

## In The News

# Lawyers Duct Tape Managing Partners to the Wall-for Charity

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*Texas Lawyer*

It's easy for a lawyer to donate money for access to justice when he pays his annual attorney dues.

But why take the easy road when it's more fun to duct tape a managing partner to the wall while helping to provide for low-income Texans' legal needs?

That's the tactic that Big Tex firm Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr took to give money to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation. On April 21, at the same time in its three offices, lawyers and staff used brightly colored duct tape—some adorned with unicorns—to fasten Austin shareholder David Mattka, Dallas chief executive officer Phil Appenzeller Jr. and Houston shareholder Mitch McFarland to the wall. The firm leaders stood on stools or chairs while their peers taped them, aiming to see whether they would stick or fly upon removal of their foot supports. In the "sticky fly fundraiser," the firm planned to match its lawyers' donations up to \$2,000.

Mattka was definitely the winner of the three flies—he stuck on the wall for four minutes and nine seconds, while McFarland dropped after a few minutes and Appenzeller fell in less than a minute.

While Mattka's slimmer physique might have contributed to his win, it might also have been his lawyerly skills at reducing risk and strategizing victories. After the use of four rolls of duct tape, feeling less than secure, Mattka and a sympathetic colleague forked over more cash to buy two more longer rolls. He also was not shy about directing his colleagues how to tape him up.

"I think you want to work it up a little higher on the chest," Mattka told co-workers. He added later, "When you release me, you are going to move that table, right?"

Austin shareholder Peyton Smith replied, "Yes, and call the dentist."

Smith proclaimed later, "I have faith he's coming straight down."

All onlookers—except a Texas Lawyer reporter, who had faith in the strength of duct tape—seemed surprised at Mattka's stickiness. During his four minutes as a fly, he slowly inched down as his duct tape crackled like Rice Krispies, giving way bit by bit. When Mattka finally fell, it was only a couple of inches to the floor.

Mattka noted that the tape really squished him to the wall, and the unbreathable material made him hot. The back of his blue long sleeve T-shirt was soaked with sweat when he finally peeled off his tape cocoon. The office wall survived with just minor spots of peeling paint here and there—which is easy to fix, Mattka noted.

"It's for a good cause," he said.

Mattka added in an email, "It looks like we raised about \$7,000 for the foundation through this stunt, attorney contributions, firm match and \$5 jeans days."

By: Angela Morris

## Primary Contacts



**D. Mitchell McFarland**

Houston  
713.222.4041  
[mmcfarland@munsch.com](mailto:mmcfarland@munsch.com)



**Phil Appenzeller**

Dallas  
214.855.7542  
[pappenzeller@munsch.com](mailto:pappenzeller@munsch.com)