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MY PERSPECTIVE

As I write this column during the Easter season, I wanted to write something positive about the great education I received in my early life. I often read in the press or hear in discussions with others how nuns were “mean” to them in Catholic grammar school. Let me give you my perspective. I was a spoiled brat when I attended St. Paul’s Catholic Grade School ... and I mean *spoiled*. As a little kid in school, did I appreciate Sr. Mary, Sr. Rosemary, Sr. Philomena, or the other Dominican Sisters who taught us reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion? Absolutely not.



One of the most important things the nuns taught me was this very simple fact: The world did not revolve around me. The sisters taught me that life revolved around God and others. How did they teach this? By the daily witness of their lives. I learned discipline from those dedicated and wonderful women. I can tell you it was a rough journey. I remember one time, I simply left school and went home because I didn’t like being disciplined. However, one thing always stuck with me about these nuns: They believed in their hearts that no child was “disposable.” No matter how many mistakes I made, they never gave up on me. The sisters I knew believed that every child, no matter how intellectually or behaviorally challenged (i.e., me), was a gift from God and their job was to push each child to reach their potential. I wonder if nowadays our community needs a little more of that attitude.

with us and be easy on us? It sure would have been, but I am thankful for the great education they gave me. Sisters, if you are reading this, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

While I’m on the subject of nuns, it seems the whole world has been enchanted by Sr. Jean Dolores Schmidt, BVM from Loyola, as the Ramblers made their incredible journey to the Final Four. What a great story! But there’s more. There’s a new wave of nuns who have taken social media by storm. Do you want a completely unique and wholesome perspective on a daily basis? Follow these nuns on Twitter: Sr. Helena Burns, FSP @SrHelenaBurns, Sr. Miriam Jones @onegroovynun, Sr. Bethany, FSP @SrBethanyfsp, Sr. Andrew Marie @SrAndrewfsp, Sr. Carly Paula @SrPaulafsp, and Sr. Theresa Alethia @pursuedbytruth. For example, check out the tweets that were flying during the Super Bowl. If you like what the nuns have to say, retweet. Also, if you want to watch some powerful YouTube work by these very interesting women, watch the YouTube videos from the nuns above as well as Sr. Bethany Madonna, SV. It’s great stuff.

—Joe Shannon

Those of you who have known me my entire life completely understand: I continue to be spoiled, selfish, and self-centered. However, now I know that the above conduct is wrong, and I should strive to do better. Plus, I know that the sisters have not given up on me! I am thankful for these Dominican sisters for teaching me how to be a better person. Would it have been easier for them to be “friends”

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Shannon Law Group 2018 March Madness Bracket Challenge Results:

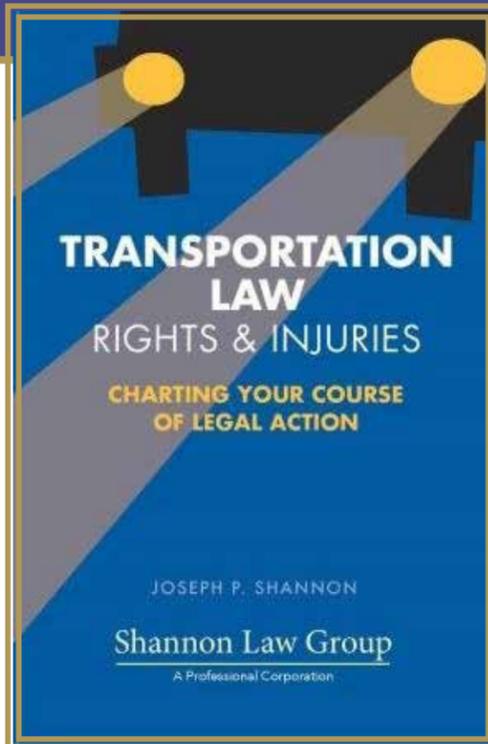
1st: Tom Jansen (114)

2nd: Jeff Mote (109)

3rd: Tom Ilich (105)

4th: Michael Kowalski (104)

Thanks for participating! We’ll be back in 2019 with a new bracket challenge.





We've expanded our practice to include helping those who have been injured as a result of side effects to vaccines. To address this issue, the government created the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) in 1988 as a no-fault program for injuries caused by vaccinations.

The VICP is not funded by tax dollars. Pharmaceutical companies that manufacture the vaccines fund the VICP.

One of the anticipated benefits of this program is to give injured petitioners a fast-track to compensation. In state court, you could wait three or more years to resolve your case. However, in vaccine court, the early program petitions used to be adjudicated within two years on average. Today, they can take longer because the number of yearly petitions has tripled, while staffing at the Department of Justice has remained the same. As such, the fast-track has slowed. Moreover, one of the unique features of the VICP is that injured people do not pay any attorney fees even if they hire attorneys. All fees incurred by the attorneys are reimbursed through the program. As such, there is no downside to hiring a lawyer to present your case.

Want to learn more? We have been publishing a number of articles on the VICP to further educate our clients and friends. We invite you to learn more about the VICP on our website at ShannonLawGroup.com.

-Jonathan Svitak

THE CUTTING-EDGE ISSUES

We Can Obtain Justice for You

In this edition of our newsletter, I asked our lawyers to highlight the practice area that dominates their time these days. Since Patrick has been handling a number of cases where commercial driving companies have seriously injured our clients, I asked him to write an article regarding this subject. Jon has been working on a number of vaccine cases, so I asked him to review any trends in that area.

Let me give you a broad picture of the cases where we can be of assistance. We are trial lawyers. Our job is to make sure our clients have their day in court. For the first eight years of my career, I worked for law firms who defended insurance companies and large self-insured companies. I defended truck and automobile manufacturers, trucking companies, and asbestos manufacturers. In fact, I took a lot of depositions of men who were dying from mesothelioma. My job was to make sure that these cases did not go to court. I needed to win the case out of court by way of motions to dismiss or summary judgment.

That all changed in 1996. Since Emma was 2 and Clare was a newborn, I've been representing people who have been seriously injured and needed a lawyer on their side to even the playing field with the insurance companies and big law firms that represent

them. For over 22 years, I've been doing just that, and it has been a pleasure. A lot of those people we represented came to our door because *you* referred them. For that, we thank you.

This year, we have made a conscious effort to stay on the cutting edge of the issues our clients face and to educate our clients and friends. To that end, we have published 32 articles and posted them on our website, ShannonLawGroup.com. We have continued to consult with the foremost experts in their fields to prove our clients' cases in court. We know that when our clients hire us to



represent them, the case has just begun. Our job is not done until we have obtained justice on their behalf. Numerous trials are on the horizon for 2018 and 2019. Whether it's a trucking case, a vaccine-injury case, a mesothelioma case, or a whistleblower case, we will be prepared and answer-ready for trial.

GETTING TO THE ANSWERS: WHY BAD CRASHES HAPPEN

If you have read our previous newsletters or blog articles, you know that we represent people who have been severely injured in crashes. We consider it a tremendous honor when a client entrusts us with helping them through an extremely difficult period of their life.

In a number of serious injury cases we have been asked to investigate the following questions:

1. Why would a driver of an eighteen-wheeler fix their log books and drive to the point of exhaustion, fall asleep, and plow into stopped traffic at 60 mph?
2. Why would a taxicab company entrust the keys to a cab to a driver who had an abysmal driving record as well as an alarming criminal record?
3. Why would a trucking company entrust an eighteen-wheeler to a driver without a commercial driver's license?

The answer in each of these cases played out in the discovery part of our cases as well as in the courtroom. Our job is to uncover the facts. The job of the court and jury is to decide who is on the right side of the lawsuit, and sometimes these cases have ramifications beyond the courtroom.

In Question No. 1 above, the Illinois Appellate Court affirmed a jury verdict against one of the largest food brokers in the world because the food broker controlled the driver

from the time they picked up the load until the time of the crash. This case had ramifications beyond the courtroom. It hopefully allowed other victims injured in a similar fashion to secure a recovery from those who profited from the negligent driver.

In Question No. 2, the answer was clearly that the taxicab company did absolutely nothing to qualify or vet this driver. In that case, a Cook County jury awarded significant punitive damages against the cab company for failing to screen or train its driver. In July 2017, the Illinois First District Appellate Court held that the taxicab company, whose driver crashed into and injured our client, had an obligation to adequately vet its driver by checking their background, investigating their driving history, and training the driver before handing over the keys to the vehicle. Hopefully, this change in the law encourages other commercial transportation companies to screen drivers so that fewer untrained drivers end up on our roads.

In Question No. 3, the answer was that a friend needed a job, and that friend just didn't have the proper training to operate a heavy rig. Unfortunately, that resulted in our client being seriously injured. Through this result, it is hoped that the large delivery company that employed our client did a better job of making sure that delivery drivers properly chocked their vehicles and set their parking brakes.

-Pat Cummings

ROASTED ASPARAGUS WITH LEMON BREADCRUMBS

Ingredients

- 2 pounds asparagus
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- Juice of one lemon (not packaged lemon juice)
- Kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Freshly ground pepper

Directions

1. Heat oven to 425 F. Toss asparagus with 2 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place on baking sheet and bake for 20-26 minutes, turning asparagus halfway through.
2. When asparagus is nearly done, heat remaining olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add breadcrumbs and cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and fold in parsley and lemon zest.
3. Transfer asparagus to serving platter, drizzle with lemon juice, and top with breadcrumb mixture.

Recipe inspired by Food and Wine Magazine

APRIL 2018 DATES OF CONSEQUENCE

- April 1** Easter Sunday
- April 5:** White Sox Home Opener
- April 9:** Cubs Home Opener
- April 13-15** Patriot's Day / Boston Marathon
- April 16:** U of I Moms Weekend
- April 29** Feast of St. Catherine of Siena

