started her own education journey by starting college part-time to get her undergraduate degree. By the time that youngest child had started high school, Stephanie had achieved her undergraduate degree, but that was not enough. She wanted even more.

"I always knew I wanted to go to law school but wanted to wait until my kids got older. As soon as my youngest started high school I started law school," she



said.

Most people do not go through law school alone. There is support from friends and family to keep law students motivated when school gets tough, but for Stephanie the support was taken to another level because she went to law school at the same time as her daughter Lisa.

"It was wonderful to share the experience with her. It was so nice to have someone to talk to that was facing the same challenges that I was," Stephanie said. Lisa adds, "We attended separate law schools in Houston, and we faced quite the dilemma on May 18, 1997—we actually graduated on the same day, and our ceremonies were 30 minutes apart! Even though we were not able to attend each other's graduations, we made up for it by working for many years together thereafter!"

In addition to sharing her law school experience with Lisa, law school also delivered to Stephanie an opportunity that would carry her through her entire

legal career – a position at RMWBH.

Stephanie came to RMWBH halfway through her time in law school and knew instantly this was the firm she wanted to stay at.

“I knew instantly when I interviewed with Marc Markel for the clerk position this was the firm I wanted to work for and Marc was the right person for me to work with,” Stephanie said.

Founding Shareholder Marc Markel also has fond memories of hiring Stephanie. “When you meet someone that can unwind some of the most complicated issues and bring logic to the table you stick with them – that person is Stephanie. Stephanie and I have worked on many interesting projects. Early on we were not only transactional attorneys, but we were litigators. The two of us handled trial and appellate cases and many of the reported community association cases have Stephanie’s fingerprints on them. I think that there are still many more complex puzzles to be solved and I believe that Stephanie will be at the table with me when they are presented and solved.”

Stephanie’s first assignment has also stuck with her through the years.

“Marc asked me to write a multi-state CLE paper that he was to present in Florida. I was only halfway through law school at the time and felt very under qualified. I spent untold hours researching and drafting that paper. It was a great learning experience – little did I know that it was just the first of many.”

“Stephanie is always up for a challenge, and while she may have doubted her abilities in the early years from time to time, I never did,” Marc said.

Founding Shareholder Jeffery Roberts echoes Marc’s statements. “Stephanie has been a valued asset to our firm since her arrival. We have never doubted her abilities, and she has risen above and beyond in everything we have asked of her in the service of her clients.”

Over her career Stephanie says the mentor/mentee relationship she has had with Marc stands out the most to her throughout her career and she counts herself very lucky to have had Marc as a mentor.

Of course, the job has not always been easy, but the work is something Stephanie has always enjoyed.

“I have enjoyed the mental challenges that have come with this career. The work has always been interesting



Stephanie with the RMWBH Real Estate team of Founding Shareholders Rick Butler and Marc Markel, Shareholders Jane Janecek and Rahila Sultanali, Senior Counsel Lisa Gambrell and Associate Casson Wen.

and challenging,” Stephanie said.

But what about that transition from full-time mom, to law school, to full-fledged legal career? Many people would be overwhelmed with that transition and challenge. Not Stephanie.

“The transition was very easy. I had started clerking for Marc halfway through law school, so I was very comfortable with the firm by the time I graduated. The transition was not difficult since all of my kids were out of the nest, and I had the incredible support of my husband. My long hours of classes and studying in law school, just changed to long hours at the firm,” Stephanie said.

Through those long hours at the firm, family has never been far away. Just like in law school, Stephanie’s daughter Lisa has been close by. They both made the transition from law school to the firm together and working with Lisa has kept Stephanie working longer.

“It has been wonderful to work with Lisa. In fact, I kept working many years beyond my planned time to stop working full-time because I enjoyed working with her so much,” Stephanie said.

In describing her experience of working with Stephanie, Lisa explains, “Having my mom as a mentor and colleague has been the joy and privilege of my lifetime. She exemplifies the highest of ethics, has a gift for teaching others and finds creative and practical solutions for clients. I am a better person, and attorney, because of her.”

But now, as Stephanie’s day to day schedule is changing, she still remains a valuable leader at the firm. “I plan to continue on as a consultant for the attorneys at RMWBH for a few years; and additionally, take on a few projects that interest me,” Stephanie said.

As she transitions in her role, she says she will miss the day-to-day interactions with the great people of RMWBH the most, but as she becomes a mentor to her fellow attorneys, she wants to leave with these words of wisdom to aspiring attorneys, especially those looking to follow in her footsteps and go back to school later in life.

“When I was struggling with the decision to return to college a good friend gave me advice that helped me make the decision. She said: ‘the years are going to pass anyway, why not do what you want to do with those years.’ I am very grateful for the opportunities that RMWBH has given me.”

For Marc, the feeling is quite mutual “We are grateful to have had the opportunities Stephanie has given us through her great work. We would not have been able to accomplish the goals we have as a firm without her, and I look forward to accomplishing many more goals with her for years to come.”

Upcoming Events

2019 Legislative Session

Pre-filing of legislation starts in November with the 2019 session official opening in January. Learn what you may expect in relation to community association legislation and what community managers and boards can do to increase the chance that community associations keep the ability to self-govern.

December 5, 2018

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

RMWBH Training Room
4630 N Loop 1604 West, Ste. 311
San Antonio, Texas 78249

Appetizers will be provided.

[Register Here »](#)

12th Annual Advanced Real Estate Strategies Course

Looking for a great opportunity for continuing education? The TexasBarCLE is presenting their 12th Annual Course Advanced Real Estate Strategies. Shareholder Brady Ortego will be lecturing on Property Owners Association Law on Friday, December 14.

December 13 - 14, 2018

Inn on Barons Creek
308 S Washington St.
Fredericksburg, Texas 7824

[Register Here »](#)

Save the Date: Annual Checklist

Community amenities are not the only parts of the association that require regular maintenance. Even the association as a corporation and its document database require some maintenance or at least inspection. Brady will present RMWBH's annual checklist for both single family and condominiums which allows management to demonstrate the value it brings to the business relationship with the association.

January 16, 2019

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

RMWBH San Antonio
4630 N Loop 1604 West, Ste. 311
San Antonio, Texas 78249

Appetizers will be provided.

[Register Here »](#)

Save the Date: TCAA & CAI Rally Day

The Texas Community Association Advocates and CAI will be meeting at the State Capitol to rally legislatures on behalf of community associations and the professionals who serve them. Join Shareholder Brady Ortego and other TCAA supporters at the Capitol to rally in support of public policy to benefit homeowners and to protect the quality of life of Texas neighborhoods.

February 13, 2019

State Capitol
Austin, Texas

[More Information »](#)



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