

## MOVER OF THE WEEK

## Crowell & Moring Bankruptcy Group Bulks Up With 3 New Hires

By Laura K. McGann

Crowell & Moring LLP, known for its work in tort-liability bankruptcies, hopes its decision to bring on three prominent restructuring lawyers will round out its niche practice.



Monique Almy



Matt Cheney



Mark Lichtenstein

Crowell developed a reputation for representing insurance companies in mass asbestos-claims cases. Bringing on new lawyers won't shift the firm's focus from creditor-rights work but the move will help the group respond to clients' changing restructuring needs.

The three newcomers will brace for the next wave of bankruptcies and restructurings that many experts are predicting, after a slowdown in what has been a relatively high level of liquidity available to troubled companies in recent years. Long-time Crowell partner Mark Plevin mentioned the collapse of several subprime mortgage lenders as a further indication of an approaching slowdown.

Two of Crowell's new partners have worked together for the past five years, Monique Almy and Matt Cheney from Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe. They bring experience in the energy and health care industries. Filing for bankruptcy, they noted, doesn't signal a company's end.

"It's not a place of last resort anymore," Almy said. "It's not the place to go out of business. You are in the thick of things making business work. It's the place where things happen."

Cheney agreed, saying, "Bankruptcy allows you to get the creative juices flowing."

The two are based in Crowell's Washington, D.C., office, where the firm began.

The other new Crowell lawyer, Mark Lichtenstein, moved to the firm after it snagged nine of his financial-services colleagues from Buchanan Ingersoll. The nine were brought on to focus on distressed investing. Lichtenstein will join them in

Crowell's New York office where he will continue representing creditor interests.

Lichtenstein said he considers himself a commercial lawyer who enjoys the bankruptcy field for its diversity.

"You are in this fluid situation involving so many different areas of law, so it's very challenging and very interesting," he said.

All three lawyers agreed that the atmosphere at Crowell attracted them to the firm. The collegiality is noticeable, they said.

"You take a deep breath and the air is different," Almy said. "As seriously as they take their work, nobody takes themselves too seriously." *DBR*

## NETWORKING

*A selected listing of recent appointments and announcements in U.S. bankruptcy law practice, compiled by Dow Jones' Daily Bankruptcy Review Small-Cap staff.*

**Mark E. Toney** has joined **Grant Thornton LLP** as a managing principal and co-leader of its recovery and reorganization services practice. Toney, who will work in the firm's New York office, has 22 years of experience in crisis management and in corporate finance and investment banking. Prior to joining Grant Thornton, Toney was a managing director at **Alix-Partners LLC**.

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**Robert K. Rasmussen**, an expert on corporate reorganization and bankruptcy law, will serve as the next dean of **USC's Gould School of Law** as of August 1. Since 1989, Rasmussen has taught and held high-level administrative posts at **Vanderbilt University Law School**.

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**Adam Cook** has joined **Clear Thinking Group** to serve as managing director in the consulting firm's turnaround management and financial services group. Prior to joining Clear Thinking Group, Cook was a director at **Glass & Associates** and executed merger and acquisition and refinancing transactions, primarily in the automotive industry.

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**Victor Vital** has joined Baker Botts LLP as a partner in the firm's litigation department. He will be based in the firm's Dallas office. Vital, who was most recently a partner at **Haynes and Boone LLP**, represents clients in commercial matters and business disputes.

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**Daily Bankruptcy Review Small-Cap's NETWORKING** column welcomes news releases from those working in the corporate bankruptcy industry. The column will appear each Friday. Items for NETWORKING may be faxed to Marie Beaudette at 202-862-8873.