

V&B ATTORNEYS

BOARD CERTIFIED ACCIDENT & INJURY LAWYERS

the Newsletter

May 2011 Volume 3 Issue 5

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by Brian Beckcom



FINISH WHAT YOU START

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“When we are injured and vulnerable, we must be careful whom we turn to for help. I am thankful in my time of need I had Curtis Bickers and his staff on my side. Large corporations care very little for individual employees, often times treating people like machines. Sadly the voice of the individual is not heard. Mr. Bickers gave my voice power. He did not allow a large corporation to treat me like a piece of broken equipment. His staff was courteous and helpful through the entire process. Mr. Bickers set out his plan clearly from day one and followed through on his word. My sincerest thanks for Mr. Bickers and all those in his office who helped me in this difficult time.”

Gratefully,
Brandon H.

"There are two kinds of people, those who finish what they start and so on."

- Robert Byrne

Most of us are pretty good at starting things. Where we need help is finishing the things we start.

I am a world-class starter. I am constantly looking for new challenges and new ideas. For example, there's a workout program called "P90X" that involves a bunch of really hard one-hour workouts, 6 days a week. The program is advertised non-stop on infomercials and I finally broke down and bought P90X this past summer. The "90" signifies 90 days of the workout. I got to 60 then didn't finish. That's just one of many examples of things I started and didn't finish.

So I've been thinking lately about how to finish the things I start. I read a really good article recently that provides some good guidance on how to finish what you start.

1 Find your motivation.

Finishing is all about motivation. If you're having trouble finishing what you start, look carefully at why you want to finish in the first place. If you don't really want to finish, then

it's probably okay to move on to something different. But if you really want to finish, one way to motivate yourself is to give yourself some public accountability. Tell a close friend about what you're doing, and ask them to hold you accountable. It's much harder to procrastinate or quit when you make yourself publicly accountable.

2 Just do it

Break your finishing tasks into the smallest little steps you can, then just get started on each little step (As Nike would say, "Just Do It.") If you can't finish that book you're reading, just focus on finishing the next chapter, the next paragraph, or the next sentence. Take a break, then finish the next chapter. Breaking tasks into the smallest steps you can really makes finishing the overall task much less daunting.

3 Then let people know

After you've finished your project or challenge or goal, tell people what you've done. It feels great. ■

Brian

P.S. I waited until the last minute to "finish" this article. How's that for irony?

WE GET QUESTIONS

Q: What are the symptoms of a burn injury?

A: If you were involved in an accident that resulted in burns from heat, fire, hot liquids or chemicals, you can suffer a serious burn injury. Symptoms will vary depending on the nature and location of your injury, but there are some ways you can tell if your skin was burned.

- Symptoms of a burn injury include:
- Skin that is red and swollen
- Blisters on the skin
- Skin that looks moist or wet, even though you have not been around water recently
- Pain, especially pain that is severe
- Skin that is leathery or waxy white
- In severe burn cases, skin can be blackened or look charred

You should seek medical attention if your workplace accident, car or truck wreck, home injury, or other accident resulted in a burn injury. It is important that a doctor evaluate your condition to make sure that you get the treatment you need before your injuries worsen.

Mother's Day

Honor Your Mom All Year Round



It is a time of year that is highly anticipated by many women across the country.

Dinners, bath times, soccer practices, dirty diapers...a mother's work never ends. As May rolls around, every mother should be honored for her hard work in raising and caring for her children. However, why stop there? To show your mother (or your wife) that you truly appreciate her hard work, don't limit the showers of praise and gifts to Mother's Day alone. Celebrate your mother year round.

Below are some ideas of how you can let your mother or wife know that you are thankful for her:

1 Give her a personalized card or handwritten note. Many women just want to know that their family appreciates what they do for them. Write a heartfelt note or give her a card reflecting that you recognize what she does for the family.

2 Tell your mother or wife to take the day off. If children are still living at home, a day off might be needed. This should be a free day with no strings attached.

3 Clean the house or cook dinner. Actions often speak louder than words. Cook a surprise dinner or pick up the house. Grab the vacuum or dust cloth and start cleaning. These actions will be sure to let her know you care.

4 Call your mom or take her out. As an adult, it is never too late to honor your mother. Give her a call and express how much you love her or take her out for a nice meal or outing.

Money shouldn't be an issue when celebrating mothers. There are enough things that you can do that don't cost a dime.



The Weather is Heating Up ...and So Are Insurance Adjusters' Tactics

An accident can happen at any time. It is not a thought that most of us would like to dwell on, but it is reality.

When you are the one who is hurt, your problems don't end with the accident. You have medical bills, doctor visits and missed time from work. If all of those issues weren't depressing enough, you also have to face the insurance adjuster.

The last thing you want is extra stress in your life, as you attempt to focus your time and energy on recuperating from your injuries. That is why when the insurance adjuster acts like he or she is your friend, you don't doubt for a minute that this person is looking out for you. The adjuster may have told you that you are in good hands—that the insurance company would take care of your medical bills. Therefore, you should have no reason to worry.

The adjuster may have made everything sound so easy that when the topic of a lawyer came up, you didn't doubt the adjuster's advice. He or she may have told you that your case would be handled fairly and that there was no need to get an attorney involved.

If this sounds a little too familiar, you need to understand something – the reason the adjuster tried to dissuade you from hiring a lawyer is to protect the insurance company's bottom line. The insurance adjuster knows that if a lawyer represents

you, you will most likely receive a higher settlement. He or she is also aware that you don't have experience negotiating claims.

If an attorney does not represent you, the insurance company has the upper hand. ■



Posted Spring Break Pictures on Facebook?

Find Out Why You May Have Wrecked Your Case

Did you have a great vacation over spring break? Were you able to sneak away on a cruise or head to the beach? As tempting as it might be to post your pictures on Facebook to show all of your friends and family members, if you have been injured in an accident of any kind, you might want to think twice. Pictures, videos and comments are all potential pieces of evidence that the insurance adjuster can use against you.

As tempting as it might be to post your pictures on Facebook... you might want to think twice.

It may seem hard to believe that the insurance adjuster could be watching your social media activity, but if you stop and think about it for a moment, it does make sense. Adjusters are savvy and they know how to search out information that can be used to minimize your injury claim. Don't make it easy for the adjuster. If there is a nice picture of you on the beach, the adjuster might allege that if you were truly injured, you wouldn't have

gone out to enjoy the surf and sand. Pictures and videos reflecting physical activities are even worse, as they provide stronger ammunition for the adjuster.

Although you know your limitations and what you can handle after an accident, a picture, video or other social media posting can reflect an entirely different story. Adjusters know how to twist information in the insurance companies' favor.

Save yourself a lot of grief and stress. Don't post things on Facebook that can be misconstrued by the insurance company. Better yet, avoid posting anything on social media sites, until your case is resolved. ■

Make Sure Your Mother is Taking Care of Her Heart

May is a time when we think about our mothers and all that they have sacrificed to ensure our needs have been met. It is often not until we become adults that we fully recognize what our mothers have done for us, and all that they have endured while raising their children.



There is a way that you can give back to your mother and that is ensuring that she is taking care of her heart.

One of the biggest health threats to women, believe it or not, is cardiovascular disease. While most women fear breast cancer, they don't think about the serious risk of heart disease. Sadly, according to the American Heart Association, one in three women will die from it. The following are some ways you can help your mother reduce her odds of suffering a heart attack or stroke.

- 1 Make sure your mother knows her numbers.** To combat heart disease, your mother must be aware of her cholesterol and triglyceride levels, not to mention blood pressure.
- 2 Encourage your mother to stay active.** Heart disease is nearly twice as likely to develop in people who are inactive.
- 3 Remind your mother to visit her doctor regularly.** If your mother is at a high risk of heart disease, her doctor will be able to recommend the appropriate precautions.

Remember to approach your mother gently and with love when talking about her health. Just as we didn't enjoy being nagged as children, your mother won't appreciate it either.

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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- *Make Mom feel appreciated all year round.*
- *What you need to know about posting photos on Facebook.*



THANKS FOR YOUR REFERRALS!

Readers of this newsletter have referred 85 clients to our firm since 2009. Thank you so much!

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SUPERSTAR SPOTLIGHT

Kenneth Fenelon



Kenneth Fenelon is one of the firm's bright young attorneys. Kenneth hails from Houston and his dad was a lawyer at a very prominent firm in town. Kenneth is a superstar at making sure the "law" part of each case he works on is handled properly. When our client's cases need work on a legal issue or an appeal, Kenneth is the go-to lawyer at the firm. He's probably handled more appellate issue than almost any lawyer his age and done a great job at it.

Kenneth got married this month to a lovely young lady who is also a lawyer and the entire firm was excited to see Kenneth tie the knot. If you want to drop Kenneth a congratulatory note, send him an email at Kenneth@vbattorneys.com.

MARITIME INFORMATION:

Q: Why would my employer ask me to complete a handwritten statement immediately following my maritime accident?

A: This trick is one of the most common ones used by maritime companies. Sadly, some employers in the offshore industry or more concerned about protecting themselves than fairly compensating their injured employees.

It is very difficult to process what just happened when you are hurt offshore. Accidents can occur in an instance, leaving you in a complete haze. Don't be quick to fill out a handwritten statement. You need time to think things over.

There are many tactics used by maritime companies to avoid liability for their employees' injuries. We recently worked with a former Kirby Inland Marine employee who slipped on a deck that was covered in gasoline. Not only did his supervisor spill gasoline and fail to report it, the company refused to pay the deckhand's medical treatment. The company used all kinds of tactics to evade responsibility.

You need to proceed cautiously after an offshore accident. ■