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“On behalf of my family and I, we want to thank you for your feed back response. Your experience, wisdom and helpful resources shined through so bright even my pre teen could understand. When my husband read your reply it gave him courage and confidence owning a meeting with our attorney. We are grateful for this site and all the supportive messages, similar cases and library gifts of support feeding our physical and mentally drained bodies.

Mr. Vuk Vujasinovic, Mr. Brian Augustus Beckcom, team members and associates of V&B we raise our hands and salute all of your efforts in helping humanity with excellence.”

Car Accident Victim
Cedar Hill, Texas



Your Worst Moments Are Your Best Moments Too

by Brian Beckcom

If I wanted to know the real you, I would want to see how you react to the most difficult times in your life, whether at work, at home, or in any other area of your life.

How you react to the most difficult times in your life, how you handle ethical dilemmas, what you do when the going gets tough, that's who you really are.

I want to know if you are ethical and honest. Well, anyone can be ethical and honest when everyone is watching. How about when no one is watching? How you act when no one is watching tells me if you're really an ethical person or not.

I want to know if you are a great employee. Well, anyone can be cheerful and energetic at work

when things are going well. How about when you face a seemingly impossible deadline or unsolvable problem? How you handle the impossible deadline or unsolvable problem tells me whether you're a great employee or just average.

You are probably the best husband/wife/father/son/daughter/friend when everyone is on the same page and sees eye to eye. What about when you have a family crisis and decisions need to be made about how to deal with the crisis? The easy decisions don't tell us who you are—the hard ones tell us who you are.

Next time you're faced with a difficult problem at work, or you have troubles at home, or you

The easy decisions don't tell us who you are—the hard ones tell us who you are.

have a friend who has issues, or you're faced with an ethical or moral problem and no one is looking, remember, how you deal with the tough stuff in life tells us more than anything about you. ■

Dedicated to serving clients,

Brian

WE GET QUESTIONS

Q: Can an explosion cause a brain injury?

A: Yes. If you were exposed to an explosive blast in a workplace accident, roadway accident, gas explosion, or other situation then you could have suffered brain damage – even if you do not visibly have any injuries.

Researchers and medical professionals are not completely clear on how accident victims can suffer from traumatic brain injuries because of an explosive blast. They believe that pressure waves from the blast can pass through the brain, disrupting brain activity and leading to brain damage.

Of course, if the explosion you were exposed to blasted out debris, you could have been knocked on the head or suffered a penetrating wound (when debris breaks your skin and perhaps even your skull). You may have also been thrown back by the blast, knocking your head on the ground or another object. Injuries of this nature can certainly cause a brain injury.



April Fools' Day is a Mystery

For practical jokesters and those just looking to have a little fun, April Fools' Day is a highly anticipated day of the year.

Some of us spend days coming up with the perfect trick to play on our spouse, parent or even co-worker. We carefully craft a story that we can use to “pull one over” on someone, only later to say those highly anticipated words—*April Fools' Day!*

Although April Fools' Day is celebrated by countless Americans each year and despite the fact that it has even made our calendars, the origins of this day are still masked in mystery.

There are many theories on how the tradition of April Fools' Day got its start, ranging from centuries old European spring festivals to Roman jesters in the third and fourth centuries A.D.

According to the National Geographic Society, one of the most popular theories dates all the way back to the 1500s. The story goes that France decided to modify its calendar to match the Roman calendar. New Year was changed from the start of spring to January. Since there was no television, radio or Internet in those days, word of this calendar change traveled slowly. Supposedly, many people who lived in rural areas continued to celebrate New Year in the spring. These people became known as “April fools.”

No matter where this tradition got its start, it continues to be a favorite holiday for pranksters and people just looking to have a little fun. ■



Is the Value of Your Totaled Car Some Kind of April Fools' Joke?

If you have been in a car accident, you may be assuming that the insurance company will cover the repair of your vehicle or at least pay you the fair market value (if it was totaled). After all, the other driver caused the accident. Isn't it right to assume that you will be taken care of by the insurance company? Think again.

When Repairs are Needed

Getting the necessary repairs for your vehicle may not be a straightforward process. Insurance companies are known for using tactics to get out of paying a lot of money for these much needed repairs. If the insurance company tells you to take your vehicle to one of their preferred auto repair shops, be very leery.

You can take your vehicle to whatever repair shop you choose, but it can be tempting to go to a place the insurance company recommends, especially if they

are offering you some type of incentive. Here's the problem with the repair shops that are on the insurer's “preferred” list – they often cut corners and use cheap parts.

You have to understand that the repair shops will be loyal to the insurance company, not you.

There have been some cases where people's cars weren't fully repaired. You have to understand that the repair shops will be loyal to the insurance company, not you, as that

is where they are getting a lot of their business.

When the Car is Totaled

If the insurance company determines that your car is totaled, don't expect to get the Kelley Blue Book value of your vehicle. The number offered for your vehicle may be a lot lower than you expect. You should be provided with the comparables used to determine the value of your vehicle. If you are not satisfied with the amount offered to you, you may want to enlist outside help to determine a fair value. ■

Spring Has Sprung and So Have Insurers' Tricks

Getting into an accident is not your idea of a good time.

Recovering from painful injuries is no walk in the park. Dealing with the insurance company is outright stressful. If you have been in an accident and are currently working with the insurer to obtain compensation for your injuries, you know firsthand how challenging of a process it can be.

While some insurance companies will treat you fair, by evaluating your claim and offering you a decent settlement, others will not be so easy. Insurance companies have earned a reputation as being challenging, playing hardball and looking out more for their bottom line than claimants.

Tricky Tactics

The insurance company has many tricks up their sleeve, including blaming you for the accident. To you, fault in the accident may seem pretty cut and dry, whether another driver rear-ended you or someone's recklessness was very apparent. However, the insurance company is going to look for a way to blame you. As shocking as that might sound, it is a practice that is commonly adopted by insurers, even by some of the biggest names in the industry.

The insurance company will investigate your accident thoroughly, to find a reason to say you were at fault. If they can't find something that shows you were totally to blame, they will still look for ways to state that you were at least partially at fault. Yet, that's not the only tactic that the insurance company may employ. They may even claim that your injuries were caused by some other factor than the accident.

Be very cautious when working with the insurance company. If your injuries were serious, you may want to talk with a lawyer. ■



Spring is in the Air... and So Are Allergies

Spring is in full swing. Flowers are blooming, the sun is shining and people are coughing and sneezing. Although spring is a beautiful time of year with colorful flowers and ideal weather, it is also a season that sets off allergies for millions of Americans. If you have been sniffing, sneezing and itching your eyes, you are not alone. It is estimated that about 30 percent of the U.S. population is affected by allergies annually.

Take Control of Your Allergies

Below are some practical tips to help you conquer your allergies this season:

- 1 Visit your local pharmacy.** There are plenty of over-the-counter medications that will assist you in getting a handle on your allergies. Allergy experts recommend starting with non-sedating antihistamine every morning. A decongestant nose spray may also do the trick when it comes to nasal congestion. If your symptoms persist, it may be time to visit your doctor.
- 2 Talk to your physician.** If you are not sure what you are allergic to, your primary care physician or an allergist can perform an allergy skin test to determine the culprits that are sending you into those sneezing fits. The test does not take long, but the information it provides is invaluable. Once you know what you are allergic to, you can avoid those allergy triggers.
- 3 Clean house.** Some allergens love to attach themselves to fabric. Make sure you wash your bedding, clothes and even your pajamas as often as possible. That will help you rid your home of allergens, such as pollen and grass spores.

Don't sit back and let allergies get the best of you this spring. Take action to manage those pesky symptoms. ■

Reminder About Our Firm's Communication Policy

Our goal when we are working on our clients' cases is to obtain the best possible result as quickly as possible. When we are working on your case, our lawyers do not accept unscheduled phone calls or respond to emails. We believe this allows our lawyers to be much more productive and provide fast and effective legal services to our clients. Remember, if you are a client of the firm, you can always call our firm and schedule an appointment to talk with a lawyer at any time about your legal matter.

We will call you back within 24-48 hours unless it is not possible to do so. We will also respond to your emails in the same time frame. We have found that focusing on our clients' cases helps us to provide the best service possible.

This newsletter is provided to clients, friends, and colleagues who have requested it. We provide information on a variety of topics we think our subscribers will be interested in. We do not provide legal advice in this newsletter and receipt of this newsletter does not create an attorney-client relationship with our firm. We are happy to discuss your legal case with you, and if you want to talk to one of our lawyers, don't ever hesitate to call us toll free at 877.724.7800. To add a friend to the newsletter, call us toll free at 877.724.7800. To be removed, call the same number.



ACCIDENT & INJURY LAWYERS

VUJASINOVIC & BECKCOM, PLLC

Vujasinovic & Beckcom, P.L.L.C.

1001 Texas Avenue
Suite 1020
Houston, TX 77002

Phone: 713.224.7800
Toll Free: 877.724.7800
Fax: 713.224.7801

Email: Brian@VBAttorneys.com
Email: Vuk@vbattorneys.com
www.VBAttorneys.com
www.MaritimeAccidentAttorney.com

IN THIS ISSUE...

- Who is the real you?
- Getting a fair price for your totaled car.
- How to conquer spring allergies.

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THANKS FOR YOUR REFERRALS!

Readers of this newsletter have referred 78 clients to our firm since 2009. Thank you so much!

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SUPERSTAR SPOTLIGHT

Linda
Ramirez



Linda Ramirez is Vuk's Assistant Case Manager. Linda is fluent in Spanish, and has been a part of our law firm team for five years. Linda helps our clients with their medical treatment, exchange of case information, and travel arrangements. Linda also helps our clients in coordinating various case activities, such as answering discovery, depositions, mediations, settlement, and trial. In addition, Linda often interacts with people who call us for the first time seeking help with some kind of accident or injury issue.

Linda has lived in Houston for her entire life, and her hobbies include cooking and gardening. We value and appreciate Linda's hard work, and are honored that she continues to be a part of our team. Congratulations Linda!

MARITIME INFORMATION:

I was injured recently. Do I have a case?

Q: *I recently injured my elbow—fortunately not seriously—when it was hit by a swinging crane hook during securing operations when the ship was in rough swells at anchor. The operation could easily have been done the day before in better conditions but for some reason the chief mate decided that washing down the main deck was a priority. Do I have a case against my employer?*

A: There is a very good chance that in your case the employer violated its Jones Act duty to provide you with a safe working place. The more formal explanation is failure to act with ordinary prudence. This was obviously a situation where the senior officers ignored the potential for a dangerous atmosphere to develop. Had the crane hook broke loose due to events out of the crew's control such as sudden unexpected bad weather then you're looking at Force Majeure ("Act of God") and a lack of foreseeability. But in your case the injury would probably have been avoided if the crane had been secured in the earlier favorable conditions. ■