

## Canton Repository

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### Meet Rob Roland, senior counsel with Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs



**Patricia Faulhaber**

Special to the Canton Repository

Rob Roland is senior counsel at [Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs](#). His father was a well-known doctor and his grandfather was a successful attorney. His high school and college years were dedicated to studying science.

"I completed the pre-med program at Miami University and was first in my major," he said.

"However, in the last semester of my senior year, I did some soul-searching and concluded that I don't have the patience or empathy necessary to be a good doctor or at least a happy one."

He was in the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity at the time and he complained about his situation to his fraternity brothers.

"Without hesitating, they said something to the effect that 'Heck that's easy, we always thought you were a lawyer, not a doctor,'" Roland recalled.

He applied and was accepted into the Ohio State University law school.

"When looking for a law clerk position, Day Ketterer, one of the oldest law firms in the state, made me an offer," Roland said. "I had never been to Canton and remember having to look it up on a map to make it to my first interview. That was in 1983."

He lives in Canton with his wife, Debbie. The two have owned and renovated two Tudor revival houses in Ridgewood, which they believe is the best place to live in Stark County because of its beautiful historic atmosphere and association.

Debbie is an attorney and just retired from the 5th District Court of Appeals after 30 years as a judicial clerk. They have a Bernedoodle dog named Becket and a cat named Olive.

"We are both avid readers and maintain a library with about 1,000 volumes," Roland said. "We enjoy traveling. I spend a lot of time cultivating our yard, and we attend festivals and antiques shows. I am a jazz piano player and somewhat of an audiophile, which seems to make all my extra money mysteriously disappear. I am also very into wine and maintain a modest cellar of mostly Bordeaux and Southern Rhones. I write poetry under another name."



## **5 questions with Maiharriese Wooden:**Founder of the Stark Blessing Box Initiative

### **What is your typical workday like?**

A successful attorney is in a constant state of evolution professionally because each year he or she gains a little more knowledge and experience; every five years or so you become a different attorney and what you do therefore tends to change.

I am now in my 39th year of practice and limit my practice to the representation of larger businesses. My day is spent consulting with the president or CEO about business matters, in context of the law.

I still draft contracts, work through business disputes, deal with corporate governance issues, recapitalizations, and structure transactions, but on very large matters I try to work with and

oversee younger attorneys who have the stamina to regularly put in 12- to 14-hour days. Luckily, at Buckingham I am surrounded by very talented younger attorneys.

**Do you specialize in a certain type of law?**

In my first 10 years of practice, I did a little bit of everything, including handling jury trials. Slowly, my practice became centered on commercial real estate, banking and corporate law.

I represented a number of real estate developers, mall owners, national and regional banks, and business owners. Now I limit my practice exclusively to corporate law.

I gravitated to corporate law because I am completely convinced that capitalism is the single most important factor that has contributed to the success of America, and businesses (often starting out with only a few employees, or in someone's basement) are the engine of capitalism. In my mind, a great and powerful democracy cannot succeed without also being a great economic power.

We wouldn't have the electric light, airplanes, or the cellphone, all of which are products of capitalism. In my small way, I gain real fulfillment from helping businesses to succeed. Often the first thing I ask a client when kicking off a telephone call is "How's business?" and it makes my day if I'm part of the team and we're beating the competition.

**What are your thoughts on being involved with the community?**

I was taught by my grandfather, my father and by senior attorneys who have been my mentors, that lawyers must be leaders. They are required by the privilege of their education and profession to give back as much as they can to the city or town that allowed them to succeed.

Most nonprofit boards benefit from having an attorney at the table who can spot problems before they happen, and who can help guide the organization through rough waters.

## **What does it mean to you to be recognized for your work?**

I realized a long time ago that if you do something just for the applause, you're bound to be disappointed, and a sad person.

You have to do something because you are driven to make something happen, or it adds meaning to your otherwise limited existence. I'm embarrassed to admit that all of my plaques are buried underneath a messy pile of shoes on the floor of my closet.

## **What advice can you offer those thinking of making law their profession?**

Law can provide a jumping off point for many vocations.

Don't go into law because you like to argue. Law is much more nuanced than that. Law is about achieving your client's goals.

It takes about 10 years to figure out how to be a decent lawyer and even more time to build a practice that will allow you to buy a nice car and go on vacations. I have canceled vacations and lost plane tickets because a client needed something right away.

Once when I was in Paris on a vacation we planned for two years, I spent three days holed up in the hotel working to save a bank deal that ran into trouble.

Being successful in private practice takes some combination of intellectual ability, people skills, marketing sense, management skills, street smarts, communication ability ... and a good sense of humor doesn't hurt.

*Editor's note: Five questions with ... is a Sunday feature that showcases a member of the Stark County community. If you'd like to recommend someone to participate, send an email to [newsroom@cantonrep.com](mailto:newsroom@cantonrep.com).*