



PERSONAL INJURY LAW JOURNAL

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Create Your Own Odyssey



MYTHICAL ADVENTURES AWAIT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

One of the oldest stories in Western literature is Homer's "The Odyssey." This epic poem tells the story of Odysseus and his long journey home after the Trojan War. While Odysseus' travels were fraught with mythical monsters and magic, many of the places he visited are said to be inspired by real islands in the Mediterranean. Even today, travelers flock to these islands looking for peace, adventure, and epic stories of their own.

SICILY, ITALY

One of the most popular stories in "The Odyssey" is the tale of Odysseus rescuing his crew from Polyphemus, a man-eating Cyclops. It's said that Polyphemus made his home

on what is now modern-day Sicily. Fortunately, there are no Cyclopes in Sicily today; there are only cultural festivals, world-class golf courses, and delicious food.

GOZO, MALTA

While Odysseus' journey was perilous, he did enjoy one peaceful stop. Odysseus spent seven years on the mythical island of Ogygia, home of the nymph Calypso. Historians suspect that Ogygia was Gaudos, now modern-day Gozo, Malta. Gozo is home to the Ġgantija temples, which are older than the Egyptian pyramids. In addition to exploring its archaeological marvels, Gozo's visitors can also enjoy snorkeling, horseback riding, and other memorable adventures.

ITHACA, GREECE

If you want to chart your own odyssey, make your final stop Odysseus' home, the island of Ithaca. Covered in lush greenery and quaint villages, Ithaca is a wonderful place to relax at the end of your trip. Visitors can enjoy their morning coffee by a seaside cafe before lounging on a secluded beach for the rest of the day. It's no wonder why Odysseus fought so hard to get back to Ithaca!

With dozens of other islands to explore, the Mediterranean is the perfect place to plan your own odyssey — minus the mythical monsters, of course.

LEGAL FOUNDATIONS

Valentine's Day can be about more than celebrating romantic relationships. Having introduced my husband and law partner, Doug Black, in our last edition, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the other members of our team. Their skill and dedication have had a positive impact on our clients over the years and also on me.

The first person I'd like to introduce is our legal assistant, Anne Mary Morrison, who I have known for 28 years. We met at the infancy of our careers when we worked together at another law firm. Anne has been with our firm since 2014. She is generally the first person you speak to when you call in or come through our doors — she is a calm, knowledgeable presence who keeps you informed over the course of your case. Beyond her 28 years of experience in her field, Anne also has a deep appreciation for the arts; she enjoys opera, singing, and piano. She's been deeply involved in raising her grandchildren over the years and works directly with her son, Matthew, here at the firm.

Matthew Morrison, our associate attorney, a graduate of UC Berkeley and Golden Gate Law School, has defined his legal career through a patient, meticulous approach that gives his clients the winning edge. Since becoming a lawyer in 2011, he's excelled in representing personal injury clients and has won the respect of his opposition thanks to his diligent and persistent demeanor. Matthew seems to have inherited his mother's ability to work well under pressure, and it's

been a pleasure to see them coordinate together during the three years he's been with us. As someone who worked at her own father's law firm, I know the difference this kind of family bond can make.

Michele Cuttler and I have worked together as attorneys for years, and I've found her skillset to be invaluable. A graduate of both UC Santa Barbara and Santa Clara University School of Law, Michele has been practicing law for three decades. She's a consummate expert when it comes to the technical aspects of being an attorney, specializing in law and motion work, researching the law and crafting legal arguments and case strategies. But it's not just Michele's knowledge and attention to detail that make her a great fit for this firm. Her work over the decades with vital charities, like CALM (Child Abuse Listening Mediation), Storyteller Children's Center, and the Santa Barbara Resiliency Project, show she's committed to serving our community beyond her capacity as a lawyer.

Our legal assistant, Sylvia Guzman, is one of the newer members of our team, one who's poised to go far. Finishing up her final year of law school, Sylvia has been putting her studies to work here at the firm, providing invaluable support to our attorneys. The fact that she manages to juggle school and her job while raising her three children (ages 12, 10, and 4) is a testament to her dedication and work ethic. There is no doubt in my mind she is going to make a fantastic attorney.

Last but certainly not least, Emma Glancy is responsible for much of the behind-the-scenes work that keeps our firm running smoothly. As our bookkeeper, Emma's expertise in accounting and technology management enables our legal team to focus on our clients rather than on spreadsheets and databases. We're all looking forward to celebrating her graduation in June of this year from UC Santa Barbara's ethics and public policy program.

Coming to know and work with these individuals has been one of the best surprises about running a law firm. For many years, I thought that no one could do things as well as I could. I cared for my clients and felt uncomfortable leaving any aspect of their case in someone else's hands. But over the years, witnessing the professionalism of this team has shown me just how much better we can serve our community when I can collaborate with those I trust.

On a more personal note, it has been a joy to watch each and every member of this team grow over the years. Seeing them raise their families, advance in their studies, and help causes close to their heart has been deeply inspiring to me. I may have hired them to make a difference to our clients, but looking back, they've certainly made a difference to me, too.

Here's to all the meaningful relationships in our lives,

Renee Nordstrand

LEAP INTO 2020

Facts About the Leap Year

Like the Olympics and presidential elections, leap years only occur once every four years, which is why many people look forward to Feb. 29. But there's a lot that you might not know about this quirk on the calendar.

WHY To keep the calendar in sync with Earth's orbit around the sun, an extra day is added to it every four years. Earth takes exactly 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds to orbit the sun. Those extra hours add up over time, so another calendar day becomes necessary. But a leap year doesn't occur every four years. Adding that extra day still doesn't quite keep Earth on track, so the calendar skips leap years that occur during century years not divisible by 400. For example, 2000 was a leap year, but 2100 won't be.

WHO The odds of being born on Feb. 29 are 1 in 1,461. That means that of the roughly seven billion people in the world, only about five million of them are "leaplings." The number of leaplings currently living in the U.S. is roughly 187,000. Some famous leaplings include motivational speaker Tony Robbins, rapper Ja Rule, and singer Mark Foster of Foster the People. However, the most famous leapling is probably Superman. When you invent a super-being, you might as well give him a super-birthday.

WHERE Anthony, Texas/New Mexico (a single town that straddles the two states' borders), claims the title "Leap Year Capital of the World." The city throws one massive birthday party for all leaplings but invites everyone to join the celebration. Two leapling neighbors from Anthony began the tradition in



1988, and it's blossomed into a festival with thousands of participants every four years. It includes banquets, hot air balloons, a carnival, concerts, parades, and more. When you have four years to plan in between each shindig, there's time to go big.

Celebrate this leap year by doing something unusual or new. It's a special day that doesn't occur often, so make the most of it by doing something you'll talk about for another four years.

A CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE

Workers' Compensation, Personal Injury, or Both?

A construction worker was leaning over a railing while on the job. Unbeknownst to him, a bolt, which was key to the railing's stability, had been removed by the homeowner. Suddenly, the railing gave way, and the worker plummeted 15 feet to the ground, suffering serious injuries. Naturally, he wanted to recover damages for this accident, so he went to a workers' compensation lawyer, not knowing that he also had a personal injury claim. So, when someone is injured at work, the question is this: Should they file a workers' comp claim or a personal injury claim?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? From an injured worker's perspective, the most significant difference between a workers' compensation claim and a third-party claim is that the workers' compensation system does not allow the employer or their insurance company to pay the worker money to compensate them for their pain and suffering. Thus, a workers' compensation claim will only cover medical expenses and lost wages. However, as third-party claims are personal injury cases, you can hold the responsible party accountable for the full extent of the harm they caused you.

HURT ON THE JOB Many people make the mistake of assuming that just because you are hurt on the job, the injury needs to be treated as a workers' compensation case. In a workers' compensation claim, the employee does not have to



prove fault to receive compensation from their employer. In a personal injury case, an employee must prove that someone other than their employer created a dangerous condition that led to the injury in order to recover compensation. When an employee is injured at work by someone due to the fault of someone other than their employer — for example, the manufacturer of faulty equipment, a third-party driver, the actions of an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or a property owner who was not a direct employer — then an employee may have grounds for a personal injury case.

THIRD-PARTY CLAIMS Third-party claims exist for these exact situations, and they're more common than you might think. The scenario with the injured construction worker is based on a client whose case we resolved favorably. In fact, he was referred to us by the workers' compensation lawyer he originally sought out. But we see plenty of other examples of these claims throughout the year, especially when it comes to car accidents. Whether they're a ride-share driver or are simply running to the office-supply store to get more toner, many people wind up in auto crashes while on the clock. When these accidents are due to the negligence of a third-party driver, pursuing a personal injury claim can make a huge impact on the damages an employee can recover.

Unsure where your case falls? Call us for a consultation. If your accident would be better handled as a workers' compensation claim, we'd be happy to recommend some experts in that field.

BIT BY A DOG?

Take These 3 Steps for a Smoother Recovery

We love dogs here at our firm, and many of us are proud owners ourselves. But sometimes a mixture of unfortunate circumstances leads a canine to lash out, often causing serious harm. Renee's own son was hurt by a dog in this way, requiring facial plastic surgery at just 4 years old. Drawing on this experience, we wanted to share what you should do in the event of a dog bite.

GET MEDICAL ATTENTION

Even if a bite seems "minor," it should be properly cleaned and dressed. Infection is very common with these sorts of puncture wounds, sometimes even occurring despite proper treatment. To give yourself the best odds of avoiding any further complications, get the wound irrigated, cleaned, and stitched by a medical professional. You will likely be prescribed an antibiotic to prevent infection, which often occurs if left untreated.

GET PLASTIC SURGERY AT THE TIME OF INITIAL TREATMENT

When you are bit by a dog, you should go to the emergency room where you will have the option of asking for a plastic surgeon to stitch your wounds instead of the doctor on call, who generally handles the stitching. A plastic surgeon can take care of both the medical and cosmetic work all in one place, saving you time, money, and aggravation. This is especially advisable if the wound is in a very visible spot. An expert plastic surgeon can ensure the bite leaves as little a lasting impact as possible.

CONSULT A LAWYER EARLY

As with most personal injury cases, sooner is better than later when it comes to pursuing damages for a dog bite. Vital evidence and key witnesses may be impossible to obtain and track



down after an extended period of time, so bringing on a team of experts early can vastly improve the strength of your claim. At NordstrandBlack, we handle many dog bite cases a year and understand what it's like to have a family member recover from such a vicious attack. For our knowledge and expertise, call us at 805-962-2022.

WORD SEARCH

T S Z P F R S R G Z V K I
S B U H R U O R P E A N Z
H K S I G E O N C N L A J
O A I A R U S N O F E B E
E M R I N A A I G D N W V
G C A D N M U X D Q T O O
B A H N O G G Q Y E I N L
C O G R L N J V A V N S G
G E T A L O C O H C E T O
S E S O R B U P I S C E S
U N S W V O P O M S T R E
P T F O Z G I W B D V H R
V N H V E D D J U Z U O E

AQUARIUS	GROUNDHOG	ROSES
ASH	LOVE	SKIING
CHOCOLATE	PISCES	SNOWBANK
CUPID	PRESIDENTS	SUGAR
DONOR	ROMANCE	VALENTINE

EASY SHRIMP SCAMPI

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tbsp butter
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 8 oz cooked linguine
- 1/4 cup parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. In a skillet over medium heat, melt 2 tbsp of butter with 2 tbsp of olive oil. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes.
2. Add shrimp and oregano, stirring frequently until shrimp is pink. Remove shrimp from skillet.
3. Add wine and lemon juice to skillet and bring the mixture to a boil.
4. Stir in remaining butter and olive oil and cook until butter is melted.
5. Add cooked shrimp to skillet and cook for 1 minute, stirring occasionally.
6. In a serving bowl, top cooked linguine with shrimp mixture. Garnish with parsley and serve.

Inspired by The Blond Cook