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- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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## LIGHT UP THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT! TAKE A MAGICAL STROLL

As the holiday season approaches, Christmas lights are typically the first decorations to go up and the last to be taken down! No matter where you go, you can see them just about anywhere — in living rooms, on rooftops, in office buildings, and along the city streets.

Traditionally, candles were used to light up Christmas trees and were attached to branches with pins or melted wax. But as many can imagine, this was a bit of a fire hazard! Eventually, the idea to use lightbulbs for Christmas trees instead of candles became a hit! Millions of people hang lights to bring in the holiday spirit.

Grab your hot cocoa, pile the family in the car, and turn on your favorite holiday tunes because we've got a list of St. Louis' best Christmas light displays!

### Winter Wonderland at Tilles Park

Start a new holiday tradition or continue your favorite one at the 37th Annual Winter Wonderland at Tilles Park! This light show is open from Nov. 18 through Dec. 30 from 5:30–9:30 p.m. and can be walked, driven through, or enjoyed on carriage rides!

Check out **WinterWonderlandSTL.com** for ticket prices and details!

### Candy Cane Lane

Though Candy Cane Lane isn't an "official" light show, this location in South St. Louis on the 6500 block of Murdoch (between Ted Drewes and Francis Park) is a festive neighborhood tradition! Nearly every house glows with twinkling lights, decorations, and lights wrapped around nearby trees and streets.

### Wild Lights at the St. Louis Zoo

Each year, the St. Louis Zoo features new lights and displays to create a wonderland unlike any other! In addition to their dazzling light features and themed areas, they have winter-themed treats, and you can say hello to the animals at Penguin and Puffin Coast and the Insectarium!

The light show runs from Nov. 25 to Dec. 30, 5–8:30 p.m. each night. Tickets are \$10 for Zoo members, \$11 for non-members on weekdays, and \$2 more on weekends. Children under 2 get in for free and free parking at both Zoo lots! Check out **STLZoo.org** for more information.

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season from all of us here at Finney Injury Law!



# TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD., SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144 // FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222 // DECEMBER 2022

## WHAT DO YOU VALUE? TACKLING THE MONEY QUANDARY

"Money will lift up a bowed down head." —Juror #11

That was a statement from a potential juror in our last trial when my cousin was discussing money during the jury selection. It really caught my attention. Because it rang true. It felt true immediately. I'd heard my grandpa tell me that you always feel a little better with a couple of bucks in your pocket. He was right.

The issue of money is always a tough one. We can be conditioned or led to believe money is evil. That whoever has it maybe didn't really earn it or must have done something icky. That there is never enough to go around.

I spend my time discussing money in rooms full of strangers, sometimes as many as 70 strangers. I ask them for millions, sometimes tens of millions, of dollars. I need to be comfortable discussing money and the feelings that surround it. Otherwise, they will eat you alive if you aren't on solid footing.

Many people have a lot of trouble discussing money. Feelings of shame, envy, anger, fear, and other strong emotions surround the topic. It can be difficult to get to someone's true feelings. Somehow, some way at trial, I need to convince 12 strangers to place a considerable value of money on someone or something they've never met or seen.

What has always confused me was people's anger about money when you discuss it with the jury. In civil lawsuits, like personal injury cases, money is the only remedy the Constitution allows. That is it. Yet, when I discuss it with some people during jury selection, they get angry that we would ask for so much. They get offended. They get shrill. You'd almost think they had to pay it, not some multibillion-dollar insurance carrier.

So, how do I talk with them about money and not get eaten alive? Well, first, I had to get to the root of my own money issues. This is a constant work in progress. It will probably be long before I am completely secure talking about it. At our

office, we make a conscious effort to only take a case that we can afford to completely work up, invest in and go to trial, and lose while still keeping the lights on. Otherwise, we will be making decisions on the file based on other factors rather than the client and the actual case. That is a no-no.

I ask the jurors early on about money. What do they value? Economic assets like cars, homes, and bank accounts? Or non-economic assets like Thanksgiving, vacations, family, and experiences? Truthfully, we value them all. But when you really peel back the layers of what it means to be a human being, the most valuable and treasured items are not really items at all. They are shared experiences. They are feelings of community, warmth, acceptance, and love. Those are the big value items.

When doing this in jury selection, the No. 1 question I get is, "How do we value these?" Some people cannot honestly do it. They cannot go there. Either it is too tough, or it is just too much to think about having to lose something they truly value and put a price on it. But this is the beauty of a jury trial — there is no formula to value these items. There is only evidence from this specific case. This case will have evidence unique to it and different from every other case — and you, as a juror, will decide what is a fair and reasonable number in this case for these parties. No one else will interfere.

Juror #11 made our jury panel for the trial. He signed on to an eight-figure verdict. I can tell you it lifted our clients' heads which had been so low for so long.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season with all the non-economic assets you desire. That is what we will be focusing on at our office and with our families. Thanks for reading, and see you in 2023.

Chi



# HOME ALONE — IS YOUR CHILD READY?

Deciding if your child is ready to stay home alone is an important milestone every parent will face. It's natural for a parent to worry when leaving their kids unsupervised. Although this concern will never fade away completely, you can prepare yourself and your children for this day with some planning.



Establish clear ground rules to keep them safe and trust they will follow those rules.

So, you've asked your child if they feel comfortable being home alone, and they say yes. Here's what you can do to prepare your child for this new experience and responsibility.

### Important things you should consider:

- *Child's Age:* Do you believe your child is mature enough to stay home alone? Will they be able to care for themselves and their younger siblings? Can they respond to an emergency? There isn't a set age when children are ready to be home by themselves. It depends on your judgment and whether you've seen signs your child is prepared for that responsibility.
- *How Long You'll Be Gone:* Will you be out of the house for a couple of hours or all day? For the first time leaving your child alone, you only want to be gone for a few hours. This will help you see if they are ready to take on this responsibility and how they feel about being alone.
- *Safety Awareness:* Would your child remember and follow the safety rules? Can they make good judgment calls on their own? Do they have common sense?

- *Leave Emergency Contacts:* Write down your and your spouse's cell and work numbers in case your child needs to contact either of you. You can also list out other relatives they can contact if needed. Keep this list somewhere where it's easily accessible such as the refrigerator.
- *Plan for "What if" Scenarios:* Inform your child about what to do if there is a fire, storm, medical issue, or a stranger comes to the door. Make sure they understand the solutions and can follow them without question. Also, leave an emergency first-aid kit with them.

Don't worry; their experience won't be like Kevin McCallister's experience in the famous Christmas comedy "Home Alone." By communicating with your adolescent and preparing properly, they are one step closer to fulfilling new responsibilities and taking the first step into adulthood.

# KEEPING OLDER DRIVERS SAFE ON THE ROADS

## How Driving Risks Increase With Age

National Older Driver Safety Awareness Week is the first full week of December (6-10), dedicated to ensuring the roads are safe for the older drivers among us.

As we age, we experience several challenges, such as decreased eyesight, impaired hearing, sleep disorders, and physical disabilities that can make driving more difficult. Aging also tends to reduce strength, coordination, and flexibility, which affects a person's ability to control a vehicle safely.

In most cases, it's necessary for older people to drive because they cannot walk long intervals or distances. But the risk of an automobile accident increases for older drivers, which unfortunately leads to severe injuries or even death.

### When should someone stop driving?

Many people wonder at what age they should consider no longer driving, but it truly depends on the person and their performance on the road. Generally, people should start preparing for life away from the steering wheel around 85. Around that time, even the healthiest of people will experience slow reaction time and trouble with eyesight or hearing.

You can take precautions before giving up driving altogether, and they include the following:

- Avoid driving at night and in bad weather.
- Drive only in familiar places.
- Drive only within a certain radius of home.
- Stay off of highways.
- Limit distractions while driving by turning off the radio and other noises, avoiding conversations with people in the car, and not texting or using a cellphone.

### Why is older driver safety awareness important?

This dedicated week aims to promote the importance of mobility and transportation to ensure older individuals remain active in the community. Whether working, volunteering, or shopping, older adults deserve to be confident that transportation issues will not limit them.

Driving is a necessary part of most people's lives. Yet, it is one of the most dangerous activities we do. Bringing awareness to the risks older drivers face is one of the best ways to ensure everyone is safe on the roads. In turn, they can still have independence while doing what they enjoy most!

# Locks of Love Son Makes a Wig for His Mother

Melanie Shaha is currently fighting her third brain cancer battle. For 15 years, she's been suffering from a benign tumor on her pituitary gland. Although she doesn't mind being sick, going to her appointments, focusing on her treatment, and talking to loved ones about her cancer, she doesn't like looking sick.

If you didn't know Shaha, you wouldn't realize she was battling cancer. But this suddenly changed once she lost all of her hair. She had two surgeries, in 2003 and 2006, in hopes of removing the tumor on her pituitary gland, but they weren't successful. Then, when she began radiation therapy in 2017, the treatment caused her hair to fall out.

"Not having hair [makes] you stick out like a sore thumb, and well-meaning people can say things that break your heart," Shaha told TODAY. She didn't like all the attention and the looks people gave her in public. So, her 27-year-old son Matt had an idea. At first, Matt joked about cutting all of his hair off to make his mother a wig. But the joke soon became a plan, and Matt followed through in 2018.

After graduating from college, Matt began growing his hair out. In no time, he had long and luscious hair. His mother tried to dissuade him from cutting it, but Matt wanted to help her feel confident and comfortable in her skin. So, he chopped it off and sent his locks to Compassionate Creations, a hair company in Newport Beach, California, that created a wig for his mother.

Now, Shaha has a piece of her son to take everywhere with her beautiful new tresses. "The color is spectacular, and we had it cut and styled with a hairdresser. Matt said it looked great on me. It sure fills your emotional cup," Shaha says.

If you — or someone you know — would like to donate your hair to cancer patients, you can donate to Locks of Love, Wigs For Kids, Chai Lifeline, and Children With Hair Loss. Research donation centers in your area if you would like to give back locally.



## No-Bake Peanut Butter Snowballs

*This year-round treat is the perfect dessert for any holiday party. Since you don't need to worry about a hot oven, it's a great recipe to make with the whole family — including the little ones!*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 3 tbsp softened butter
- 1 lb white chocolate candy coating



### DIRECTIONS

1. Line a cookie sheet with parchment or wax paper.
2. In a medium bowl, combine powdered sugar, peanut butter, and softened butter. Mix until evenly combined.
3. Shape the mixture into 1-inch balls and place them on the lined cookie sheet. Chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or until firm.
4. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt white chocolate candy coating in increments of 30 seconds, stirring occasionally until smooth.
5. In the same bowl, use skewers to dip peanut butter balls into the chocolate before placing them on a lined cookie sheet so they can harden.
6. Chill until ready and then serve!

## YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.