

Law firm anniversary spurs volunteer effort

Hope is that example will inspire others

By **ERIC VELASCO**
News staff writer

When its 10th anniversary rolled around this year, the law firm Marsh Rickard & Bryan could have patted itself on the back and thrown a party for employees, spouses and clients.

Instead, the 10-lawyer plaintiffs' firm chose kindness.

The effort was dubbed "Ten not-so-random acts of kindness." Each lawyer chose a charity to support with time or money, and the firm sweetened the pot in some cases, said David Marsh, one of the firm's founding partners.

For example, lawyer David Steelman decided to volunteer with The Emergency Animal Rescue Service for 10 hours during its weekend pet-adoption efforts. The firm kicked in \$1,000 for the no-kill shelter, which takes injured animals, then tries to find families to adopt them after they heal.

"TEARS is a great organization," said Steelman, who learned about the Birmingham-based group when his wife rescued an injured dog she found by the side of the road. "It's nice to know there is an organization that will take in abused and

'Not-so-random acts of kindness'

Marsh Rickard & Bryan projects:

- ▶ Sponsor 10 children for a week at Camp Smile-A-Mile.
 - ▶ Donate to Wylam-based Acknowledge Outreach Ministries.
 - ▶ Sponsor 10 meals each at Thanksgiving and Christmas at Jesse's Place women's and children's shelter.
 - ▶ Prepare 10 hot meals at First Light center for homeless women and children.
 - ▶ Sponsor cost of emergency YWCA shelter for 10 families for one week each.
 - ▶ Donate to the Alabama Child Caring Foundation, which provides uninsured children with health care.
 - ▶ Spend at least 10 hours removing trash from Shades Creek.
 - ▶ Fill 10 Wounded Warrior Project backpacks for soldiers returning from Iraq.
 - ▶ Donate 10 hours of time to TEARS and money toward its new building.
 - ▶ Teach 10 parenting skills classes through the Exchange Cub's Family Skills Center, and donate materials and supplies.
- Source: Marsh Rickard & Bryan

To volunteer through Hands On Birmingham: 251-5849.