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Scharf, Banks, Marmor hosts a holiday party 'with a twist'

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LAW BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

The partners at Scharf, Banks, Marmor LLC were ecstatic.

They had a great year and wanted to celebrate with a charitable holiday party. They also wanted to do something creative.

Then it hit them.

Pin the Tail on the Donkey, meet Pin the Charity Ornament on the Holiday Tree.

"We really feel strongly that when you're doing well, you should also do some good," said [Stephanie A. Scharf](#). "That's why we decided to have a holiday party with a twist.

"Guests are going to choose a color-coded ornament, and based on how many ornaments are chosen for a given charity, that's how we will allocate our charitable fund at the end of the year."

The partners decided to select charities that represented "solid contributions to the community," Scharf said, picking one for animals, one for the environment and one for children. Their choices are Midwest Dachshund Rescue, Keep Chicago Beautiful and KT's Kids.

These are also personal choices.

[Sarah R. Marmor](#) has worked with Midwest Dachshund Rescue as a "foster" for two years, successfully placing 21 dogs in that time. [Theodore L. Banks](#) serves as pro bono general counsel for Keep Chicago Beautiful and has been involved with the group for 25 years.

And Scharf, who has long been involved in child welfare issues, is an admirer of KT's Kids, the 10-year-old North Center organization that raises money for children rehabbing serious injuries.

"We wanted to recognize some of the groups



Stephanie A. Scharf



Theodore L. Banks



Sarah R. Marmor

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that we were involved in and share with some of our friends a chance to get together in a fun way but still have an opportunity to do something good," Banks said. "If you think about the spirit of the holidays, that's really what it should be — helping other people and doing it with friends."

The event, which will be held tonight at Untitled, 111 W. Kinzie St., will be the first holiday party hosted by Scharf, Banks, Marmor, a 12-attorney firm launched in June 2012. The firm's areas of practice are complex litigation, compliance and corporate governance, employment, life sciences, antitrust and advising food companies on matters that include distributor and supplier agreements.

So far, the response from invited guests has been supportive.

"I think people are excited about the location, and I think people are charmed by the idea of being able to select who we give to," Marmor said. "And, certainly, the charities themselves couldn't be happier."

The same can be said for the partners, who view the party as an extension of the firm's guiding philosophy.

"It's a reflection of our personalities," Banks said. "What we do in our law practice is we try to bring whatever level of experience and knowledge we have to whatever legal problems we're dealing with and do it in a way that's effective and efficient and hopefully intelligent. We like to approach our nonprofit activities in the same way: 'How can we help?'"

The answer goes beyond money.

"When you've been in practice for a while, you become experienced in how organizations and businesses work," Banks said. "That kind of knowledge is extremely helpful to any sort of organization, whether it's a nonprofit or a client."

"Our firm is very collegial," Scharf said. "We like to give to our clients services that are of value, and we do many services on a value-added basis. I think that's a fit for how we framed our holiday party, which is it's not just all about us. It's about other people too."

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