

# Shannon Law Group, P.C.

## Where Compassion Meets Justice

### Auto Accidents and Traumatic Brain Injuries

Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) are responsible for the deaths of approximately 50,000 Americans each year and the hospitalizations of roughly 230,000 more. Many more victims go undiagnosed.

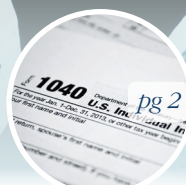
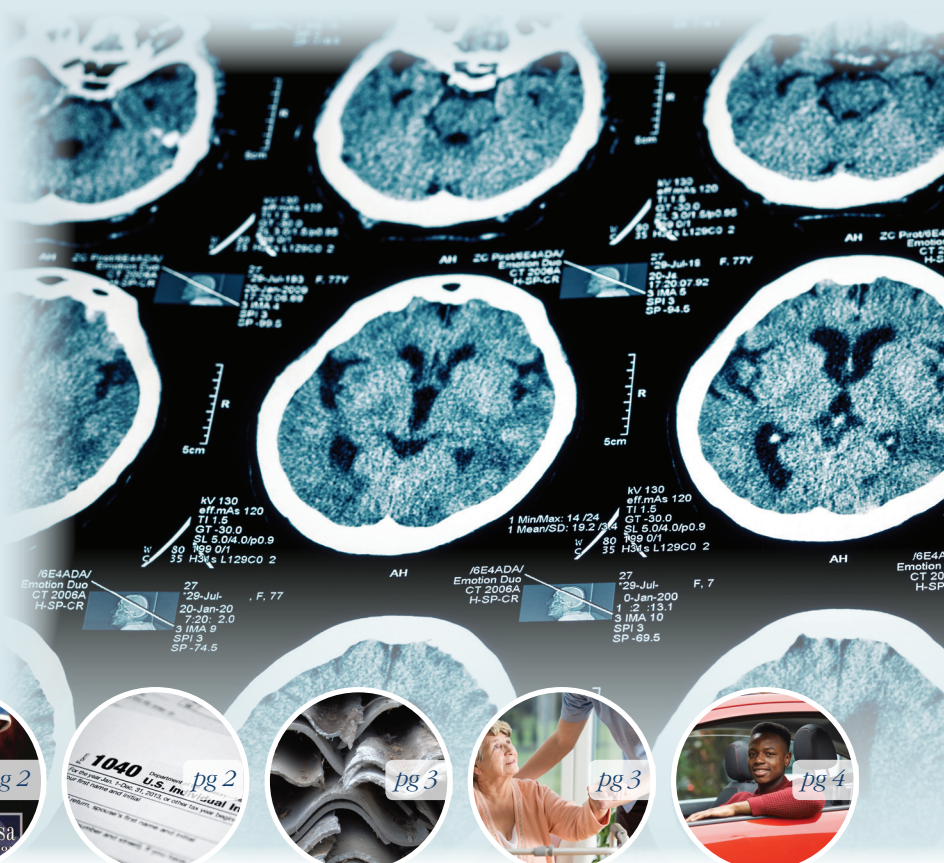
Auto accidents are one of the leading causes of TBI. Most TBIs are closed head injuries, which means that trauma sets the brain in motion inside the skull. The brain gets slammed against the interior surface of the skull, resulting in contusions and swelling.

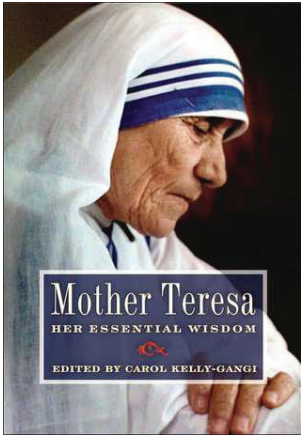
Trauma can also initiate rotational forces that twist and stretch the brain, which can damage axons. Brain neurons send messages via electrical impulses; axons are the carriers of these impulses. When axons are damaged, brain function is diminished. A condition called diffuse axonal injury (DAI) occurs on a cellular level and leaves blood vessels and major brain structures intact. This type of damage cannot be detected by MRIs or CT scans, making DAI vastly underdiagnosed and undertreated.

Brain injuries are unlike injuries to other parts of the body. They not only have a physical component, they also affect the cognitive and emotional well-being of the victim. Impairments can be temporary or permanent, subtle or catastrophic.

It's important to note that low-impact auto accidents can result in TBI (e.g., concussion due to whiplash), not just high-impact ones. In addition, a person involved in a car crash may feel perfectly normal immediately following the incident; however, TBI symptoms might only present themselves hours, days, or weeks later.

If you have been involved in a car accident caused by the negligence of another driver, schedule a medical evaluation and contact an auto accident attorney to protect your rights. •





# Book Review

## Mother Teresa: Her Essential Wisdom, Fall River Press 2006

Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born in what is now Macedonia in 1910. In 1931, after her novitiate, she professed temporary vows to the Order of the Sisters of Loreto in Dublin, Ireland, an Irish order with missions in India. She took the name of Teresa after St. Therese of Lisieux, the patron saint of missionaries. Sister Teresa became a high school teacher at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta. In 1946, she felt a calling to live amongst the poorest of the poor. By 1950, she formed the Missionaries of Charity. Her work and the work of her Missionaries of Charity are legendary, and the legacy lives on. The congregation now consists of over 4,500 religious sisters. The Missionaries of Charity operate over 500 missions in more than 100 countries. After all this work and all of her accomplishments, Mother Teresa stated:

"I don't claim anything of the work. It's his work. I'm like a little pencil in his hand. That's all. He does the thinking. He does the writing. The pencil has nothing to do with it. The pencil has only to be allowed to be used." Blessed Mother Teresa 1989

Some pencil indeed. Sometimes we feel that there are so many problems in the world that we feel helpless to do anything about it. When I feel like this, I think of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. It is amazing to me that one person from Macedonia made such an impact on the world at large, mainly from her base in Calcutta, India. A lifetime like that deserves reflection. This book deserves to be on our bookshelf. In my first world, suburban, comfortable life, I NEED to learn more from Blessed Mother Teresa about spirituality, joy, charity, family life, suffering and death, the gift of life, humility, and chastity. Her thoughts on all of these issues are in the book. Whenever I think I am giving all I can to my community or to charity, it is vital to look to Blessed Mother Teresa as a role model. Regarding charity, she states:

"I ask you one thing: do not tire of giving, but do not give your leftovers. Give until it hurts, until you feel the pain."

With all of our grumbling about politicians and what is wrong with the world at large, Blessed Mother Teresa clearly advises that charity starts at home with our own families:

"We are commanded to love God and our neighbor equally, without difference. We don't have to look for the opportunities to fill this command, they're all around us, twenty-four hours a day. You must open your eyes wide so that you can see opportunities to give wholeheartedly, free service right where you are, in your family. If you don't give such service in your family, you will not be able to give it to those outside your home."

In summary, this book caused me to reflect on what gifts I have been given and whether I've made the most of these gifts. I recommend it highly. •

## April 2016 Important Dates

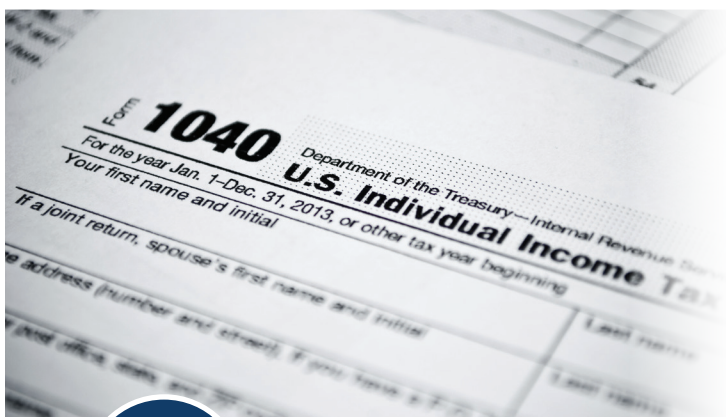
**April 4** Outdoor Practices begin for Lisle Football Club

**April 4** NCAA Basketball National Championship      **April 6** Huskie Dual Meet vs. Naperville Central

**April 29** Feast Day of St. Catherine of Siena      **April 29-30** St. Joan of Arc production: Peter Pan, Jr.

## Did You Know?

The first U.S income tax was signed into law by President Lincoln in 1862 in order to help pay for the cost of the Civil War. The law levied a three percent tax on incomes between \$600 and \$10,000, and a five percent tax on incomes greater than \$10,000. By 1867, public opposition to the income tax persuaded Congress to cut the tax rate. Interestingly, between 1868 and 1913 (when our current income tax system was signed into law), 90 percent of all revenue came from taxes on liquor, beer, wine and tobacco. •



# The Latest on Mesothelioma

Although most everyone today knows generally of the dangers of asbestos exposure, you may be surprised to learn that the mortality rate for asbestos-related disease in the US continues to climb.

Asbestos is a crystalline mineral that forms in long strands. It was used for centuries in manufacturing because of its durability and fire resistant properties. But when the fibers break and are inhaled they cause a variety of lung and intestinal diseases, including the deadly lung cancer mesothelioma.

Tragically, this failure to act for over a century has been costly for millions of Americans. It is estimated that around ten thousand Americans die each year from asbestos related disease. Future mortality models predict more than 100,000 asbestos deaths in the US in the next decade.

Fortunately, new research is shedding light on some of the causes of mesothelioma that may open new avenues of treatment and prevention. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine and the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia have recently found evidence that mesothelioma tumors may be related to asbestos related inflammation.

Research at several recruitment centers in the US, Australia, and Europe is strengthening the case that certain antibodies can enhance chemotherapy for mesothelioma patients. Trials of amatuximab, a compound using the antibody, have shown overall longer survival rates for mesothelioma patients. More information on the trial of amatuximab and participating research centers, can be found on the government's clinical trial website at [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov).

While a cure for mesothelioma may still be a long way off, victims of asbestos related disease may have legal options for monetary recovery. Since smoking gun documents by asbestos manufacturers show that they concealed the dangers of asbestos from the public for years, courts forced them to establish a trust fund to compensate victims and survivors. Consult an attorney if you suffer from asbestos related disease and want to learn more about recovery options. •



## Nursing Home Care Act of Illinois

The Illinois Nursing Home Care Reform Act has been on the books for over 35 years. This Act was designed as a full reform of the nursing home industry to protect some of Illinois's most vulnerable residents.

Today, common forms of abuse and neglect in nursing homes include dropping residents or allowing them to fall, failing to treat or prevent bed sores, lackluster approaches to personal hygiene (e.g., inadequate changing of incontinence undergarments and bathing), failure to nourish and hydrate a resident, or even physical or sexual abuse to a resident by nursing home employees or other residents.

In addition to addressing abuse, the Act established standards for treatment and care of residents. Central to this is the creation of the nursing home resident's "bill of rights," protecting the following rights:

- The fear of dire consequences—for example, a child receiving a low grade or not making the team—may spur parents to go out of their way to spare their children disappointment and unhappiness.
- The right to refuse to perform labor for the facility;
- The right to private, uncensored visits, mail, and telephone communication;
- The right to manage their own financial affairs and keep personal property, including wearing their own clothes and keeping personal belongings in their rooms;
- The right to privacy and respect in medical and personal care, including the choice of their own doctor and the right to refuse treatment or unnecessary drugs;
- The right to be free from unlawful discrimination, including the right to religious freedom; and
- The right to access personal records related to their care, present grievances without retaliation, and to be discharged by the facility after giving written notice.

The Act also permits nursing home residents to directly sue a nursing home's owner and licensee for abuse, neglect, or violations of the residents' rights. These claims may even be brought by a resident's estate after their death. •

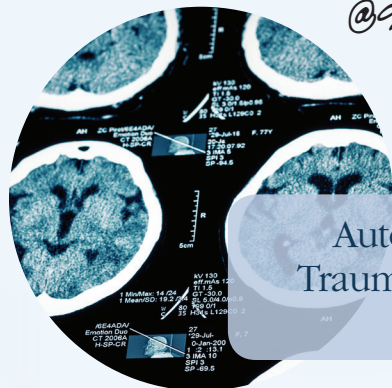


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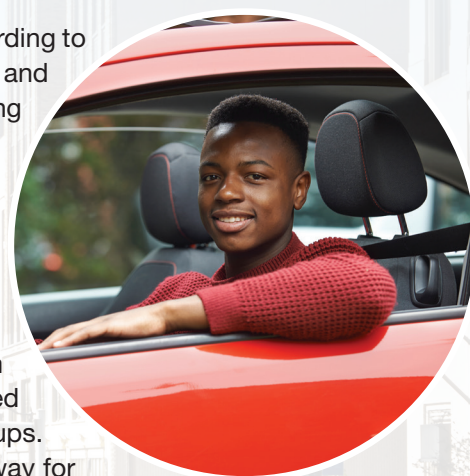
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## Improving the Odds for Teen Drivers

Motor vehicle crashes are the number-one cause of death among American teenagers. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention statistics for 2013, over 2,100 teens were killed and nearly a quarter-million required visits to hospital emergency rooms. The fatality rate for young males involved in auto accidents was almost twice that of their female counterparts.

Factors involved in heightening teenagers' susceptibility to auto collisions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Teens are more likely to speed than older drivers and not allow for the proper following distance.
- Young drivers tend to underestimate dangerous situations or fail to recognize them at all more so than older drivers, which points to their inexperience and/or distracted driving—also more of a problem with young drivers (ages 16–20) than other age groups.
- Alcohol elevates the risk of accidents for all age groups, but in a disproportionate way for young drivers.
- The level of seat-belt usage is lower for teenage drivers.



Many auto accident fatalities and injuries can be avoided. Parents can help by setting a good example; being dutiful driving teachers and exposing their kids to a wide variety of driving situations; restricting nighttime driving (for at least the first six months); hammering home the importance of seat belts; emphasizing the consequences of distracted driving and limiting the number of passengers to one (if any) until they're more experienced; and instituting a zero-tolerance policy for drunk driving.

If you or a loved one has been injured in a car accident due to the fault of another, contact an auto accident attorney to safeguard your rights. •