

Couple makes Goodfellows donation an annual tradition

By Mary Dahdouh
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When the global recession began in 2009, Richard and Ginni Mithoff agreed to cancel their annual Christmas party and donate to those who were gripped by financial burdens.

The Mithoffs, well-known in Houston for their philanthropy, decided to give \$50,000 to the Houston Chronicle's Goodfellows program.

This year, the couple celebrates their fifth year of giving to Goodfellows, a program that provides toys for children whose families need assistance because of unemployment, illness or other circumstances.

"There's only so much you need to have a comfortable life, and when you have more than that, then you should give to those who don't have a comfortable life," Ginni Mithoff said.

To date, the Mithoffs have donated \$250,000 to the annual toy drive.

The couple also supports Children at Risk, Justice for Children and Collaborative for Children, among other charitable organizations.

Attorney Richard Mithoff, who successfully represented Harris County in a massive 1998 tobacco lawsuit, requested that \$10 million from his legal fee be used to set up the Children's Health Fund at the Harris County Hospital District Foundation. His wife is on the fund's board.

The Mithoffs were awarded the first Ben Taub Humanitarian Award in 2000 by the Hospital District Foundation. The foundation also renamed the Ben Taub Hospital emergency center the Ginni and Richard Mithoff Trauma Center.



Photo By Eric Kayne
Houston attorney Richard Mithoff and his wife, Ginni, have donated \$250,000 to the annual Goodfellows toy drive since 2009, apart from their support for other charitable organizations.

Although the couple supports numerous causes, Ginni Mithoff said helping children is her passion.

"They are the future, and it's up to individuals to give," she said.

Last year, the generosity shown by donors like the Mithoffs enabled the century-old Goodfellows program to provide toys to nearly 60,000 children in almost 18,000 families.

"I have a lot of admiration for those families who stay together and stay

strong and who continue to provide for their children in tough times," Richard Mithoff said.

He and his wife say they believe that the Goodfellows program helps countless children bask in the joy of Christmas, which is the reason why they continue their support.

"Childhood memories of Christmas are pretty powerful," Richard Mithoff said. "It's important to try to make those memories good memories."