

Making a Difference

This Pennsylvania Bar News column highlights Pennsylvania attorneys who make a difference in their communities by providing extraordinary pro bono service and/or other community services in the public interest.

Garry S. Taroli **Luzerne County**



Garry S. Taroli is a lawyer with Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald LLP in Wilkes-Barre.

Describe your pro bono work.

I perform legal work pro bono for a number of organizations.

Solicitor for the Luzerne County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

I handle most of their humane officers' animal cruelty prosecutions, their compliance work, corporate and contractual issues, real estate issues and other legal matters. (156 hours in 2016).

Assistant District Attorney for Luzerne County

I handled the majority of the Luzerne County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Humane Police Officers cases. (Under the Pennsylvania Humane Act, a non-profit rescue can ask the district attorney to appoint a lawyer to handle the non-profit animal cruelty prosecution.)

Solicitor for Blue Chip Farms Animal Refuge

I handle all of the legal work for this no-kill animal shelter in Luzerne County.

Solicitor for Back Mountain Youth Soccer Association

This is a youth age group soccer organization (one of the largest in the country).

Solicitor for the Dallas Area Fall Fair t/a the Luzerne County Fair

This is the county's annual farmer/arts and crafts fair with amusement rides.

Attorney (and former board member and chairman of personnel committee) for Maternal and Family Health Services

Maternal and Family Health Services is a non-profit supplying health and counseling services to needy families, such as WIC program, etc.

Solicitor and treasurer for the Keystone State Games

The Keystone State Games are Pennsylvania's annual amateur Olympic festival.

Solicitor to Modified K-9/Concrete Angels

This group is a small Wilkes-Barre rescue that specializes in rescuing street-wild pit bull dogs and other powerful breed dogs.

Cecil 2016

This organization promotes the rescuing of African animals, especially lions, in the wake of the murder of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe. I was one of the speakers at the Cecil 2016 Rally in Washington, D.C. at the Sylvan Theater (at the base of the Washington Monument).

I have handled various animal rights cases for people I meet throughout the years in furtherance of the above organizations.

Why do you participate in pro bono?

Children, animals and the environment are among the most important issues to me.

How did you first become involved?

I have always been involved with my children in their endeavors, including coaching their sports teams, and I have always done volunteer work for animal rights and environmental organizations.

Have your pro bono cases dealt with legal issues different from your regular practice areas? If so, how did you adapt?

I have had to educate myself in various aspects and procedures of criminal law in order to do the Americans with Disabilities Act animal rights prosecutions because that procedure and law is very different from my real estate practice.

What have been the personal rewards?

I have seen many animals go from homelessness or abusive situations to loving forever homes. Many of the children that I coached in years past keep in touch with me. I have met many wonderful and caring people. In this time when the news seems to be dominated by tragedy and cruelty, I have seen the much more vast group of people who are compassionate and caring for children and animals (the only two innocent things left in the world.) Lastly, many of those people have become my friends and clients.