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## BARTALK

### JUKEBOX HERO

*The tunes keep spinning at Sheppard Mullin.*

**ROBERT STUMPF** didn't set out to be a jukebox collector. But back in 2000, as a recent lateral to Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton, "I discovered something called eBay," he recalls. Stumpf bought a 1948 Seeburg, nicknamed "the trashcan," in need of repair and found a jukebox specialist in the Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco who knew exactly how to fix it. After that, he was hooked.

"Unlike digital technology, it's all exposed, you can see the mechanism, the lights, the music," he says. "Once I found a technician, it became fun, something to look forward to." Today, Stumpf, who heads the firm's financial

institutions litigation team, has 25 jukeboxes made between 1928 and 1950. All but four of them reside in Sheppard Mullin's San Francisco office, with 10 stored in Stumpf's personal office. "One fateful day I turned all 10 on, and it caused a minor power outage," he says.

Stumpf says he didn't actually ask his law partners if he could bring the collection to the office, but no one complained when the first jukebox showed up, a 1937 Wurlitzer Model 61 Countertop. Stumpf kept bringing them in. Clients and firm employees can play songs on them whenever they like—and especially on Fridays, to kick off the weekend. (Some machines are "free play"; others are two songs for a dime or three for a quarter.) The records in each machine are appropriate for the period when the jukebox was made.



JASON DOY

*Don't rock the jukebox: Robert Stumpf and his 1942 Seeburg HiTone*

Stumpf's collection of jukeboxes, which cost him an average of \$2,800 each, is unlikely to grow further. Late last year, his longtime repairman, John Jablonski, died. Buying fixer-uppers wouldn't be the same without him, Stumpf says. "We didn't have a lot in common, but I'll miss him," he says. "I think I've reached the end of the road."

—SARA RANDAZZO