



RUSSELL & LAZARUS APC
PERSONAL INJURY TRIAL ATTORNEYS

Exclusively handling serious and catastrophic personal injury claims as well as wrongful death claims due to the negligence of individuals or business entities.



The Right Help When You Need It Most!

Spring/Summer 2017

- Auto Collisions
- Motorcycle Collisions
- Bicycle Collisions
- Trip/Slip and Fall Accidents
- Construction Site Accidents
- Elder Abuse Claims
- Brain Trauma Claims
- Wrongful Death Claims

THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY'S NEW BEST FRIEND: SOCIAL MEDIA!

By Christopher Russell

The number one goal of an insurance defense attorney in any personal injury claim is to destroy the credibility of the injured person to where a jury will not believe anything that comes out of the mouth of the injured person. They do this in a variety of ways such as showing inconsistencies in medical records or inconsistencies with what the injured party may have said 2-3 years prior (in most cases it takes at least that long to get to trial).

However, where an injured party really has an opportunity to destroy his or her own claim is by way of postings on social media. Statements such as "I had a good time at dinner last night" or "my back is feeling better today" can be taken completely out of context (even family members' comments or postings can be used by a clever insurance defense attorney to put the injured party in a bad light.)

Jurors, in this day and age, are highly suspicious of any personal injury claim, it takes just one out of context comment to literally destroy a legitimate personal injury claim. In one of our recent trials where our client had undergone three shoulder surgeries, which left him with limited functioning of his dominate arm, we had this issue come up. He had lost his job and his wife as a result of his serious injuries. His life was turned completely upside down.

However, when trying to impress a former girlfriend, he posted on Facebook that he was going to the beach and to the mountains and to Disneyland (she lived in Minnesota) when in reality his condition would not allow him to do any of that. The Facebook posting was presented to the jury by the insurance defense attorney which ended up significantly compromising our client's credibility. The end result was an award that was less than half of what was offered prior to trial. By the time the court costs were added up (he had to pay the defense costs as well since he did not beat their final offer) there was no money left for the client, which was a horrible outcome.

JUST SAY NO!

The moral of the story is, and something we tell all of our clients all of the time, if you are seriously hurt and are going to pursue a personal injury claim, just say no to social media postings! To not follow that advice is to put your claim in tremendous jeopardy. In the current environment, where insurance companies will spend ten times as much on defending a claim than paying a claim, help yourself and your attorneys by staying away from all social media postings. The outcome of your claim depends on it.

MEET OUR NEW ATTORNEY: Jorge Ramirez, Esq.



Jorge Ramirez has been practicing law since 2001. But even before that Jorge was a paralegal for several prestigious personal injury law firms. He received his Bachelors of Arts degree in Political Science from California State University Long Beach in 1996, where he was recognized as a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society. Jorge received his Juris Doctor degree from Whittier Law School in 2000, where he was a recipient of the CALI Award of Excellence.

Jorge also studied in Mexico at the University Guanajuato School of Law as a part of a Summer Law Institute. This program was co-sponsored by New Mexico School of Law and Texas Tech School of Law, where he studied International Arbitration, NAFTA, and International Business Law.

Jorge is fluent in Spanish and has volunteered as a guest speaker in English and Spanish at a community-based family resource center known as Families of Costa Mesa. In his capacity as a volunteer, he has lectured and provided self-help materials to indigent and homeless families on issues concerning landlord-tenant law, immigration law, employment law, family law and domestic violence.

Jorge enjoys spending “silly” time with his family, which consists of his wife, Gracie, and his two children, Ashley and Luke. He also enjoys playing golf and attending sporting events. Jorge is an avid follower of professional boxing and has even represented professional fighters previously.

It is clear Jorge enjoys a good fight which is a quality that endears him to our clients and why he is perfect for Russell & Lazarus as one of our lead Litigation Attorneys. Russell & Lazarus is proud to have Jorge in its corner and in the corner of our deserving clients.

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Rory Mills is more than just a first rate, litigation paralegal. He is actually a much appreciated “Jack of all Trades”. Rory works directly with Attorney Stephen Counts (Team Counts) and is responsible for establishing great relationships with both our clients and opposing counsel, drafting and filing all court documents, scheduling treatment for our clients, preparing the case for trial and sometimes even participating in trial as a “second chair” when the schedule does not allow for our typical 2 attorney trial team.

Although all of that is important Rory’s most important role at the firm may be his ability to help with the laughter factor, while also being a positive influence on younger team members.

However, the firm has definitely given back to Rory since Russell & Lazarus is where he met his future wife Mandy! Their wedding is to take place next spring. As Rory reflects, “We were friends for a while until I asked her out on a date after the firm’s Christmas Party. She is my dream girl and best friend!” Mandy left the firm to finish graduate school, and we are proud to say she now works as a Family Therapist with a local school district.

The other love of Rory’s life is his 13 year old daughter, Paetyn, who he likes to “nerd out” with while watching Marvel, Star Wars and Harry Potter movies. As Rory says, “Paetyn is the coolest kid I know and I am soooooo proud of her!”

Rory’s “Jack of all Trades” moniker also extends to his love of classic rock, blues, and jam music. He also loves to cook, which he does often for his family (Mom, Dad, brothers and friends).

Next year will mark Rory’s 5th year with the firm, and it is fitting that he and Mandy will be able to celebrate that milestone together...as husband and wife!



BIG RIGS AND YOUR SAFETY: By Stephen Counts, Esq.



Anyone who has driven close to a big-rig knows it can be a nerve wracking (or downright terrifying) experience. Those trucks weigh an average of 80,000 pounds, and tend to drift into your lane at the most inconvenient times.

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), between 2009 and 2015, the number of fatal crashes involving large trucks has increased by 20% and the number of non-fatal, injury-producing, large truck crashes has increased by a whopping 69%.

In 2013, the FMCSA enacted a new set of safety regulations designed to reduce the number of crashes and make both trucks and truckers safer. Obviously, these new regulations are not having the desired effect.

Sadly and all too often, truck drivers still drive too many hours, suffer distraction due to fatigue, fail to properly inspect their rig, and even abuse drugs and alcohol. Likewise, many trucking companies fail to properly screen and/or train their employees. They often place unrealistic expectations on drivers and even fail to perform regular drug testing. All of these factors, along with an increased number of vehicles on the highway every year, contribute to a mounting number of preventable trucking accidents.

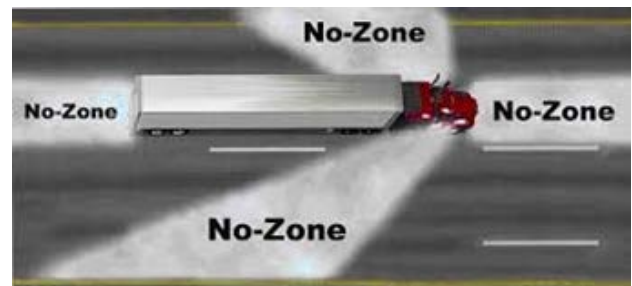
So, what can you do to prevent a big-rig collision? Here are some simple rules to follow:

1. Do not follow a truck too closely.
2. Do not change lanes in front of a truck and then suddenly slow down.
3. Do not pull to the side of a truck that is about to make a right turn.
4. Do not drive in the truck's blind spots. If you cannot see the truck driver, the truck driver probably cannot see you. If you need to pass a large truck, do so quickly. Do not linger in a truck's blind spot for long.

If you or a loved one are involved in a collision with a commercial truck or bus, protect yourself by remembering these five basics:

1. Call 911.
2. Request that the officer or deputy prepare a Traffic Collision Report (not just an "exchange of information").
3. Go to the Emergency Room right away.
4. Obtain contact and insurance information for BOTH the driver and driver's employer.
5. Contact a highly qualified Personal Injury attorney right away for a free consultation.

"The No Zone"



Erica and Kyle's Delicious VEGAN Mac n Cheese

Erica and Kyle are the dynamic duo Brother/Sister team who work in our medical records department. This creative team made this their own!



Ingredients

10 ounces large macaroni shells
3-4 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup raw cashews, soaked for 4-6 hours or overnight, then drain
1 1/2 cups vegetable broth
5 Tbsp cornstarch
1/2 tsp cumin
3/4 tsp chili powder
2 Tbsp nutritional yeast

Directions

1. Boil water and add macaroni;
2. Saute garlic in olive oil with salt and pepper, until soft;
3. In the blender, add the garlic and the rest of the ingredients; blend until smooth and creamy and voila, you have your Cashew Cheese!
4. Drain the noodles, set aside. Put cooked macaroni back in the pot you boiled them in, add the Cashew Cheese and cook on low stirring frequently until it slightly thickens;
5. Serve immediately, topping with crushed toasted tortilla chips and cilantro. Enjoy!





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We are Russell & Lazarus. We provide the highest level of service exclusively to those who have been injured in accidents.

We work diligently each day, offering our clients uncompromising legal assistance and support.

We continually strive to exceed the expectations of those we represent.

We commit to being a positive force in their lives and the communities in which we serve.

..... CASE RESULTS

DEPENDENT ADULT ABUSE

\$590,000 - Settlement on behalf of our disabled, 55-year-old client who was neglected and not provided with proper medical treatment after an injury he suffered while in an adult residential care facility.

PRODUCT LIABILITY

\$555,000 - A jury verdict (3 weeks in trial) on behalf of our 52-year-old client involving a defective chair which caused a partial finger amputation to his right, middle finger.

AUTO ACCIDENT

\$1,250,000 - Settlement on behalf of our 34-year-old client and mother of one, who had to undergo neck surgery after a rear end auto collision. State Farm called our injured client a fraud and offered only \$25,000 until the eve of trial.

..... TESTIMONIALS

Russell & Lazarus are top rate personal injury attorneys. Always ready to help and answer any questions. If I ever need a law firm again it would be Russell & Lazarus. Good Job! "

- Mel M.

"The Russell & Lazarus Team is the best in the personal injury field of practice."

- Mario S.

"Wonderful team that really cares about you as a person. I couldn't recommend anyone better!"

- Lynne H.