

Lawyer Lipman collects big bucks in Seminole lawsuit win

Although last year was an exciting one for Boca Raton attorney **Ken Lipman** — he was local counsel for **George Bush** and **Dick Cheney** in the federal Florida election case in Miami — this year has proven particularly rewarding for him. In January, he won the biggest civil case in South Florida, representing Prudential Insurance in a \$15 billion case against **Jack Scarola**. Last week, he won what was arguably the biggest federal criminal trial of the year — litigation involving the Seminole Indians.

Democratic U.S. Rep. **Robert Wexler** of Boca Raton has been named an assistant Democratic House whip for the 108th Congress.

Palm Beach County Commissioner **Burt Aaronson** of West Boca will open his campaign account in January for a fourth term.

With a war chest of \$1.8 million, Republican U.S. Rep. **Mark Foley** may run for the U.S. Senate in 2004, whether or not Democratic U.S. Sen. **Bob Graham** retires or seeks higher office. It also helps Foley that Republican U.S. Sen. **Trent Lott** resigned as majority leader. If Graham does move on, Democratic U.S. Rep. **Peter Deutsch** has his eye on the seat.

It seems at this point that **Graham** is moving up — to president, if he can. He has announced he's considering a run for the nation's top office, putting him in the pack with front-runners **John Kerry**, **Joe Lieberman** and **John Edwards**.

Larry Casey, who ran Republican U.S. Rep. **Clay Shaw's** successful re-election campaign, will be heading up Shaw's West Palm Beach office.

Speaking of GOP elections, there's talk that the Broward County party's former chairman, **Ed Pozzuoli**, might be drafted to run for chairman of the state party. So far, none of the potential contenders to replace **Al Cardenas** are from South Florida.

Broward County is looking to make the supervisor of elections an appointed office due to the flascos surrounding elections chief **Miriam Oliphant**.

Congress created a monumental screw-up that was just discovered when members adjourned for the holidays without re-authorizing the national flood-insurance program. South Florida homebuyers trying to close after Jan. 1 could be stymied, because lenders require flood insurance before granting a mortgage loan. Most of South Florida is in a des-

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ignated flood zone, and the only insurer is the federal insurance program. Lenders are working with the Feds to improvise stop-gap solutions until Congress fixes the problem.

Some businesses take the holiday season seriously and try to give back to the community. So it was as this time of the year approached when the Radisson elves made possible a Bridge Christmas for a Delray Beach family in need. The staff at the Radisson Bridge Resort donated money from their own pockets to buy four bicycles, a lighted Christmas tree, toys for four boys and food for Christmas dinner for the family. Also several boxes of food and toys were donated to the

Caring Kitchen in Delray Beach, to help families in distress that walk in on Christmas with no toys or food for their family. Boca Raton residents **Barry and Carole Kaye** have donated \$1 million to the United Way.

Bottled-water suppliers hit the jackpot this month when Boca's water supply was reported to be contaminated. Boca is very big on bottled water — especially the very trendy imported brands — and the alert sent sales of bottled water skyrocketing. The Boca Resort & Club snapped up 40,000 bottles for its guests and food-service operations, and the area's 11 Publix stores diverted thousands of bottles to fill the overwhelming demand. Also riding to the rescue during the bottled-water alert was Aqua Maestro, a new gourmet bottled water service, featuring dozens of imported European brands delivered by white-gloved drivers.

Boca Raton's Sun Capital Health Care has stepped forward to save several health-care providers and hospitals from going down the tubes. Sun Capital finances health care through the purchase of discount receivables and has rescued many providers when their main accounts-receivable buyer, National Century Financial, went

belly-up in a billion-dollar accounting scandal.

Flick pic of the week: "Chicago," previewed Monday night at the Muvico Palace. It opens exclusively Dec. 27 in Palm Beach and Broward counties at the Sunrise 11 Pine Island. It will open in Boca in January.

Lawyer bashers are reporting another class-action rip-off by the legal profession. Lawyers sued Western Union for failing to disclose favorable exchange rates between the peso and dollar when millions of Hispanic migrants wired money home to Mexico and Latin America during a 12-year period. Western Union settled the \$375 million suit, and it was to be paid with discount coupons to be used for future services. The lawyers received \$10 million in cash. Critics called the deal a disgrace.

Happy anniversary today to **Joanne**, the best wife and mother in the world, and best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year to all readers and their families.

Barry R. Epstein, APR, is the president of barry r. epstein associates inc., a public relations, marketing and political consulting firm based in Boca Raton. Items for the column may be e-mailed to pr@publicrelations.nu or faxed to 451-0000.