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AUG/SEPT 2018

AUTO COLLISIONS | MOTORCYCLE COLLISIONS | BICYCLE COLLISIONS | TRIP/SLIP AND FALL ACCIDENTS
CONSTRUCTION SITE ACCIDENTS | ELDER ABUSE CLAIMS | BRAIN TRAUMA CLAIMS | WRONGFUL DEATH CLAIMS



MY PURSUIT OF LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

Making Sure Regular People Get a Fair Shake

I became an attorney because I saw the opportunities attorneys have to impact people's lives in a positive way. As a kid, I didn't know anyone who was an attorney, but I wanted to be part of that helping club.

I went into the field thinking that I could have that positive impact on people and bring some balance to areas of law where it was needed on behalf of normal people. I knew instinctively that there's always going to be a playing field that's not level when money and power are involved.

I came from fairly humble beginnings; I grew up in a family of eight in a 1,100-square-foot house in Bellflower, California, with one up-to-code bathroom. My dad was a sergeant in the army and then a clerk for the local school district and my mom was a stay-at-home mom. You could say that my family was on the powerless side of things, and I had firsthand knowledge of how people are taken advantage of because of that.

Handling serious personal injury claims on behalf of those injured is an area of law that fits into my personal philosophy that justice should be fair, even if life isn't. Providing our clients with a fair chance to prevail (and then prevailing) is exactly what we accomplish on most claims. When my team is handling a

case, most often it involves a big, powerful insurance company on one side and our "everyday people" clients on the other side. A multibillion-dollar insurance company has all the assets in the world to fight anyone they want to fight. But in many of our clients' cases, the outcome is the same as David and Goliath's.

In order to beat Goliath, it is important to work harder, smarter, and most importantly, for a client who you believe in. That is our secret sauce that allows us to prevail, since we know the attorneys on the other side will never have the same passion that we do when working for a faceless, wealthy insurance company.

Sometimes the odds against us are astronomical, but that's the beauty of going into court with the A-plus courtroom skill set that we possess — it levels the playing field. That level playing field allows us to prevail even if the other side outspends us, as they often do. Trying a case can cost a ton of money. In fact, I tell my friends and family that if they're going to hire an attorney for any area of law, they should shy away from solo practitioners or smaller firms. They just don't have the time or resources to fight the fight that needs to be fought.

As a law firm of six attorneys and 23 total team members, we at Russell & Lazarus can fight the good fight and match the resources of the other side. In the past, we have spent as much as half of a million dollars to get

a good outcome for one of our deserving clients. There are very few trials where we don't spend at least \$100,000 on behalf of our client. If we believe in the case, we'll spend the kind of money to level the playing field even further and give our clients the best opportunity for success.

Most people going into law school have the same ideals as I did — they want to help people and provide justice where justice is missing. But once they leave law school, they often lose sight of those ideals because they get focused on finding a job, having a family — you know, life. We at Russell & Lazarus never lose sight of why we do what we do; not only because it is the right thing to do by our clients, but also because if we lose focus and the case, we don't get paid, because our consumer-friendly contract only allows us to be paid if our clients get compensated. Talk about a true partnership!

The bottom line is that we here at Russell & Lazarus are advocates for anyone seriously injured who needs help obtaining fair compensation. I see on a daily basis how large corporations attempt to control people's lives because they have the money to do so. They attempt to overwhelm the "little people" with their might. It really is the classic David and Goliath tale — and I love being on David's side!

Chris Russell

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THE HAZARDS OF BLUE LIGHT

How to Protect Your Eyes and Minimize Exposure



You may have been warned about blue light and its impending threat to your eyes. It comes from your computer screen, your phone, and even from the sun. Why is this form of light harmful, and how can you keep your eyes safe?

IS BLUE LIGHT A NEW THING?

Blue light occurs in nature and is nothing new. However, because many electronics emit blue light, it's more of an issue now than it was just 10 years ago. Backlit LED screens emit strong blue light waves, so our use of devices like cellphones, tablets, and flat-screen TVs means we are exposed to more blue light than ever before.

WHY ARE EYE DOCTORS WORRIED?

Blue light isn't inherently bad — it's found in sunlight and lightbulbs — but our increased exposure to it might be. Our eyes are pretty good at blocking UV rays but not so good at blocking blue light. Blue light has a higher energy output than other forms of light, so instead of being filtered by the corneas and lenses, almost all of it reaches the more sensitive retinas.

The high energy output of blue light and our eyes' inability to protect the retinas from it appears to cause damage similar to macular degeneration, an eye disease mostly affecting people over 65 that can lead to blindness.

These similarities to macular degeneration have scientists worried that our increased exposure to blue light could lead to more cases of it.

HOW CAN YOU MINIMIZE EXPOSURE?

Many computers and electronic devices have a "night shift" option built into them. Enabling this feature will dim the screen and lower the amount of blue light that your device emits.

There are also removable filters you can put on your computer screen. Brands like RetinaShield/Tech Armor and Eyesafe are designed to limit the amount of blue light your eyes are exposed to.

To avoid eye strain, talk to your eye doctor about blue light glasses. These tinted glasses, which come in prescription and nonprescription versions, reduce the amount of blue light that reaches your eyes.

Remember, blue light itself is just a natural form of light and isn't inherently bad. During the day, it can even be beneficial to get some natural blue light from sunshine — while wearing sunglasses, of course. But it's also a good idea to take precautions to protect your eyes from artificial blue light, especially if your work environment and hobbies expose you to it frequently.

TEAM MEMBER FEATURE

SEAN GOEDINGHAUS A Man of Many Hats

Sean Goedinghaus is an amazing litigation paralegal who has been with Russell & Lazarus for nearly four years. He's highly dedicated to his work and is an expert in assisting attorneys with litigation and trial relation matters.

Before he began working with Russell & Lazarus, Sean worked for a forensic psychology firm. The transition from this career to becoming a litigation paralegal was engaging and rewarding. "I enjoy the challenges," Sean explains. "I do trials now and get thrown into these situations where I have to figure out how to get the best outcome."

Most people don't know Sean has quite a variety of hobbies and interests that make him a very interesting and well-rounded guy.

His hobbies include designing and creating woodwork masterpieces, candle making, working with concrete and masonry, gardening, and cooking. "In 2018, I look forward to taking more formal carpentry classes, playing more golf, and doing indoor rock climbing." He also enjoys pickling vegetables. "I'll just kind of dabble in anything I find interesting or whatever kind of pops into my head." Recently, Sean has been unable to indulge in his hobbies as he's been busy with work and applying to law school. We support his efforts and we know that he will be a great addition to the legal community as an attorney. We foresee that he will accomplish great things in the years to come.

Sean's passion for challenges and his creativity in solving problems is reflected in the projects he takes on. When talking with him about a coffee table project he is working on, Sean told us, "It started out as a headboard for my bed, but it's a little unwieldy. I got tired of mounting it on the wall, but I didn't want to get rid of it because I put so much work into it. So I popped a custom glass piece in the middle, and now it's a coffee table."

Sean is also interested in men's fashion and will frequently go to thrift stores or swap meets to find vintage clothes that are otherwise unavailable. He is touted as the "best dressed" due to his impeccable sense of style. One of his best finds was a leather Members Only jacket. "I had been looking for one for several years before finally finding one."

Sean also has an impressive vinyl record collection and attends concerts as often as he can. Most important, though, are his friends. "I have the best friends anyone could ask for," Sean says proudly, "and as a young single person without any family in the area, I love spending as much time with them as possible."



KRIS J. O'CONNELL

A Hard-Working Team Member, Veteran, and Father

Kris J. O'Connell is a veteran of the United States Air Force. While serving in the Air Force, he obtained a Bachelor of Science in technical management from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. After completing his enlistment, he worked as an electronics technician repairing oil tankers up and down the West Coast of the United States and Canada.

After graduating with honors from Western State University School of Law in December 2013, it was only a few months later that Mr. O'Connell was admitted into the California State Bar. Prior to his employment at Russell and Lazarus, he was house counsel for one of the world's largest insurance carriers. As house counsel, Mr. O'Connell handled over a hundred personal injury claims. It's this experience that has allowed him to learn the insurance



companies' defensive strategies and tactics. His understanding of insurance companies' procedures has allowed Mr. O'Connell to successfully litigate and settle claims on behalf of many of our clients.

When he's not in the office, he enjoys spending quality time with his family. Mr. O'Connell enjoys getting as involved as he can with his kids' extracurricular activities. He coaches his son's football team and encourages his daughter's love of softball. When he has time to himself, he enjoys playing ice hockey.

RECENT CASES

LAZARUS RAISES A CASE FROM THE DEAD

Marc Lazarus recently saved a case from being lost due to a prior law firm's failure to prosecute the case.

An injured woman who was frustrated with her previous attorney contacted the Law Offices of Russell and Lazarus to step in and help her with her case. Unbeknownst to the client, the prior attorney allowed the court to dismiss her case, leaving her without a recovery. Once Marc Lazarus got involved, he learned of the dismissal from the court, and he worked tirelessly to get the court to set aside the dismissal before time ran out to do so. After Mr. Lazarus resurrected the case from the dead, the Law Offices of Russell and Lazarus was able to achieve a spectacular \$100,000 policy-limit settlement on a disputed liability case.

Auto Accident \$300,000 — Settlement on behalf of our 49-year-old client. She suffered delayed-onset neck pain after a moderate head-on collision.

Excessive Force \$400,000 — Verdict after a four-week trial, Fenja Klaus and Jorge Ramirez and their team obtained justice for our client who was illegally injured by a grocery store security.



RORY GOT MARRIED!

Litigation Paralegal Rory Mills and his lovely bride, Mandy Culler, were married on March 10th at the beautiful Franciscan Gardens in San Juan Capistrano, CA.

They spent their honeymoon on a Mediterranean cruise in July, where they visited Spain, France, Monte Carlo, and Italy.

They met at Russell & Lazarus, and their many friends from the firm were able to celebrate the special day with the couple.

LYNNE'S FAVORITE RECIPES

From Lynne Powers, our Marketing Director

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 ounces store-bought waffle cones, lightly crushed
- 1 1/2 cups oats
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 large egg yolk

INGREDIENTS

1. Heat oven to 350 F. While oven is heating, cook butter in saucepan over medium heat until browned, 5–8 minutes. Scrape browned butter into a heatproof measuring glass.
2. Pulse waffle cones, oats, flour, and salt in a food processor or blender. Once cones are finely ground, add brown sugar and pulse again.
3. Whisk egg yolk, vanilla, and 2 tablespoons water in a small bowl.
4. Add egg mixture to food processor while spinning on low. Once integrated, slowly add browned butter; blend until dough forms a solid mass around blades.
5. Form dough into 26 balls and place 2 inches apart on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Flatten balls and bake 12–15 minutes or until edges begin to brown.
6. Let cool, then spread ice cream between cookies to make sandwiches.
7. Freeze for up to 5 days — or enjoy today!

OATMEAL COOKIE ICE CREAM SANDWICHES



- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 pints ice cream (any flavor)



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Invest in Movie Nights

PARENTS WATCH FREE

Is a Movie Pass Right for Your Family?

Superheroes, robots, and dinosaurs, oh my! The 2018 blockbuster season is in full swing, and chances are your kids don't want to miss out on the action. But these days, going to the movies costs an arm and a leg — and that's before you buy the popcorn.

One service is looking to change this. If you've watched the news at all in the last year, chances are you've heard the buzz about Movie Pass. It's a subscription service in which one user pays \$7.95 a month in exchange for three free movie tickets or \$9.95 for one free ticket per day at participating theaters. While initially envisioned for college students and film aficionados, could Movie Pass be right for your family?

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

The first thing you should do when considering whether to sign up for the

pass is research which theaters in your area take the pass and which don't. If you have to make a long drive just to get to a participating theater, it's probably not worth subscribing.

ARE YOU A MOVIE FAMILY?

Do you go to the movies often as a family? Or do you and your spouse need more date-night options? With the \$9.95 monthly subscription fee, as long as the pass holder in your family sees *more* than one movie a month, you are saving money. This can be a great encouragement to see more films, whether as a family or individually.

IS 3D A MUST?

The one catch of Movie Pass is that it will only get you into standard 2D movies. If you and the family want the 3D experience, you'll have to pay for it separately.



If enough theaters in your area participate, your family enjoys going to the movies, and you're not set on seeing 3D movies, Movie Pass can be a great investment. But if the answer is no to any of these questions, you're probably better off just buying tickets at the box office.