

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Elephant in the room

When he gets time away from the office at Fox Rothschild, Dirk Haire can be found at Nats games with his family in tow.

JOANNE S. LAWTON / STAFF

Dirk Haire's schedule could make even the most Type A organizer lose sleep. There's his day job as office managing partner for Fox Rothschild in D.C., an office with 25 lawyers and around 50 employees. And then there's the new side gig. After 17 years working as outside counsel for the Maryland Republican Party, Haire is two months into a two-year term as the state's GOP chairman, putting him at the forefront of a party looking to gain ground in a traditionally Democratic state. And then there's the baseball practice, basketball games, carpool and ... when is that meeting in Dubai again?

Post-college: I had worked during law school for U.S. Sen. Dan Coats and then for Jack Kemp, who ran for president. By the time I was out of law school and had worked in politics for three or four years, I ended up wanting a more permanent job. I ended up getting my first job with the Associated General Contractors of America as a federal contracts lawyer.

Quick read: My first day on the job [with Associated General Contractors of America], my boss left a Post-It note on a copy of the Federal Acquisitions Regulation. I walked in, got to my desk and the note said, "Traveling this week for work. Read this. We'll discuss next week." So my first week on the job at AGC, I read the whole FAR. That actually has turned out to be extraordinarily useful in my career.

Best advice: "Don't let perfect become the enemy of good." Roger Clegg, a former Justice Department official who I worked for, gave me that advice. When I was younger, in particular, I wanted people to do things my way and I quickly learned that's not a recipe to be a successful manager.

Proudest moment in court: In 2013, I won a

▶ THE BASICS

DIRK HAIRE

D.C. office managing partner, Fox Rothschild LLP; chairman, Maryland Republican Party

Education: Bachelor's in history and political science, Ball State University; Juris doctorate, George Washington University Law School

Residence: Edgewater, Maryland

Family: Wife Jessica, three kids (fourth on the way)

First job: Summer basketball camp counselor

\$160 million bid protest for my client, Caddell Construction, in the Court of Federal Claims and got the contract award for the new U.S. Embassy annex in Moscow. Winning your client a \$160 million contract is good for your career. Then in February 2015, we went in to argue in the Maryland Court of Appeals for Gov. [Larry] Hogan on a challenge to his authority on delegate vacancies in Maryland. I argued the constitutional question on the governor's power to appoint a replacement, and my wife argued what is now the precedent in Maryland on the difference in a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction. It was pretty exciting.

Republican in a blue state: In Maryland, we're obviously in the minority. But [two of] the last three governors have been Republican. I think there are clearly plenty of Marylanders receptive to a Republican who they think is focused on economic issues, on quality-of-life issues.

On President Trump: From where I sit, I see some good things he is trying to accomplish by pushing for more jobs and growth, but I am

concerned about other things, such as seemingly inviting trade wars. On balance, my hope is the administration and Congress will succeed in increasing jobs, lowering taxes and fixing infrastructure.

Frequent flier: I'm executive platinum for American Airlines. On any given year, call it 100,000 to 125,000 flight miles. Right now, I have a case where in the next month I've got to go to St. Louis, Denver, probably back to Dubai. So that tends to rack up the miles.

Travel rules: As my kids would tell you, I do not allow checking luggage. Checking luggage is the death of every business traveler.

Outside the office: My 12-year-old son plays on a travel baseball team. I spend a lot of time on a baseball field when I'm not working.

Favorite book: One of my favorite books of all time is "What it Takes" by Richard Ben Cramer. It's a fascinating biography of the six main candidates in the 1988 presidential race. It really dove down into the individual personalities. You end up liking and disliking a mix of Republicans and Democrats.

Coffee order: Starbucks in the morning is a quad grande Americano, a triple tall Americano in the afternoon. That's how I get through the day – seven shots of espresso.

— Interview by Emily Van Zandt

Read the full interview
www.washingtonbusinessjournal.com