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BRIEF

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FRANK'S COLUMN

FIRED UP TO HELP OUR CLIENTS IN 2020

How many times are we going to hear, "I can't believe it's 2020"? Remember when you would write checks and put the wrong year on them until about April? Now our iPhones do all of that updating for us. And yes, now it's been 20 years since Y2K.

As an optimist, I'm pretty enthusiastic about every new year - I don't even know why, but maybe that's what makes me an optimist.

Maybe it's because our work brings us together with some amazing people who teach us so much about life: sacrifice, overcoming obstacles, caring for someone, and never giving up. It's hard not to be optimistic when you're surrounded by the types of people we attract as our clients.

And special thanks to our team: Brooke, Priscilla, Chris, Nick, Edvin, and Kiana. This is a tough, demanding business with a lot at stake. Every one of them is a superstar, but the real secret is that, in their hearts, they are fired up to help people.

All the best in 2020!

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JANUARY 2020

CHOOSING FORGIVENESS OVER BITTERNESS

A DIFFICULT JOURNEY TO WALK



For 25 years, all we've ever done is help people recover from severe life-changing injuries after a bad accident or injury. We've also walked alongside those whose family members have been seriously injured, or died in an accident.

Still, it is so hard to forgive someone who harmed us. That's why Ms. Ford-Holmes' story is so striking — from the moment we met with her on the case, we could tell her case would be different. This is her story.

"Ever since I was a little girl, I could never stay mad at someone who wronged me. If I got in a fight with another girl at school, the next day we would be talking and laughing like nothing happened. My parents raised my siblings and me to be people who didn't hold on to anger, and as a Christian, I strive to forgive others as God forgave me for the things I've done wrong.

"Earlier this year, on the evening of April 17, my husband, Barry, was working as a flagger for a construction company here in Washington D.C., where some road work was being done. A young man came up to him wanting to cross the street, but Barry asked him not to cross because the pavement was still wet. This made the man very angry, and he pulled out a gun, shot my husband in the chest, and killed him. The next morning, I got the news that Barry had died in the hospital.

"That was the most horrific news I'd ever received. In the days that immediately followed, the pain was incomprehensible, and I couldn't make heads or tails of anything. All I could do was just plead with the Lord that He would grant me peace. I tried so hard to be angry at the man who killed my husband. I had every right to be furious, but I just couldn't hold on to it — so I forgave him. I forgave the man who killed Barry.

"That may sound impossible, but I don't think forgiveness is as hard as some people think it is. A part of me knew that if I hung on to all my bitterness and hatred, it wouldn't do me any favors. It would only



weigh me down and make me miserable. I think the ability to forgive people, even for the most egregious deeds, is inside all of us, and we just have to activate it. Even though I still miss my husband, and there are still days where it's hard to move forward, I feel as though God has lifted a

weight off me for having forgiven the man who killed him. No bitterness, anger, or hatred will ever control me.

"I'm thankful for all the ways God has shaped me and strengthened me through this experience. It's been a difficult journey, but it hasn't been unwalkable. I'm so incredibly thankful for all the love and support my family, friends, and church community have shown me since Barry died. Within an hour after I got the news, my pastor and some members of my church were at my house comforting me and praying for me. Some of them didn't even know my husband — they just knew I needed help. Because of them, and by the grace of God, the journey forward gets a little easier every day.

"I've found myself praying more for my husband's killer than for myself since I forgave him. I pray he will find peace, too, and I also pray that someday soon, I'll be able to help people who go through similar experiences. I want to show love to him the way God shows love to everyone. On top of that, I know if Barry would have lived, he would have forgiven that man as well. That was just the heart he had for people."

Patsy Ford-Holmes

That is an incredible story — an inspiration for many of us who have someone we need to forgive for something they've done to us — and a great way to start the new year. By the way, Barry's killer was caught, and he is currently in jail awaiting trial.

SOME CONTRARY ADVICE FOR OPPOSITE DAY ...

5 PIECES OF LEGAL ADVICE YOU SHOULD ABSOLUTELY NOT FOLLOW



If you were a kid in the 70s or 80s, or maybe even today, you might remember Opposite Day. Some other kid would say, "I like your coat," or "I like your haircut," or "You're smart [or funny or cute]." You'd be feeling good, but then they'd say, "Too bad it's Opposite Day!"

Pretty funny, but who knew Opposite Day was really a thing? Well, it turns out Jan. 25 is Opposite Day. Really. So, while you sleep all day and stay up all night, or eat breakfast for dinner, we thought it could be a day where you also get some really terrible legal advice. Unfortunately, a lot of lawyers give this advice out every day, so watch out!

If you get this kind of advice from someone else, do the opposite!

DON'T TAKE YOUR OWN PHOTOS FOR EVIDENCE.

If you're ever in an auto accident, don't worry about taking photos to show an attorney in the immediate aftermath. After you call the police, they'll take all the photos you need, not to mention the photos your insurance provider will get. Those photos will absolutely not be used in your case in any way, shape, or form.

ALWAYS TRUST TV LAWYERS.

We're lucky to live in a world where the law really isn't incredibly nuanced and intricate, and we have a great resource we can trust to give us sound legal advice — lawyer TV commercials! So, don't do your own research and read the books and guides a lawyer has written that will actually help you. Just look at how many lawyers have their own TV commercials! You must be really good to get your own TV commercial (and judges and juries will think you have a great case if you have a TV lawyer — because they never watch TV).

NEVER BE FULLY HONEST WITH YOUR LAWYER.

When your law firm starts asking you a bunch of personal questions, there's no need to share all the embarrassing details, right? After all,

maintaining your pride is much more important than giving your attorney the full picture of what happened. This meticulous and detail-oriented profession certainly doesn't need the fullest possible picture of your situation. Your lawyer won't care if you haven't told them everything — and the insurance company will never find that stuff out, right?

TRUST YOUR CASE TO A FIRM WITH NO SPECIALIZATION.

Much like how the best person to perform brain surgery is your family's general physician, the best legal advice will come from firms that don't specialize in any one area of law. Forget all that garbage you might have heard about how specialization and National Board Certification is important. After all, we've already established the law really isn't that complicated, remember? So, the same guy who did your brother-in-law's DUI can take your child's cerebral palsy case and make sure they get the care they need for the rest of their life.

POST YOUR WHOLE LIFE ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

During your case, it's perfectly okay to disclose all the intimate details of your accident to your hundreds of followers on your various social media accounts. The insurance companies, those beacons of truth and justice, definitely aren't trolling your Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts for any pictures or posts they can use as evidence to lower your compensation. So, go ahead and post away — after all, you wouldn't want your followers to think you were in an accident or something. Judges totally understand social media; they're all about 25 or 30 years old, so they get it.

While all of this advice may seem rather silly, people fall prey to insurance companies and bad legal advice every day. Get information you trust that will help you and your family. We'll give that to you even if you don't hire us — even on Opposite Day!

FRANK GIVES A BOOK REPORT FROM 2019

Written by Frank Kearney

I'm not really a New Year's resolution type of person, but last January, I did announce a goal I had — to read 50 books during 2019. Reading is so important for thinking, writing, and communicating clearly, but I'd become so busy that it had fallen off dramatically the last few years.

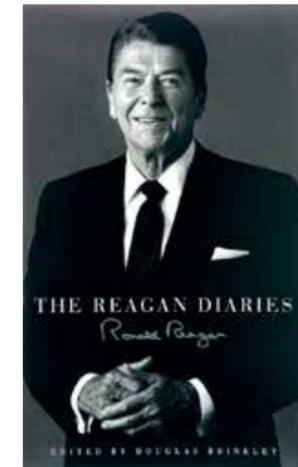
So, I announced the goal here in the newsletter. How many of you remember that? I didn't really have a plan, just to read a bunch of books on different subjects. Here's how I did, along with a list of a few favorites.

First, I thought I was reading a lot, but when I counted them up the other day, it was only 31 books. I probably forgot a few, especially library books I returned, and I have a lot of excuses. It's really only 11 months — so we can get the newsletter out on time. I read a lot for my work, of course, and I spent a lot of time watching the Nats this year (worth it!), but still, that's not very good. This is probably why I am adamant about not making New Year's resolutions!

Here are some of my favorites:

RELIGION/SPIRITUAL

"Tattoos on the Heart" by Gregory Boyle (the Jesuit priest who founded Homeboy Industries in LA's inner city).



HISTORY

"Founding Brothers" by Joseph J. Ellis, "The Garden of Beasts" by Erik Larson, and "The Reagan Diaries," edited by Douglas Brinkley. (I'd never read a diary before, and he was president when I was in junior high, high school, and part of college, so I remembered a lot of the events he wrote about.)

SPORTS

"The Boys in the Boat" by Daniel James Brown. (It's pretty historical as well.)

BUSINESS

"The E-Myth" by Michael E. Gerber, and "Get a Grip" by Gino Wickman and Mike

Paton. (Both are well-written, tell a story, and offer great insight into how to think about business.)

CLASSICS

"A Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens. (It's just a great, great story with all the symbolism and foreshadowing.)

I think my kids would call this a "nerd alert," but I'm setting the same goal for next year.

KATHY SHARES HER FAVE COCKTAIL RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

- 24 oz vodka
- 12 oz Cointreau
- 12 oz cranberry juice
- 6 oz fresh lime juice
- 4 oz water



Frank and Kathy Kearney:
Enjoy a Cosmo when you
Rock the Red!

DIRECTIONS

1. In a 65 oz container, combine all ingredients.
2. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or place in freezer for 2 hours.

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER



KATHERINE PAREJA: A SUCCESSFUL CLIENT

Rock-Star Paralegal Priscilla Villalta, left, and Amazing Client Katherine Pareja, right

Katherine finished her case in November with a settlement and has already started her own cleaning service business, Katherine's Business Solutions, LLC (443.762.4644) in Woodbridge, VA. Way to go, Katherine!



BROOKE BIRKEY ON WHY ADOPTION MATTERS

ANGELS IN ADOPTION GALA 2019

Written by Brooke Birkey

One thing I love best is the adoption cause. While not formally adopted, I went through something when I was 19 that forever changed my perspective on family. I began to appreciate the sweetness of having a chosen family.

Without getting into much detail, I found myself on my own at that young age. While most of my peers were perfecting the art of beer pong, I was working a professional job (sometimes alongside a second job) and trying to figure out how I was going to get an education.

At 21, I was able to go back to college at the University of Central Florida (Charge on, Knights!). At the ripe age of 22, I bought my first home. At 25, I finally graduated with a four-year degree. Life was atypical, but it was good.

Here's why all this matters:

When I became estranged from my family (which I was for roughly 15 years), a woman took an interest in me. She was about my parents' age, and she counseled me. She was there for me every day I was on my own. And she is still there for me even though I have reconciled with my parents.

If it hadn't been for her stepping into my life, things would have been quite different for me.

This is why adoption is extremely important. You may be thinking, "What difference can I make? I'm just one person, and there are thousands of children who need to be adopted."

Fair point. But consider the ripple effect. You adopt one child and raise them with strong values. Odds are every life they touch will be your influence, too. And they may grow up to instill good values in their children. Just by adopting one child, you could change the script for 10 generations.

A few years back, I worked for a group called the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI). I adore this organization because their work is deeply rooted in this idea of ripple impact. They value

the lives, experiences, and personhood of youth in foster care as well as honor and support adoptive families and those who have made significant contributions to the cause.

In November, I attended an event called Angels in Adoption that the CCAI puts on annually. It's an incredible event filled with hope and commitment to do the right thing for our kids. Please check out their website and consider getting involved.

This photo shows some of the staff, volunteers, and friends of the CCAI who helped put on the capstone gala, where families who have adopted, members of Congress who have been active in the adoption caucus, and national advocates for the cause were honored with fancy food and a program full of incredible stories of hope and inspiration. We had an absolute blast.

I know there are a lot of causes competing for your attention, and you may feel spread thin. I totally get that. You don't have to adopt or foster in order to have an impact. You can give as little as \$5 a month (the price of a medium cup of coffee) in tax-deductible donations. You would be surprised how these amazing staffers can make that money stretch! I've seen it — it's like watching the feeding of the five thousand.

And, if you're not sold on the impact you'll have, please read one of these stories. I don't want to have to say I told you so.

CCAIInstitute.org/programs/view/angels-in-adoption-impact



Angels in Adoption®



DONAHOE KEARNEY

Settlement Stories: Why Settlements Are a Big Deal

At Donahoe Kearney, settlements are a big deal. Yes, they are about money, but we never disclose the amount of money our clients receive — that is always confidential. But just as important is that every case represents a story — your story — of how you made it through a significant injury and what can be a long and intense legal process.

These are stories of incredible courage and resilience, of lives turned upside down and put back together. We hear the stories every day. They inspire us, and they deserve to be told.

If you've had a settlement story, we'd love to hear it from your perspective! For Donahoe Kearney clients, send in your story (bbirkey@dkllp.com), and we will make sure it gets told.

LEAVING THINGS BETTER THAN WE FOUND THEM

WHAT DONAHOE KEARNEY CAN DO FOR YOU

When you get right down to it, we focus on one thing: defending your rights and interests against insurance companies so you can focus on healing, rehab, and recovery after a serious injury. By design, we only handle a few kinds of cases, the ones that really make a difference in peoples' lives.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

When a hospital, HMO, or doctor doesn't follow rules that keep patients safe, and there is no system for preventing mistakes, catastrophic, life-changing injuries can happen. We hold them accountable so they provide for the future care, medical treatment, services, modifications to your home, and everything else you now need and to make our community safer.

LONG-TERM DISABILITY

When it comes to disability claims, the fight just isn't fair. Disability insurance companies write the policies to limit your ability to challenge them, and worse, they know many people with legitimate, disabling medical conditions who cannot work will just give up and never take on the insurance company. But that's why we're in this business.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

If you get injured at work, don't rely on your employer or their insurance provider to give you all the necessary information or file all the necessary paperwork. Your employer might mean well, but they don't know everything you need. Additionally, the workers' comp insurance company will have their lawyers, adjusters, nurses, and investigators working to deny or minimize their payout to you. Don't fight that battle on your own.

AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS

Car accidents can lead to hospitalization, surgeries, rehab, and medical bills, plus the worries about how you will feed your family. And insurance companies will make sure to compensate you for as little as they possibly can. Know the facts, document everything, don't speculate about any part of the accident with anyone, and give us a call. We'll make sure you're still able to get around town happy and in good health.

If you ever need an attorney for any serious injury or want great information on any of these areas of law, make Donahoe Kearney your go-to law firm in the Washington, D.C., area. Give us a call at (202) 393-3320. We'll send you our free books, guides, and reports to help you get started.