



THE SHUTTLESWORTH SENTINEL

Personal Injury
Product Liability
Wrongful Death
Nursing Home Abuse/Neglect
Assisted Living Abuse/Neglect

THEY'RE OUR CLOSEST SIDEKICKS AND WE'RE THEIR ENTIRE WORLD

Why I Adore My Dogs

If you've been into our office for any reason lately, there's a chance you might have met Gigi or Biko. Everyone at the office loves them — because who doesn't love dogs? Gigi is an 8-year-old wheaten terrier, who is basically like a third child to me. Biko is the newest canine addition to my family, and he's a year-old black Russian terrier. Though he may look scary, he's one of the sweetest dogs in the world. I have a third dog as well, a 16-year-old terrier mix named Mr. Sniffers, but he usually stays home with my wife while she works.

I've always loved animals of all kinds. I grew up with dogs and goats, and my family has had dogs, cats, rabbits, and chickens, too. We love all living things, to the point where instead of squishing a bug in the house, we'll catch it and release it outside. Unless it's a cockroach or a mosquito. We kill those.

That said, though, dogs have always been a core part of my family. I've rarely been without a dog in my life, from the time that I was 8–10 years old until now. My dogs have constantly been my sidekicks. My daughters grew up with dogs and adored them just as much as I did. Whenever they FaceTime to talk to me from their respective cities, they always ask to see the dogs, too.

Now that my daughters are out of the house, though, my dogs have taken on an even greater role for my wife and me. When your kids are gone, it's nice to have dogs to take on trips, hikes, and out to eat at dog-friendly restaurants! All three of our dogs (even 16-year-old Mr. Sniffers) love to hike. Anytime they see me get my boots or pack out, they hang on me until they know we're hitting the trails.

All in all, our dogs are just part and parcel of everything we do. They bring us so much joy, and I know any other dog owner would say the same. However, I heard something about dogs once that has kind of changed my perspective

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on dog ownership: As important as our dogs are to us (or any of our pets, for that matter), to them, we're the entire world. And for that reason, our dogs deserve the best possible treatment from us.

When we moved our practice to a different building a while back, one of my conditions for the new space was that I had to be able to bring my dogs into the office. I bring Gigi and Biko in on most days, and at this point, they've basically become the office dogs. People in my office and the law firm with whom we share the office space know them and love bringing them treats. They even get their own little stockings at Christmas!

That said, the real reason I love having my dogs around at the office is because the nature of my work means that I'm around people who have suffered tragedy and loss. While dogs can't fix everything about a person's situation, having Biko or Gigi around does seem to comfort some of our clients. Dogs can tell when people are hurting.

So, if for any reason you're coming into our office soon, be sure to say hello to Gigi and Biko if you get a chance. Whatever the reason for your visit, they'll be happy to see you, and I hope you'll be happy to see them!

-Perry Shuttlesworth

The Legacy of Dale Earnhardt

CONTINUES WITH SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS IN RACING

Known as “The Intimidator” to sportswriters who loved his rowdy personality and “Ironhead” to opponents who loathed racing against him, Dale Earnhardt Sr. forever changed racing in both his life and tragic death on Feb. 18, 2001, during the final lap of the Daytona 500. Today, Earnhardt’s legacy lives on through the racing triumphs of his descendants, like Dale Earnhardt Jr., and the safety protocols his death inspired.

Earnhardt was born into a racing family in 1951 and made his NASCAR debut in 1975. He went on to win 34 races at the sport’s most popular track in Daytona, Florida, and record 76 career wins. Earnhardt’s style of racing was unparalleled, and most fans will never forget the 2000 race at Talladega Superspeedway where he barreled from 18th into first place over the final six laps.

On that fateful day in 2001, Earnhardt was racing toward the finish line on the final lap — a first-place finish in his sights — when he collided with three other vehicles, rammed into the concrete barrier, and slid to a stop in the infield. Earnhardt was pronounced dead at the hospital that evening, the result of a skull fracture that happened within 80 milliseconds of the initial impact.

Almost immediately, NASCAR made sweeping changes to the sport, including requiring drivers to wear a head and neck support (HANS) device along with their helmet to stabilize the body in an accident. It was a device that Earnhardt refused to wear due to its restraint and one that potentially could have saved his life had he been wearing it.

The organization also instituted improved outer barriers and seat belts. (It was previously believed that a seat belt malfunction led to Earnhardt’s death.) Along with those improvements, NASCAR continues to update its safety measures. According to ESPN, the sport has also required drivers to wear full-face helmets, and vehicles are now outfitted with shock-absorbing foam to protect drivers’ bodies from the energy produced in an accident.

The work NASCAR did to improve driver safety was on full display at the 2020 Daytona 500, when racer Ryan Newman’s vehicle hit the wall, flipped upside down, and was then propelled into the air before landing in the infield. The accident was horrific, and Newman had to seek treatment at a nearby hospital — but he lived.

“Those people,” Newman said to ESPN about those who made safety regulations a standard in the sport, “collectively saved my life.”



Don't Let the Aversion to Suing Someone

Keep You From Exercising Your Right to Compensation

There are plenty of reasons you might suddenly decide not to file a personal injury lawsuit and claim compensation for injuries from an accident. Many of those reasons might be legitimate, but you should never give up on a personal injury lawsuit because you’re “not the kind of person that would sue someone.”

In our culture, there’s a sort of aversion to suing someone, even if it’s to collect damages for an accident the party you’re suing caused. You might think suing someone is equal to taking money out of their pockets and putting it in your own. However, this isn’t true. In fact, the only parties that benefit from this point of view are the insurance companies.

When you file a lawsuit against someone, you’re not actually suing them directly — you’re suing their insurance company. The insurance company is the actual source of the settlement, not the person who caused your injuries. So, while suing someone might conjure up images of you effectively stealing their house and their life savings, in reality, 99% of the time, the at-fault party won’t lose a dime out of their pocket.

As an example, whenever you see headlines like “Wife sues husband for injuries in car accident,” or “Brother sues sister for dog bite,” look a little deeper into the story. While it might seem like a scummy thing to do, suing a family member, it could be that the husband and wife, or the brother and sister have different insurance providers, and filing a lawsuit is their way of getting compensated for their injuries by the at-fault party’s provider — all without the at-fault person losing any money. In fact, in many of those cases, both parties are supportive of the lawsuit!

So, if you ever find yourself in an accident, don’t shy away from filing a lawsuit just because you don’t want to “take all of someone’s money.” All you’ll be doing is waiving your right to receive compensation for your injuries and letting the insurance company continue to hoard your compensation in their coffers. If you need help getting started on filing a lawsuit, call Shuttlesworth Law Firm today at (205) 322-1411.

What Is an Expert Witness?



And How Can They Help Your Case?

Understandably, car accidents and work accidents lead to situations where most people feel out of their element. If it's the first major accident they've been in, it no doubt left them disoriented as to what happened and with injuries they didn't fully understand. How then, can you reconcile your lack of knowledge with the fact that a successful personal injury lawsuit is dependent on concrete evidence and facts? That's where expert witnesses can come in handy.

An expert witness is a person whose expertise in a certain field permits them to testify in court when that field is relevant to the case. If an expert witness testifies on your behalf, it could go a long way in convincing a judge and jury that you deserve compensation. Common expert witnesses include accident reconstructionists, economists, and health care professionals.

These experts can impact the amount of compensation you receive in a number of ways. The aftermath of an auto accident is chaotic,

but accident reconstructionists can go back over police reports and witness statements as well as visit the site of the crash to determine exactly what happened on the day of your accident. Health care professionals can testify to the severity of your injuries and to the procedures that would be necessary to get you back to full health. Economists can accurately determine how much earning potential you lost while you were away from work.

In the courtroom, both sides may present expert witnesses to back up their side of the story, so having access to experts who can testify on your behalf can really help you in your legal battle against the other party. Similarly, having an expert legal team who understands the nuances of filing personal injury lawsuits and representing clients in court can help you get fairly compensated for injuries and lost wages.

If you need expert legal help for your personal injury case, call Shuttlesworth Law Firm at (205) 322-1411 today, or contact us through our website at ShuttlesworthLasseter.com to get a free consultation.

STRANGE FACTOID

ANCIENT BAND-AIDS FROM OUR 8-LEGGED FRIENDS



Long before gauze was invented, and Band-Aids with your kids' favorite cartoon characters were available at the nearest convenience store, back in Ancient Greece and Rome, doctors used something very peculiar to bandage their patients' wounds: spider webs.

While that might sound gross to you, it's been speculated that spider webs have natural antiseptic and antifungal properties. It's also said that they are a rich source of vitamin K, which helps with clotting.

Today, we associate spider webs more with filth and decrepit environments, but ancient doctors had to work with what they had at the time. So, be extra thankful that whenever you accidentally cut yourself with a kitchen knife, you can head to the medicine cabinet — and not to your crawlspace!

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TAKE A BREAK

SOLUTION

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1	9	8	4	7	6	8	8
8	0	8	1	5	7	2	2
5	7	1	9	2	8	4	8
6	1	4	5	8	7	3	8
9	4	1	3	6	2	5	1
3	2	0	8	9	3	7	6
7	5	8	5	2	1	8	4



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In Defense of Relaxation

Why You Need to Take Your Vacation Days

If you're one of the 50% of Americans who would prefer a higher salary over paid vacation days, then the thought of relaxing by the pool probably makes your skin crawl. According to a 2019 Allianz Global Assistance survey, most Americans would only give up their vacation days for a 48% raise, but as Forbes reports, about 1 in 5 workers would only need a 24% raise to willingly fork over their vacation days.

The rise of what experts are calling "performative workaholism" is evident in the hustle-and-grind culture of working long hours, skipping lunches, working throughout the weekend, and taking very few breaks. But medical and psychological experts caution that addiction to the hustle comes at a price.

Recent evidence suggests that working long hours over extended periods of time actually makes

you a worse employee. As exhaustion creeps in, your ability to complete even the most mundane or simple task decreases. In those moments, it's important to take a short break, but it's also vital to recognize when your body needs an extended refresher. This could make you better at your job. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Luxembourg, Ireland, and Norway have some of the world's most productive workers. Coincidentally, they also provide many vacation days.

So, what's great about taking a vacation? Experts at a Midwestern hospital system, Allina Health, report that stepping away from work for a short period of time can decrease your risk of heart disease, improve your quality of sleep, create a better mood, and boost your relationships.

Researchers in the Netherlands even found that simply planning for and anticipating a vacation can improve your happiness level!

If you can't stand the thought of taking time off, you're not alone. More than 40% of respondents in a 2016 survey said they felt they couldn't take a vacation because there wasn't anyone to cover for them. Communicate your concerns with your employer to find a compromise.

Start slow, too. Schedule a long weekend and pack your days with activities, like getting a massage, hiking, or traveling to a local destination. Look to travel sites like Expedia, Airbnb, and Travelocity for local deals and tips on the best vacation methods. Soon, you'll be the biggest advocate for taking time off.