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- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 An Unexpected Change
- 2 The Best Cleaning Tool Can Be Found in Your Kitchen
- 2 What You Need to Know About Brain Injury Prevention
- 3 Get Your Seasonal Allergies Before They Get You!
- 3 Daylight Saving Reminder!
- 4 Celebrating Women's History With 2 Local Legends



## TWO ST. LOUIS WOMEN WHO MADE HISTORY

Since March is Women's History Month, we're highlighting two area women who have made historical contributions in two different areas in the field of law: Virginia Minor, a noted women's rights suffragist, and Phoebe Couzins, one of the United States' first licensed female lawyers.

### Virginia Minor fought for voting rights.

Minor was born almost 200 years ago in Virginia, though she lived most of her life in St. Louis. It was here that she co-founded and served as president of the Women's Suffrage Association of Missouri, an organization fighting to get women the right to vote, in 1867.

In 1872, Minor attempted to register to vote, and the local registrar turned her down. She — along with her husband Francis Minor, a lawyer, who supported her efforts — filed a suit against the state of Missouri. The U.S. Supreme Court eventually heard the case, though the justices did not side with Minor. She continued to fight for women's suffrage until she died in 1894, still some 26 years before the 19th Amendment was ratified, finally giving women the right to vote.

### Phoebe Couzins' law school admission opened doors.

Couzins' family was involved in the local community. Most notably, Phoebe and her mother, Adaline, and father, John, played an instrumental role in organizing the Western Sanitary Commission, which helped soldiers injured in the American Civil War get needed medical care. Later, Phoebe got involved in the women's suffragist movement and made a bold move, at the encouragement of one of her college professors, to apply for law school at Washington University in St. Louis.

Couzins was admitted to WashU in 1869 and later became the first woman in the U.S. to graduate from law school. With law degree in hand, Couzins was admitted to the Bar in four different states, became known as a captivating orator on issues of women's rights, and continued to fight for women's suffrage. She even worked alongside Minor in the Ladies Union Aid Society. When the national suffrage group Couzins had long been involved in changed its name and strategy, Couzins resigned.

It's worth noting that Couzins' predecessor, Lemma Barkeloo, was the first woman in the U.S. to ever attend law school, though she was unable to finish. Nevertheless, her entry and Couzins' subsequent graduation paved the way for generations of women in law since then.

# TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD., SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144 // FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222 // MARCH 2021

## An Unexpected Change

This month, my life, and the lives of my wife and kids, will have a major change. The change can never be undone, is permanent, and is forever and something neither my wife nor I have ever experienced. At the end of this month, my wife is expected to give birth to our fifth child. After four beautiful boys, we are expecting a girl.

I am having trouble imagining what it will be like to have a daughter. All this will sound cliché, but we don't have anything pink in our house. Nothing. It feels like having a first kid all over again. My wife bought some bows or headbands the other day. It didn't register they were for us — I said to her, "Who is having a baby shower during the pandemic?" No one. We are having a girl. Some fancy wallpaper sample came in the mail as well. What? I mean, the boys basically have white walls — though my mother-in-law helped with sprucing them up. Candidly, I am beginning to see dollar signs float away from me.

I am sure the reality will not hit until she is here. I honestly just hope my wife and the baby are healthy. Whatever it takes to get that, I will do. The fifth time around, I am more nervous than usual that something will go wrong. I assume it is the lack of control I have over the entire process. I am very much an ancillary part to this whole deal.

I have not thought much about who my daughter will be. Will she be strong? Confident? Smart? Wise? If she is anything like her mom, she will be a tremendous child and person. I am very excited to see who this child is.

The other four have provided me endless joy and surprise. My boys have such unique personalities and their very own traits that make me laugh just thinking about them now.

But I also recognize how incredibly lucky my wife and I are. Some days, I see the stories of the people who are desperately trying to have a child. For whatever reason, things do not add up. I just

can't understand it. What separates us from them? Why are we lucky in this area of life and their journey a challenging one? I don't know — but maybe it is because they are strong enough to weather it and I am not. Perhaps they were chosen for their path for the very reason they can handle it so that the others who cannot will not have to. I don't know. Another mystery that I just don't understand. It is not fair.



I always wanted a big family. I think five kids qualifies as big these days. I come from a family of seven kids. In my grade school, it was a big family, but not crazy. Something was always going on in my family growing up. There was always action. Perhaps that is why I wanted a big family. The movement. The surprise. It is probably because I don't know any different. It is familiar to me. The chaos is comfort even if I don't like it. Isn't that a healthy way to live?

The next time I write for this newsletter, I will be different, a permanently changed person. I am excited to see how it improves me and challenges me. Hopefully, my thoughts will be better organized. I hope that I am strong enough to answer the call of being a father to a daughter. I hope my boys become trusted supporters of her. And most of all, I am so happy for my wife. I cannot put into words how happy I am for her. She will be the best mom to this girl. They will have a tremendous relationship. My wife absolutely loves her sons without any doubt, but she deserves some female companionship in the house. She has earned it.



## When Life Gives You Lemons ... **SCRUB THE MICROWAVE**

Lemons don't just add a tart flavor to your favorite desserts or cool you down in a refreshing drink on a hot summer day. In addition to bold flavors, lemons also have powerful cleaning properties. Their acidity and oils cut through grease and can sanitize many of your household items.

The best place to clean with a lemon is in the kitchen. For the microwave, simply juice a whole lemon into a bowl of water, then plop the used peels into the bowl. Microwave the mixture for a few minutes, let the bowl cool before removing it, then wipe away the grease in the microwave. You can also use this method for your oven.

For odor-blocking properties, you can use a lemon as an air freshener. Leave half of a lemon in your refrigerator to trap and block

potential smells and toss old lemon rinds down the garbage disposal. Run the disposal to clean the blades and freshen up the sink.

As for your kitchen tools, don't toss them out without trying this lemon trick first. Start by sprinkling salt on a wooden cutting board, then slice a lemon in half. Using half the lemon (flesh-side down) like a sponge, scrub the board really well. Wipe and remove the leftover lemon juice and rinse the board before using it again. Not only will the board *appear* cleaner, but it also won't smell as bad, and the bacteria will be gone. You can also use this method to polish dining ware, spruce up copper, and even remove stuck-on food from plates.

Now, here's the real secret: Once you master kitchen cleaning a la lemon,



you can use these same principles to clean other parts of your house. For example, salt and lemon can be used to scrub grimy sinks and faucets, while a few squeezes of lemon juice in a cup of water makes an excellent cleaning solution for mirrors and windows. You can even make your own reusable cleaning spray by fermenting lemon peels — and the peels of other citrus fruits — in white vinegar for two weeks. Remove the peels after two weeks and spritz the mixture over surfaces you need to clean!

## Get Your Seasonal Allergies Before They Get You!

Spring brings with it many wonderful things, like longer days, picturesque scenery, and spring break, but right alongside those good things is something most people suffer from: allergies. While beautiful, the blooming trees and flowers make you want to stay away from the great outdoors for fear of nonstop sneezing or puffy, watery eyes. If you suffer from allergies caused by pollen, grass, or other spring plants, take these steps to breathe a little easier.

When outside, avoid walking through areas with weeds, shrubbery, or lots of trees as much as possible. Grass and weeds are notably problematic. The slightest breeze can send particles flying through the air in the blink of an eye. When you walk through grassy areas, pollen will get on you, your clothes, and your hair. It's best to stick to trails, sidewalks, and other paved areas.

If you do find yourself inundated with pollen or other allergens, your next best bet is to establish an at-home decontamination protocol. Take your shoes off at the door and make sure your clothes don't come in contact with soft surfaces such as carpet, upholstery, or bedding. Take care to wash your "pollinated" clothes as soon as possible and wash your sheets and pillowcases weekly. Next, head for the shower. The sooner you can wash away the allergens, the better.

Finally, don't forget to replace the air filter in your home's air system in the spring. Consider using an air filter designed to capture allergens. If your allergies are particularly troublesome, invest in a dedicated air filtration system or unit. While you can opt for portable, stand-alone air purifiers, there are larger systems that can be incorporated into your heating and air system that keep your entire home's air free from most, if not all, common allergens.



## HEADS UP!

### MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

If you've been a longtime reader of our newsletter, you've probably noticed that we frequently address how to stay safe on the road — whether that's avoiding distracted driving, watching out for motorcyclists, or learning how to safely share the road with semitrucks.

As a law firm with a focus on helping those who've sustained brain injuries in an accident, we're all too aware of the life-altering effects they can have on our clients. March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, so this month we're using this space to provide important information about brain injuries and how to avoid them.

It probably comes as no surprise that one of the leading causes of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) is auto accidents. Some 200,000 people sustain brain injuries in auto accidents annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The top way for drivers to mitigate these injuries is to wear a seat belt, ensure all passengers are wearing seat belts, and fasten small children into their car seats properly.

Drivers should also take care to avoid distractions and stay vigilant for others on the road, including other motorized

vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians who are at an even greater risk of sustaining a TBI should a collision occur with a vehicle. Speaking of motorized vehicles, with an increasing variety of scoots, mopeds, electric bikes, and other vehicles on the road, riders of any motorized form of transportation should always wear a helmet, be aware of local laws about where to drive or ride, and be vigilant in looking out for other drivers.

If you think helmets don't matter, think again! The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that this simple technology is 67% effective in preventing brain injuries for motorcyclists. Similarly, a study published in the Journal of Accident Analysis and Prevention found that bicyclists who wear helmets reduce their risk of a TBI by 53% and a serious head injury by 60%.

It's important to note that brain injuries range in severity from mild to severe or traumatic. Regardless of the severity, brain injuries can affect the short- or long-term physical, mental, and emotional lives of those who suffer from them. Brain injury cases can be complex. Call the expert attorneys at Finney Injury Law at 314-293-4222 to ensure your rights are protected.

## DAYLIGHT SAVING REMINDER!

Don't forget that we'll be "springing" forward on **Sunday, March 14.**

Daylight Saving begins at 2 a.m., so move your clocks an hour forward on Saturday night before you go to bed.

This is also a great time to check the batteries in your home's smoke detectors and perform other annual maintenance like cleaning your gutters and checking your furnace or HVAC system and water heater.



## 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.**