

VIEWPOINT

The true cost of paper: Rainmaker to RainforestMaker

BY JEFFREY S. GLASSMAN

If you ask any lawyer how much paper they use each year, the most common answer is, "I am not exactly sure, but it is a lot." The reality is that lawyers are going through an estimated ten times more paper than the average office worker, resulting in millions of trees being destroyed each year. Even with modern technology leading firms towards a paperless office, many lawyers, including myself, have had a challenging time abandoning paper altogether.

My firm has always recycled and then converted to 100 percent recycled paper about five years ago. Even with these steps, however, it did not seem to be enough, because legal cases still produced reams of paper from third-party sources and opposing counsel. It was this realization that made me grasp my firm's negative impact on the environment, but it also sparked an inspirational ideal that all lawyers could practice.

The core principle of the initiative was to achieve a sensible balance. Lawyers who originate substantial business are known as "rainmakers," but most rainmakers produce legal fees without offsetting any of their firm's negative impact on the environment. Believing it was possible to do both, I founded RainforestMaker in 2007. The idea for lawyers was an initia-

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is principal of the Law Offices of Jeffrey S. Glassman LLC, where he practices personal injury law. He has served on the MBA's Energy and Environment Task Force, and founded RainforestMaker, a nonprofit dedicated to growing back rainforests. Glassman graduated from Syracuse University and Suffolk University Law School.



tive called LATTE or Lawyers Accountable To The Earth. This was an invitation for all lawyers to simply replant the trees they used.

RainforestMaker received its first significant contribution from Greenberg Traurig LLP, which planted more than 2,000 trees in a vital biological corridor in Costa Rica. Last year, in Las Gaviotas, Colombia, my firm planted 16,000 trees in the memory of a 16-year-old girl we represented who was a shining star and passed before her time.

To date, RainforestMaker has planted more than 30,000 trees internationally, and now we have started to plant trees here in our own backyard of Boston. Our first project was a great success and was done in partnership with the Boston Natural Areas Network. Together with arborists, lawyers, teachers and neighborhood >14



PHOTO BY RENÉE DEKONA

From left to right, top: Suffolk Law alumni Jeffrey Glassman, Michael D'Isola and Jared Freed, together, with Suffolk Law student Erica Mattison (bottom left), plant a tree in the playground at the new Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School.

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— ERIC SCHAUB

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EXPERTS & RESOURCES

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If you or a client has been denied long-term disability benefits, or had benefits terminated, Attorney Susan Sachs has the specialized knowledge and experience to handle the appeal. In most instances, the claim will be governed by federal statute, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA). ERISA pre-empts almost all state laws. Ms. Sachs specializes in the initial, mandatory administrative appeal process and has a high success rate. But if administrative appeal is unsuccessful, ERISA allows for further appeal by filing a lawsuit in U.S. District Court, which has exclusive jurisdiction. She is also experienced and successful at this level. Fee arrangements are flexible. The initial consultation is gratis.



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BUDGET PROPOSAL
Continued from page 1

get proposal. Following the Senate debate, each branch will appoint three members to a joint conference committee to reconcile the two budgets. The conference committee will produce one final conference budget to be sent to both branches

for an up-or-down vote without further debate. The governor may approve the budget in part by making a number of vetoes to the document. Fiscal 2013 begins on July 1, 2012.

Look for further status updates on the state budget, and any applicable calls to action, in the July issue of *Massachusetts Lawyers Journal*. ■

RAINMAKER
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children, we — four lawyers, one law student, and two office staff — planted trees in Roxbury at the new Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School April 28.

Many law firms, as well as several professors and one self-motivated law student, Erica Mattison, at Suffolk University Law School, contributed towards this project's success. On May 18, we planted trees at the Italian Home for Children in Jamaica Plain. On May 19, we planted 25 fruit trees on a barren hillside near a playground at the Stony Brook Reservation in Hyde Park. The fruit will be used for the local community. For other upcoming tree plantings or more information, e-mail jeff@rainforestmaker.org or visit www.rainforestmaker.org/latte.

The true cost of paper is not the price you pay for it at your local office supply store. When commodities are extracted, there is a substantial yet hidden cost to the environment and a waste factor that never gets passed on to the consumer. As Paul Hawken wrote in *Natural Capitalism*, "one ton of paper requires the use of 98 tons of various resources." Through LATTE, lawyers can at least help offset their negative impact by taking one simple step, by replanting the trees they use.

The Massachusetts Bar Association created the MBA Green Guidelines, available at www.massbar.org/green-guidelines, which provides many other steps lawyers can take to make their offices sustainable. I encourage all lawyers to download and use it as a reference. ■



PHOTO BY MATTHEW CAHILL

RainforestMakers after a day of planting trees. From left to right: Daniel Mickle, Robert Jacobs, Erica Mattison, Robb D'Ambruso, Jared Freed, Kiera Miner, Jeffrey Glassman, Ariana D'Isola and Michael D'Isola.



PHOTO BY ERICA MATTISON

From left to right: Robert Jacobs, Jared Freed and Robb D'Ambruso pitch in to plant one of 16 trees.

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