

# V&B ATTORNEYS

BOARD CERTIFIED ACCIDENT & INJURY LAWYERS

*the Newsletter*

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“First of all, I want to thank my attorney and his secretary for the kindness I was treated with. I want to express my gratitude because they valued my rights without discriminating my race, color, or religion. It is always good to have people like them stand up and speak for us humble people. I am delighted with this firm and thank all the wonderful people within. I will always keep them in my prayers so God will always bless them.”

J. Perez



## Smile

by Brian Beckcom

***As the Christmas season approaches I thought it'd be cool to tell you about a great gift you can give to your family and friends, immediately, every day, for free, that will make them happy and make you happy too.***

### Smile and laugh more.

That's right. Pretty simple, eh? It sure is. But like a lot of things in life, it's simple, yet profound. Think about the times when you've been around little kids. Think about how you react and feel when a child smiles at you? Do you smile back? Do you feel happy? It's almost impossible not to smile back and feel happy. By smiling at you a little child is giving you the gift of happiness. Why not try to give that same gift to others?

There's more. Decades of research has established beyond any doubt that smiling and laughing boost

our well-being, reduces anxiety and stress, and help us cope with good and bad things in our lives.

Lots of people think that our emotions dictate our facial expressions and body language. But did you know that it can actually be just the opposite; our facial expressions and body language have a powerful effect on how we feel emotionally. For example, in *The How of Happiness*, Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky writes about a bunch of amazing studies on smiling. For example, moms who smile at their infants have infants who begin to express positive emotions as well. So by smiling at your child you are giving them the gift of happiness. And you can smile at your child whenever you want and it doesn't cost a thing—in fact, you get rewards in return.

Other studies have demonstrated that when you smile, it actually has a direct impact on brain activities associated with happiness and positive emotions. In other words, if you are feeling gloomy or unhappy, the simple physical act of smiling or laughing can boost your mood. ■

***We wish you and yours a joyful and happy (and smiley) Holiday Season!***

Brian

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## WE GET QUESTIONS



**Q: Help, my doctor thinks I need spine surgery after my accident!**

**A:** If your back pain problems do not resolve themselves after six months or so of more conservative treatment, some doctors advise accident victims to consider surgery. You will have to speak with your doctor about why he or she thinks that surgery is the right alternative for you.

It may help you feel better to know that about 10 percent of all back injury sufferers end up needing spinal surgery to resolve their problems, so you are not alone. There are a variety of different types of spine surgeries, so make sure your doctor explains your options to you. You can also seek a second opinion if you want to be sure that surgery is warranted.

It may be in your best interest to work with a Board Certified injury attorney if you were hurt in an accident that involved a negligent person or company. Your surgery expenses, medical bills, and recovery costs, and lost wages may all be paid for by their insurance company.

## “Bah! Humbug!” The Insurance Company Doesn’t Believe That You Were Injured

**When you are in an accident, it is sometimes difficult to know the severity of your injuries.**

You might feel just fine after the incident and choose to forgo a trip to the ER. Maybe you only had a slight pain in your back or a headache. You didn’t want to make a big deal about the accident or your discomfort. Instead, you decided to “tough it out” and wait for the pain to subside. However, waiting too long to get medical attention could impact your health, not to mention the fact that it could hurt your chances of recovering compensation.

Some injuries don’t surface right away. What might feel like a minor pain could turn out to be a major injury that requires surgery and months of physical therapy. Imagine how quickly the medical bills will start adding up.

Insurance companies will jump on the fact that you didn’t get medical attention right after an accident. The insurer will make the argument that you couldn’t have been hurt

that bad in the accident, otherwise you would have gone to the doctor right away. Don’t give the insurance company the opportunity to use this argument against you. If you are hurt in an accident, get medical

attention. That could mean a trip to the ER, urgent care center or your family doctor.

In addition to getting medical care, you also need to follow through with your recommended treatment. Failing to do so could also hurt your claim. ■

***Waiting too long to get medical attention could hurt your chances of recovering compensation.***



## Santa Clause’s Journey to the Shopping Mall

***Santa Clause (a.k.a. Old Saint Nick, St. Nicholas and Kris Kringle) is a major part of the holiday season. Children daydream about Santa sliding down the chimney and delivering presents under the tree and filling their stockings. This jolly man, who dresses in red and travels in a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer, has a history that began in the third century.***

### Where It All Began

It is believed that the legend of Santa Clause is centered on a monk named St. Nicholas who was born around 280 AD in modern-day Turkey. He became known as the protector of children and sailors. Even after his death, he was still celebrated and maintained a positive reputation for his good deeds.

### Shopping Mall Santas Got Their Start

Over the years, Santa Clause has evolved into a popular holiday icon and can be seen at just about every shopping mall in town. Children and parents will wait

in long lines to get a quick snapshot with Santa. For kids, it is the prime opportunity to tell Santa Clause firsthand what they want for Christmas.

The tradition of Santa appearing at shopping malls started in the 19th century. In 1841, thousands of children flocked to a Philadelphia store to see a life-size model of Santa Clause. Of course, that sparked the interest of retailers and it wasn’t long before stores used “live” Santa Clauses to attract parents and children to their stores. Santa Clause is now one of the most highly anticipated mall attractions for children. ■



## An Early Settlement Offer Isn't an Early Christmas Present

**Don't get too excited when the insurance company offers you a settlement offer right after an accident or other event.** While it might feel as though the insurer is looking out for you and wants to make sure that you are compensated for your damages, there is another motive for that early settlement offer.

Even though delaying payments is one of the most common tactics used by insurance companies, there are circumstances where offering an immediate settlement is in the insurer's best interests. For example, if you were in a car accident, you might not know the full extent of your injuries right after the incident. Some symptoms don't surface immediately and minor injuries can turn

***Some symptoms don't surface immediately and minor injuries can turn out to be serious.***

out to be serious. The insurance company knows that you may not be aware of the severity of your injuries, the treatment involved and the impact the injuries will have on your life. If the insurance company can persuade you to accept a quick offer, they have just saved themselves a lot of money.

Insurance companies know what they are doing. They are in the

business of making money and the more that they pay out on claims, the more money that is taken from their bottom line. So keep in mind that when the insurance company offers you a quick settlement, it doesn't mean Christmas has come early. Take the time to research the value of your claim and talk with a lawyer about your rights. ■



## Why Do We Make New Year's Resolutions?

**As January 1st approaches, most of us start thinking about our New Year's resolutions**—"I want to lose 10 pounds this year." "I am going to exercise 5 times a week." "I will be debt free by the end of this year." Whatever your New Year's resolution might be in 2011, have you ever stepped back and wondered where this tradition got its start?

First, let's take a look at when New Year celebrations first began. According to History.com, the New Year holiday dates all the way back to 2000 BC in Mesopotamia. However, January 1st wasn't always the start of a new year. It wasn't until after 153 BC that the Roman republican calendar recognized the official start of the year as January 1st.

January got its name from the Roman god, Janus. The god had two faces, one looking backward and one looking forward. This symbolized looking at past events and forward to the future. Janus therefore became the icon for resolutions. In the ancient times, people would make resolutions to rid themselves of bad habits and adopt better ones. It is also believed that the New Year marked a time when Romans would seek forgiveness from their enemies.

*As you make your New Year's resolutions in 2011, remember that people have been doing the same thing for centuries. That fact alone can act as motivation to make those resolutions a reality!* ■

### 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.



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## IN THIS ISSUE...

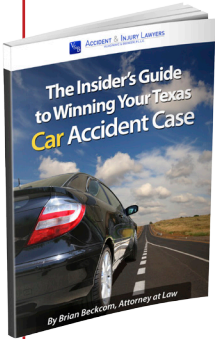
*Welcome to the new and improved V&B Attorneys Newsletter!  
We hope you enjoy the new look. Comments or feedback? We  
love hearing from you!*

**000057**

## THANKS FOR YOUR REFERRALS!

*Readers of this newsletter have referred 57 clients to our firm  
since 2009. Thank you so much!*

## WARNING!



**READ THIS BOOK  
BEFORE YOU TALK TO  
THE ADJUSTER, GIVE A  
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## SUPERSTAR SPOTLIGHT

Brenda Gallegos



*This month's Superstar Spotlight features Brenda Gallegos, our office manager and one of our Senior Case Managers. Brenda is currently the longest-tenured employee of V&B. In addition to handling a full load of cases for clients and serving as Vuk's Senior Case Manager, Brenda also serves as our office manager. As office manager, Brenda is responsible for managing the staff and handling all non-case related matters which require attention. Brenda is one of the most accomplished and experienced Case Managers/Office Managers in Houston.*

*She's also an amazing cook and interior decorator! We are truly lucky to have Brenda as a member of our team.*