



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!

December 2019

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



As we transition from the 2010s into the 2020s, I find myself reflecting on this past decade. Whenever I think back over the years, my thoughts immediately turn to my family. To a certain degree, many of us think about family when we're asked to reflect on certain aspects of life. Our family members are the most important connections we have. The people who are constantly around us, who we love, and who are important to us are always on our minds.

But family is more than our "blood" relations. It's so much more than our parents, sisters, brothers, cousins, aunts, and uncles. Family is also our close friends who we've made over the years and the people we see every day in the workplace.

Every team member at Russell & Lazarus is a part of the family here. Whenever I think about family, I always think about the people I come home to every day after work, as well as the people I get to spend the majority of my days with. The people who have been with me for years and the people who have

A TIME FOR REFLECTION

Acknowledging the People We Hold Closest to Our Hearts

worked with us, whether clients or past coworkers, have always stayed connected, and I believe they always will.

I appreciate and care for not only every person I've met at Russell & Lazarus but also for my many close friends. I have some good friends I've been close to since high school who I've known for about 50 years. They've always been there with me to laugh and just have a good time, and I think that is what's really important about family. When you have people to experience and share the great moments in life with, it creates a sense of belonging and warmth. If someone doesn't have a family to share the good and the bad with, then life becomes a bit hollow.

I have a nephew and niece who were involved in a serious car accident a while ago. They couldn't take care of themselves well and were struggling to get to their doctor's appointments. Seeing this, the people around them jumped in to help. It was incredibly heartwarming to see how the family rallied around them. Aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, and parents all came forward to help in any way we could by visiting them in the hospital, making sure they could get around, and supporting them.

In my profession, I've seen what it's like when people don't have these connections, and it's heartbreaking. Far too often, there are people who don't have family, and we see how hard it is for them when they can't even get from place to place on their own. As I mentioned before, the people in our

"The people who are constantly around us, who we love, and who are important to us are always on our minds."

workplace are part of our family, including our clients. To ensure that every person here is supported and cared for, my team and I step up to help. One way we do this is through a shared Uber account that our clients can use, giving them transportation to their doctor's offices or other necessary appointments.

Family takes care of one another through everything we face in life. It's what gives life flavor and makes it worth living. Our family, no matter if it's the family we're born into, the people we surround ourselves with, or the people we work alongside, is worth celebrating. This is a time to reflect back on the people who've been there for you and what you've accomplished with these wonderful individuals by your side.

I am very, very grateful for the life I have and the family I have around me, be it my blood family, my friends who became my family, or my work family.

— Chris Russell



MEET THE WORLD'S FIRST AIRPORT THERAPY PIG

How Lilou and Animals Like Her
Calm Stressed-Out Travelers



Imagine you're navigating a vast airport on a busy Saturday, shouldering your way through crowds and struggling to hear the PA system over the clatter of 1,000 wheeled suitcases. Suddenly, you see a pig wearing a hot pink sweater waddling toward you on a leash. Do you stop in your tracks? Does your stress level drop? Do you laugh out loud when you see its pink nail polish?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, then you can sympathize with the passengers, pilots, flight attendants, and staff at the San Francisco International Airport. They get to enjoy visits from Lilou, the world's first airport therapy pig, on a regular basis! As part of the Wag Brigade, the airport's cadre of (mostly canine) therapy animals, Lilou wanders the airport with her humans, bringing joy, peace, and calm to everyone she meets.

Lilou may be the only pig of her kind, but airport therapy animals have been a growing trend for the last few years. According to NPR, as of 2017, more than 30 airports across the U.S. employed therapy dogs, and these days, estimates land closer to 60. The San Jose and Denver airports have therapy cats, and the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport even offers passengers the chance to play with miniature horses before boarding their flights.

Therapy dogs started appearing in U.S. airports after the 9/11 terror attacks, which changed American attitudes about flying. They did so well at helping passengers calm down that airports began implementing permanent programs. Some have pets on hand 24/7 to assist passengers, while others host animal visits every few weeks or months. These days, regular travelers have fallen hard for their local therapy animals, many of whom even have their own Instagram accounts and hashtags.

So, the next time you're traveling, keep an eye out for a friendly pup, cat, pig, or horse to pet. A bit of love from an animal just might improve your trip!

TEAM MEMBER FEATURE

Roxy Medina

A Thriving Case Manager

Outside of Russell & Lazarus, Roxy Medina is a diligent and caring mother for her 2-year-old son, Liam. The two spend as much time as they can together, often heading to the park to spend a day playing or relaxing in the company of family and friends. In the office, Roxy is hard at work as one of our fantastic case managers, ensuring that our clients' cases are taken care of.

Although Roxy didn't have any family in the law field, she found herself interested in the subject. While in school, one of her friends gave her the opportunity to start working as a clerk for a law firm. While working there, she met Sam Mendez, who was working at the same firm at the time. Roxy ended up taking a break from work when she had

Liam to spend some time with him and then began looking to reapply at another firm.

Sam, who was now working on our team as a case manager, recommended that Roxy apply to our firm. "It was a great fit," she says. "Helping people has always been something I wanted to do, and everyone here is really wonderful. I feel like I got onto this path by chance, and since I've continued down it, I've been very thankful."

Since joining our team, Roxy has grown tremendously. "I originally started as a pre-litigation clerk," she remembers. "Then, Chris and Marc gave me the opportunity to

become a case manager. There's been a lot of learning involved, something I don't think I ever thought I would have the chance to do, and I love every step. Everyone has been very supportive and helpful with everything; it's been a wonderful experience."

We're all delighted to have such an eager to learn and wonderful person on our team! Thanks, Roxy!



CASE STUDY

Catastrophic Injuries: Is There a Case?

Our office recently took a client who had gone through a terrible, life-changing event. Our client, "Steve," was driving his minivan home one night after having just gone to a party with his wife and kids. The family had a wonderful time, but things suddenly took a turn for the worse when they veered off the road and into a ditch. The top left side of the vehicle was crushed due to the crash, leaving Steve with a permanent eye injury.

Steve reached out to our office, and at the time, no one had a reason to suspect anyone was responsible for the situation in which Steve found himself. When we took his case,

our team's aim was to reserve his rights. In California, it is required to file a case within six months of an injury against a governmental entity — either the state or the county. In doing so, we placed his vehicle in an evidence garage, which gave us the opportunity to dig a little deeper into the case. We wanted to see if there was any liability we could take. As it turns out, there was.

When our team evaluates a case that comes through our doors, the first thing we look at is the significance of the injuries sustained in the incident. In cases with catastrophic injuries involved, such as paralysis, wrongful death, or another terrible injury that will impact a person for the rest of their life, we look into the case carefully. We need to see if there's an avenue for recovery for our client, and the only way an attorney can correctly judge this is through experience. Luckily, we were able to do this for Steve.

At the time it was built, the vehicle Steve used met the industry standards in regard to sturdiness. However, there were records of several other people who had been in accidents and hurt in the same manner Steve had been: from the top left part of



the vehicle collapsing. Due to the steps we took, we filed a lawsuit against the manufacturer of the vehicle and resolved his case for \$1.5 million. This will go a long way toward helping Steve and his family recover from this dreadful incident.

Working with a firm that has the experience and knowledge to take the steps you need is essential for your case, even if you don't believe you have a claim. If you've been injured in an accident, you'll need that support. Call Russell & Lazarus today at 949-851-0222.



CHEERS!

Wishing you a very happy New Year's! May your new year be filled with joy and happiness.

From all of us at Russell & Lazarus

THE FLUFFIEST BLUEBERRY PANCAKES: A FAMILY FAVORITE!

By Perla Rojas, Our "Newlywed" Receptionist

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/3 cups + 1 tbsp premade pancake mix (either store bought or homemade: see website below)

WET INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

FOR BLUEBERRY PANCAKES

- Extra butter for the griddle, melted
- 2 pints blueberries, washed and dried

FOR SERVING

- Maple syrup
- Extra blueberries
- More butter



DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk pancake mix in a large bowl to make sure there are no lumps.
2. Add all wet ingredients into another large bowl. Whisk until well combined.
3. Add half of the wet ingredients to the pancake mix and gently combine. Add the rest and mix until batter is mostly smooth. Do not over-mix, as this will result in rubbery pancakes. Allow the batter to rest for about 5 minutes.
4. Heat the griddle to medium-high heat. When it's hot, brush it with some melted butter.
5. Pour about 1/2 cup of batter on to the griddle per pancake, and do not spread the batter. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of blueberries over each pancake. Let the pancakes cook for about 3 minutes or until the edges are set and the bottom is golden brown.
6. Flip the pancake over and cook for 3–4 minutes until golden brown.
7. Serve with maple syrup, extra blueberries, and butter.

(Homemade Pancake Mix:
TheFlavorBender.com/homemade-pancake-mix-or-homemade-waffle-mix)



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As One Decade Ends, Another Begins

Meet the World's First Airport Therapy Pig

Team Member Spotlight

The Experience You Need in an Attorney

The Fluffiest Blueberry Pancakes

Enter 2020 With an Organized Computer



Super Lawyers®

CTRL, ALT, DELETE YOUR CLUTTER

— Tips for National Clean Up Your Computer Month —

Everyone relies on technology. Computers, laptops, tablets, and phones are staples of modern life. However, it's easy for these devices to become cluttered with old photos, files, and general disorganization. Luckily, January is National Clean Up Your Computer Month and an excellent time to get your technology in order.

START BY DUSTING

Over time, computer towers can become clogged with dust, which creates additional, unwanted heat within your computer. Regular cleanings will increase the lifespan of your computer and protect its essential components. Compressed air is great for removing most of the dust and other particulates. If the fans or filters are too dirty, you can remove them from the tower to clean them better. If you use water or liquid cleaning products on them, be

sure they are completely dry before placing them back into your computer.

ORGANIZE YOUR FILES

Naming and arranging the files on your computer in such a way that they're easy for you to find can end up saving you a lot of time. Declutter your workspace by creating one file for pictures, one for Word documents, one for spreadsheets, and one for programs to eliminate the hassle of frantically searching for the files you need.

BACK UP YOUR COMPUTER

Be sure to back up your computer before you start deleting things. This acts as a safety net in case you delete something you didn't mean to. Additionally, consider installing a second hard drive. The extra space can help with storing important files without having to worry about how much room is left.



CLEAN UP SPACE

Any files you'll never use again should be deleted. Likewise, any programs you haven't used in a while should be uninstalled. Check your hard drive for files that might be taking up unintended space on your computer. And remember to empty the recycling bin — it's easy to forget just how much goes in there.