

BY JASON MCLURE

Everybody knows that what's tough about Christmas shopping isn't buying something for someone you know and love, it's getting something for that person you don't like but feel obligated to give a gift to anyway. Take me, for instance. I've known for months what I'm going to get my wife (who obviously falls into the first category): a brand new Boston Red Sox hat, size 7 1/4.

Of course on Christmas morning, on the off chance my wife undiplomatically tells me she doesn't a) wear baseball hats or b) like sports, I can remind her a) she's Jewish; b) she's always maintained that Christmas isn't really her kind of holiday, so she shouldn't expect something good anyway; and c) the lines to return stuff are always really long around Christmas, so we might as well keep it on the off chance we can find someone else in our house who needs a size 7 1/4 fitted Red Sox hat.

But what's tough is buying gifts for that certain group of folks that includes in-laws, bosses, and out-of-work neighbors who show up every year on Christmas morning. It's in honor of those gift receivers that we're pleased to introduce our first annual but never-to-be-repeated "Gift Guide for People You Don't Really Like but Are Obligated to Buy a Gift for and Also Happen to Be Lawyers."

Since no reasonable person bothers with going to the shopping mall, after, say, Aug. 8, we've limited our recommendations to things that can be handily purchased from the office computer when your boss isn't looking.

Our first recommendation is good for those who fall into the category of "Breeder Lawyer." The self-explanatory Baby Mobile for Lawyer to Be features soft sculpture scales of justice, a law book, a briefcase, a gavel, and a golf bag with clubs (\$29.95 from www.forcounsel.com). It's a perfect gift for that special someone who happens to have

Gifts for the Lawyer Who Has Everything

Bring holiday warmth
with songs like 'Hey
Santa, I Appeal.'

both a law degree and a baby. Since chances are the couple waited until she made partner to get pregnant, this gift can trigger an enlightening Christmas-dinner discussion about the merits of in vitro fertilization and injectable gonadotropins.

For those without rug rats, our second recommendation is a U.S. Constitution Baseball (at www.lawshop.com, \$29.95). A baseball! With the Constitution on it! This would be the perfect gift for noted Phillies fan and rookie Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito Jr.—on the off chance he shows up at the same house as you this Christmas. Then if you're feeling particularly cranky about his dissent in, say, the Hamdan case, you could autograph it with a note saying "Let's hope you don't fold every year like the Phillies do."

(Note: Be sure not to

scrawl this across the part of the baseball with the Bill of Rights monogrammed on it.)

But if that isn't suitable, our final recommendation is the H-bomb of bad Christmas gifts for lawyers and should only be given with extreme caution to people you're certain you'll never have to ask to pass you the mint jelly ever, ever again. In fact, I hesitate to even mention the name of the creator of this gift, since granting him even the most limited bit of notice only emboldens him in the same way getting on the nightly news seems to encourage Kim Jong Il.

I'm writing, naturally, about Lawrence Savell, a media lawyer at Chadbourne & Parke in New York City, who puts out an annual Christmas CD that is truly an affront to every multicelled organism on the planet.

If Savell's name rings a bell, that's because his annual holiday CD of Christmas tunes with legal lyrics (His most recent album, *Merry Lexmas from the Lawtunes* features songs like: "Let 'Em Sue" to the tune of "Let it Snow," "Down the Halls of Nussbaum Hanley" to the tune of "Deck the Halls," and so forth, \$17.99 at www.lawtunes.com) has made him the subject of scores of news articles over the past few years. Savell's landed write-ups—no kidding here—in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time Out New York*, the *Charlotte Observer*, and lawyer rags from Alaska to New Hampshire (to name just a tiny, tiny percentage of the publications suckered into writing about his albums). The pope couldn't do a Christmas album and get that kind of coverage!

Musically, Savell's albums are somewhere between John Ashcroft's recording of "Let the Eagle Soar" and that button on Radio Shack keyboards that generates an automatic drumbeat and harmony. Comically ("I Got a Footnote in My Stocking," "Hey Santa, I Appeal"), you'd get more laughs giving someone a videotape of those old Sally Struthers fundraising appeals featuring hungry children.

So if you happen to give some lawyer Savell's newest CD for Christmas, and if that CD happens to get stuck in his CD player on the way home, you won't just be ruining Christmas for that lawyer and all his little children, you'll also be ruining a perfectly good BMW. So give with care. And as a reminder to Savell, who I'm sure will try to send a thank-you gift to *Legal Times* for mentioning his CD as part of his ongoing effort to shamelessly court every hack writer in the solar system, I say this: It's hat size 7 1/4.

Like the Grinch, Jason McLure was born with a heart too sizes too small. He can be contacted at jmclure@alm.com.

