

THE REAL DEAL

MAGAZINE

AT THE DESK OF: JEFFREY LENOBEL

This photograph of the Olympic U.S. hockey team, signed by all the players, was taken moments after the U.S. beat the U.S.S.R. and won a gold medal at the 1980 Winter Games in Lake Placid, N.Y. "It brings tears to my eyes to this day," Lenobel says of the win, which is often referred to as "the Miracle on Ice."

Late "Meet the Press" host **Tim Russert** presented Lenobel this award in 2007. The honor, bestowed by the American Bar Association, recognizes lawyers and law school students who use **clear, plain language** in their writing. "I think an award for it being readable is pretty cool," he says.

Jeffrey Lenobel, chair of the real estate group at the law firm Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP, is at work on one of the largest developments underway in Manhattan — the \$15 billion Hudson Yards project, where he represents the joint venture of Oxford Properties Group and the Related Companies. And this month is going to be a busy one for Lenobel. That's because the

developer is slated to close on a massive construction loan and finalize office deals for two of the three tenants at the Far West Side site — **Coach and L'Oreal**. To get it all done, Lenobel says he's in his 919 Third Avenue office "15 hours a day, six or seven days a week." He says he's turned the space into the home that his wife would "never let him" have. **By GUELDA VOIEN**

Much to his parents' dismay, Lenobel "had the **biggest afro** of any Caucasian in the Pennsylvania-Washington [D.C.] area," says Lenobel, who often was in the nation's capital for war protests. "When someone sat behind me in a movie theater, the first thing they would say was 'Oh, shit.'"

This hardhat is from a 1982 Midtown development called **Executive Plaza** that Lenobel worked on. The deal involved dividing the building into three condos — for the retail, hotel and residential portions — and then dividing those condos into condos. The transaction was **incredibly complex**. "It's never been done before or since in the state of New York," he said. The site is now home to the **Michelangelo Hotel**.

A self-described "sports fanatic," one of Lenobel's favorite players is baseball legend **Willie Mays**, pictured here with Lenobel in 1995. "I invited Willie Mays to my Bar Mitzvah and my wedding," says Lenobel. Mays didn't come, but years later he not only met the then-60-year-old retired slugger, but played a round of golf with him.

When he started practicing law, Lenobel ordered vanity license plates that read "DIRT LAW," a play on the slang term "dirt lawyers" sometimes used to refer to real estate attorneys. But Lenobel later replaced them with "NY METS" plates passed down from his father.

Lenobel has more than 500 pig figurines, which started with a family of **oinkers** that his now 30-year-old-daughter bought him when she was 12. These porkers came from retired residential builder **Marty Goodstein**. A few years ago, Lenobel moved the collection from his Midtown apartment at his wife's request.

Lenobel has **two rules** for his collection: no salt and pepper shakers and no piggy banks. But he has no prohibition against **X-rated pigs**. "This is definitely a pig orgy," Lenobel says of this grouping. "These are from a client, too, but I don't want to tell you who."

Lenobel says he opens these bottles maybe once a week — to convey a "**Mad Men**" feeling. His office decor was "**100 percent**" inspired by the TV show, which is set at a Madison Avenue ad firm in the 1960s.

Each pig tells a unique story. This "**capitalist pig**" came from a friend he made at **Gettysburg College** who was chiding him for "selling out," and becoming a real estate lawyer after their years together protesting the Vietnam War.