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Strange Lawyer Stories!



Last month we told you'd bring back a previous fan favorite. Well, we have a doozy for you this month.

Do we have any fans of the USA series, "Suits"? This month's Strange Lawyer Story screamed "Harvey Specter and Mike Ross scandal." A law firm, right here in the Sunshine State, gained unauthorized access from the opposing side's computer *before* getting a subpoena for those very records.

What happened?

As the story alleges, Attorney Michael P. Rudd and his firm, Rudd & Diamond, were defending a homeowner's insurance company. They alleged that a local plumbing company fraudulently convinced homeowners to file claims to replace cast-iron drain pipes. They also accused the plumbing company of helping stage water damage and other losses. If it was true, it could be a slam dunk for the insurance company!

Two frauds don't make a right!

Convinced that the theory was true, Rudd enlisted the help of John Collucci, a previous employee of that same plumbing company. Mr. Collucci provided his login and passwords to the company's system, and this ultimately gave the opposing counsel full access to the company's GPS as well as sensitive customer information!

Then the tables turned.

Once the breach was discovered by the plumbing company, they received a unanimous decision by three judges that the law firm went too far. That ruling opened the door for the plumbing company to then countersue the insurance company and pursue compensatory and punitive damages against Rudd and his law firm.

If you want to read more of these, be sure to follow us on our social media pages.



A Statewide Law Firm

Many of our clients never come into the office. We use technology to handle their cases virtually all across Florida.



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AUGUST 2021

Growing Together with You

From Childhood Troublemaker to Voracious Reader

How Catholic School Lessons Made Me a Better Lawyer

When I was a kid, my dad used to come home from his gas station every night and read the paper. It was the first thing he did, and he didn't do it in an armchair or at the kitchen table. He read on the floor, which, as you can imagine, was a HUGE temptation for me as a little boy.

All I wanted to do was start a wrestling match, but my brother and I knew we weren't allowed to mess with Dad while he was reading. We waited, bouncing up and down and holding our breath until he turned that very last page. Then, we attacked!

I never gave much thought to this childhood ritual until I sat down to write this newsletter. It's crazy what you remember when you let your mind go down a rabbit hole! Mary Shelley, the author of "Frankenstein," was born this month and I intended to write about the year I discovered that book.

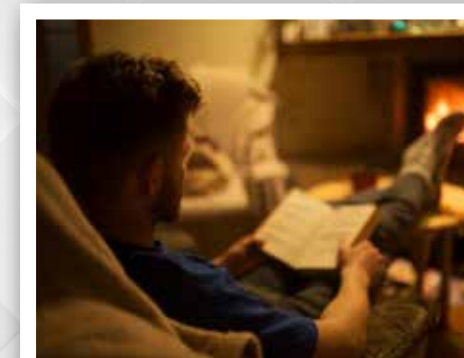
I read Shelley's work for the first time during an intense class at my Catholic high school called "Introduction to Science Fiction." We had to read about 10 novels that year including "Frankenstein," and others by Albert Camus, Ursula K. Le Guin, Ray Bradbury, and Isaac Asimov. For years, I've credited that class and the rest of my highly academic high school curriculum for inspiring my love of reading — but maybe it really goes back to my dad and his fascination with the newspaper.

Even if reading was in my blood, I wouldn't have figured it out without Catholic school. Those schools were as serious about education as they were about religion! At

first I resented all the reading. One could say that I found other ways to repent, and I spent more than my fair share of time visiting the principal's office (I wasn't a bad kid, I just happened to get into *situations*). But looking back, I have to thank my strict teachers. They straightened me out (on many occasions), squeezed me into a uniform, and poured on the homework. At some point, I actually started to enjoy the homework I had to do in English, science, and math every night.

By the time I was old enough for high school, I actually *chose* to go to a Catholic school and put on a shirt, jacket, tie, and creased slacks every morning. I truly enjoyed Mr. Coburn's "Introduction to Science Fiction" class in sophomore year. It opened my mind to a brand-new genre, and it was like the whole multiverse of books expanded in front of me! I can still remember exactly what we read. Without that class, I don't think I would be the attorney I am today.

Why? Well, here's the thing: Law school is like English class on steroids. You have



"I hate to say it, but most attorneys are like kids who refuse to do their homework."

to crush hundreds of pages of information every week to pass your first year. Those high school lectures took away my fear of reading and created an excitement for it that was absolutely critical. They were my training ground. Thanks to them I could consume page after page of my case books and boil the message down to the essentials.

Not only could I do it, I *actually liked it*. Today, I'm reading as much as I ever did. I hate to say it, but many attorneys are like kids who refuse to do their homework. They don't take the time to read the latest cases, rule changes, and new procedures. But thanks to the habits instilled in me as a kid, I always come to "class" prepared. It gives me an edge.

For that, I have to thank my dad and all my teachers who pushed me to be better. They weren't focused on who I was but who I could become.

-Carmen Dellutri

P.S. — I read for fun, too. I almost always have three books and an audiobook going. Stay tuned for my book recommendations in next month's newsletter.

If you know someone who would like a copy of this newsletter, please visit this link to add them to our mailing list: DellutriLawGroup.com/resources/newsletters

Car Accidents Can Happen to Anyone Even Attorneys!



Almost everyone has a scary story about a car accident or a near-miss – including attorneys! Here's something that happened to our very own Carmen Dellutri just recently:

"I sat working at my desk when Attorney David Fineman told me he needed to take his car in for service, and he asked me to follow him and bring him back to the office. 'Sure, no problem, I'll be right behind you.' At least, that's what I thought. I drove southbound in the left lane of a three-lane road, with no one in front of me. Then, out of nowhere, a car came from a side road on my right and tried to cut across three lanes of traffic to make a U-turn. I drive a big, black pickup truck – there's no way she couldn't see me. As her car zoomed from out of my blind spot, I slammed on my brakes as quickly as I could, but it was too late. CRASH! As if this wasn't enough, her insurance company tried to blame me for the accident. BAD IDEA."

We hear stories like this every day. There you were, minding your own business, safely cruising down U.S. 41, I-75, I-4, or any number of other local roads, just trying to get from point A to point B. And then, all of a sudden, BAM! Out of nowhere, your car spins out of control, and it feels like your whole world has been rocked. Or, you're stopped at a red light, rocking along to Bon Jovi, Jason Aldean, or talk radio, and a careless "multitasker" who's texting while driving rear-ends you. Even worse, you're hit by one of the countless irresponsible drunk drivers who turns their car into a weapon of mass destruction, with total disregard for their own life and the lives of everyone on the road.

We could go on, but we think you get the point. Now, you may see why we aggressively go after drunk and distracted drivers. You know as well as we do that Florida highways are dangerous, and they get worse every year. We like to think (and sometimes even joke) that the snowbirds are the real problem causing all the traffic and accidents. But, let's be honest for a minute; even out of season, we have a ridiculous number of distracted drivers on our roads at any given time. We see them driving, cellphone in hand as if it is glued to their fingers, just waiting for that all-important text.

When should I hire an attorney after a car accident?

The insurance company will begin working on your claim immediately after the accident takes place. When the person they are insuring seems to be liable, they will undoubtedly try to shift the blame to the other driver to minimize the payout. It is essential, therefore, that you speak with an attorney as soon as possible after the accident.

If you are unsure of whether you should hire an attorney to represent you, here are some scenarios in which you absolutely need to reach out to an attorney at once:

- You suffered injuries or substantial vehicle damage
- Another party's actions contributed to your injuries
- You suffered injuries that are severe and permanent
- The accident was fatal

Passion Project Spotlight

What are the DLG Passion Projects?

Great question! Each employee at The Dellutri Law Group is granted the opportunity to select one organization each year they are passionate about. With over 20 years in the community, multiple offices throughout Florida, and a large social media presence, we are dedicated to helping support our team's chosen charities by increasing awareness, promoting their events, and volunteering when we can.

When we were introduced to Laurie with BikerDown, we knew it was a Passion Project we wanted firm-wide. We do have a few of those!

BikerDown is a nonprofit organization established to assist motorcycle accident victims, something very near and dear to our hearts as a personal injury law firm. As much as we want to help those victims with everything life throws at them, sometimes our hands are tied with what we can and cannot assist with. That is where BikerDown comes in! While we fight on the legal side, Laurie and her team provide emotional support to family members of injured or killed riders. They even offer medical equipment and financial advice about things such as how to communicate the financial difficulties with landlords or how to cut cost in budgets to make it through until our team can legally help with reimbursements.

Every biker has a story about a friend or loved one who went down. Most can tell you about a biker whose life was changed forever due to injuries, job loss, or even loss of a home. BikerDown aims to minimize these losses and help riders and their families manage whatever changes come their way after an accident.

Should you find yourself in need of BikerDown's assistance, you can submit a "Help Request" on their website at BikerDown.org.



Summer Vegetable Greek Salad

Inspired by CookieAndKate.com

INGREDIENTS

For the vinaigrette:

- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp honey
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

For the salad:

- 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 small cucumber, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/4 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- Optional protein choices: 1 cup cooked chickpeas or 6 oz Genoa salami

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together vinegar, mustard, garlic, oregano, honey, and salt. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil, whisking until well combined.
2. In a large serving bowl, toss together the romaine lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, red onion, parsley, olives, and feta (as well as the chickpeas or salami, if desired).
3. If you plan to serve all the salad at once, drizzle the dressing over the salad to lightly coat, then toss to combine. Otherwise, store the vinaigrette and salad separately, then dress each portion before serving.

Testimonial

Our Clients Say It Best

"My husband and I were involved in a traffic accident. Amanda Downing was recommended to us, and I am so glad we called her. She explained everything to us and got us started. All of our questions were answered. Both she and her staff kept us informed along the way. I would recommend her to anyone needing a personal injury lawyer."

–D.S.

THANK YOU!

A Huge Thank-You to Our Referral Partners!

Last month we had ...

- 39 referrals from friends, family, or previous clients
- 23 returning clients for a new matter
- 18 referrals from other attorneys
- 4 referrals from other professionals in town
- **We sent out 87 referrals**

Creating a Proactive Riding Culture

The biggest plea BikerDown makes to prospective members is to get the right insurance. We bikers have a culture of "It won't happen to me." Riders don't want anyone to be a "Debbie Downer" or feel they are being jinxed by talking about accidents. But accidents do happen and the best thing a rider can do – for themselves and their families – is be proactive and have the right insurance. The right insurance means you don't have to worry if your accident is caused by a hit or run or hope an offending auto driver has enough insurance.

Learn more about BikerDown memberships at BikerDown.org/join-us.

What's the Good News?

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11