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Heroes Come in All Sizes

MACKENZIE THE CHIHUAHUA IS ONE BIG HERO

The American Humane Hero Dog Awards competition is an annual celebration that honors some of the world's most extraordinary canines. The awards recognize dogs that have gone above and beyond the call of duty, whether it's saving lives on the battlefield, comforting the ill or elderly, or demonstrating just how powerful the bond between humans and animals can be. Winners are crowned in several categories, but the "American Hero Dog" is the top winner selected by expert panelists and a popular vote. It most often goes to dogs who show astute bravery in what they do, and in 2020, that bravery came in a 4-pound package.

MacKenzie the Chihuahua bested over 400 competitors to be selected as 2020's American Hero Dog. Born seven years ago with a cleft palate and severe pneumonia that nearly took her life, MacKenzie fought hard to overcome her sickness and birth defects. Soon after she defied all odds, her owners noticed her affinity for other animals — despite being tiny compared to many of them. That's when they gave her a special job: caring for baby animals born with birth defects just like she was.

Many of the rescue animals MacKenzie helps care for have medical problems that prohibit them from staying with their mothers, but

MacKenzie takes a genuine interest in each baby from the moment they're introduced, no matter its species or size. She plays nurse, cleans, and comforts them through their recovery, becoming a pseudo-mother that teaches them how to socialize and play. She's nurtured countless puppies, kittens, birds, squirrels, mice, goats, and turkeys. Despite her tiny size, she's even mothered a Great Dane.

In addition to caring for rescued animals, MacKenzie also helps kids learn to be open-minded about both animals and people with physical differences or disabilities. The Chihuahua teaches the kids kindness and patience and shows them that no matter how small you might be, you can make a big difference.

MacKenzie lost her ability to bark very early in life, but she has one of the loudest voices when it comes to speaking for disadvantaged animals. Heroism truly comes in all shapes, sizes, and forms, but MacKenzie demonstrates that the most heroic act of all is exuding compassion for others, no matter their circumstances.



Two Concentrations, One Focus: Fighting for Your Future

FEBRUARY 2021

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Many of our clients never
come into the office. We
use technology to handle
their cases virtually all
across Florida.

Every Day With Her Is Valentine's Day!

HOW I SCORED MY AMAZING WIFE WITHOUT PROPOSING

I have a secret to tell you this Valentine's Day: I never proposed to my wife. Technically, she didn't propose to me, either. And yet somehow, we ended up married!

The story starts just over two decades ago when we were studying for our MBAs. I like to joke about how she "picked me up at a trash can". She remembers the trash can event much differently. But even she cannot dispute how "The Proposal" happened. One day, out of the blue, Marjorie came to me and said, "Carmen, graduation is coming up in a couple of months. You realize that if we're not married by then, I'm going to get a diploma with the wrong name on it, right? Then I'll have to go through a great deal of trouble to get a new one!"

I'm no fool. I could see the handwriting on the wall, and I knew this was my chance to get an answer without asking a question, so I said, "Oh, so I guess that means if we get married before graduation, that would help you out?"

Her response was a simple: "Yeah, it would probably be for the best."

Me: "Yeah, you are probably right." That was it. A done deal. Pretty romantic, Right?

Folks, that was it. Marjorie and I got married so her MBA diploma would read correctly. To this day I still regret that I didn't ask her dad's permission (maybe it was because she told me his nickname was "Chainsaw"), but to be fair, I didn't ask for her permission either. I'm still shocked that it all worked out, and she hasn't hit me over the head with that diploma.

With Marjorie, every single day is Valentine's Day (in my mind). Our marriage has been an amazing ride, and it just keeps getting better. Marjorie is so much more than a wife to me: She's my partner, my coworker, and my best friend. On top of all that, she gave me the most wonderful family anyone could ask for. For a guy who was too shy to ask, things sure worked out in my favor!

It's been 22 years now, but I still have questions:

1. Can you accept an offer that was never made?
2. If you can't, but everyone acts like it did, do you still have a binding contract?

Sometimes, deep in my lawyer brain, I wonder if Marjorie and I are really married after all. Our marriage violates Contract



Law 101. We do have a marriage certificate, but without a proposal, does it count? Is it the real deal? I'll have to dig into the legalese one day soon. Either way, I'll probably keep what I find quiet — if anyone got the raw end of this deal, it was Marjorie!

Legal issues aside, I still wonder what would have happened had I asked her Dad for permission? At that time, he called me Yankee in his southern drawl. When you are from New Jersey, you don't want to tick off a big ole southern boy who calls you Yankee and has the nickname "Chainsaw." Maybe it was better that I didn't ask?

(Love you, honey!)

-Carmen Dellutri

"To this day I still regret that I didn't ask her dad's permission ... but to be fair, I didn't ask for hers either."

If you know someone who would like a copy of this newsletter, please visit this link to add them to our mailing list: DellutriLawGroup.com/resources/newsletters

The Risk Isn't Worth It CONSIDER UM COVERAGE

A recent study by the Insurance Research Council found that 1 in 8 U.S. drivers have no insurance. The study also found that the number of uninsured drivers is on the rise. This means that people with insurance will pay out of pocket when an accident does happen — even if that accident was the fault of an uninsured driver! In other words, uninsured drivers (and drivers who do not have enough insurance) put insured drivers at significant risk.

What Is Uninsured Motorist Coverage?

Uninsured Motorist Coverage (UM) can be added to your auto insurance policy in case an uninsured or underinsured driver hits you. UM acts as a re-insurer of the bad driver who caused the accident, and it pays for the injuries incurred if an underinsured driver hurts you.

The state of Florida only requires two types of insurance coverage. The first is property damage, and that coverage does nothing for bodily injuries. The second coverage is personal injury protection (aka PIP). PIP provides \$10,000 in personal injury protection, but this protection only covers the owner of the vehicle and not someone who might be injured by that owner's negligence. In my opinion, 60% of the people on Florida roadways are either uninsured or underinsured. This is why it's important to consider UM coverage if you can afford it.

For those who choose to underinsure themselves or just simply cannot afford to purchase adequate auto insurance, you may be sued if you injure someone else in an accident and do not have adequate coverage. So, ask yourself: Can I drive without UM? Yes. Is it a good idea? Not at all. Florida has one of the highest rates of uninsured and underinsured drivers, so it's a good idea to make sure you are covered if one of those drivers hits you or if you hit someone else.



Testimonial Our Clients Say It Best

“Excellent! This firm’s whole team was very helpful in my extreme need of their service, and I want to thank each of them. Especially Lauren Horton and David Lampley for helping me through and giving me full confidence in their outstanding abilities to meet my needs, for being so detailed so I could understand, and for providing help beyond my expectations. Mr. Dellutri, you have a very special group of people working for you and I thank you, sir! Well done!”

– D.C.

THANK YOU!

A Huge Thank-You to Our Referral Partners!

Last month we had:

- 21 referrals from friends, family, or previous clients
- 9 returning clients for a new matter
- 9 referrals from other attorneys
- 8 referrals from other professionals in town
- **We sent out 48 referrals**



Employee Spotlight

Melinda Nieves Legal Assistant, Personal Injury Department

Melinda Nieves is one of our legal assistants in the Personal Injury department. The first time we met with Melinda, we knew she was the perfect addition to our team. Melinda already had extensive knowledge working with personal injury patients and dealing with the insurance companies from a medical side. Adding in her approachable demeanor, we knew she was just what our clients needed.



When we asked Melinda how she feels about being part of the Dellutri Law Group Family, she said, “Being a working mom and learning to balance my work and home life was definitely the most challenging. Working for Dellutri Law Group, they not only treat us like family, they understand we have our own families outside of the office, too. It’s refreshing.”

Outside the office, Melinda enjoys spending time with her son, Jr., and enjoying the beach with her family and friends.

PASSION PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Midwest Food Bank is hosting their **2021 Virtual Auction & Carryout Dinner Fundraiser**. This year’s theme is “Reflect, Reinvest, Revive,” and it will be an online auction.

The online auction will open Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 8 a.m., closing on Friday, Feb.19, at midnight. You can also purchase a ticket and join them on Saturday, Feb. 20, from 4–7 p.m. at the Fort Myers warehouse for an interactive, drive-thru event.

Ticket holders can visit the warehouse and conclude the evening with a carry-out meal, which includes pear salad, roasted prime rib with potatoes and vegetables, and dessert.

Purchase tickets by visiting Events.IDonate.com/mfbfl2021.

Zucchini Noodles With Turkey Bolognese

Inspired by [JustATaste.com](https://www.justataste.com)

If you love spaghetti, you'll love these zucchini noodles!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup onions, diced small
- 1 lb ground turkey
- 1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 2 tsp sugar
- 3 medium zucchini
- Parmesan cheese, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large sauté pan over medium-low heat, warm 2 tbsp olive oil.
2. Add garlic and onions and stir constantly until garlic is golden and onions are translucent.
3. Increase heat to medium and add ground turkey, break apart, and cook thoroughly.
4. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, salt, pepper, and sugar. Reduce heat to low. Stir occasionally.
5. Using a spiralizer, mandolin, or vegetable peeler, cut the zucchini into noodles.
6. In another large sauté pan over medium-low heat, add remaining olive oil and zucchini noodles, tossing constantly for 2 minutes until slightly wilted.
7. Plate the zucchini noodles, top with the turkey Bolognese, and garnish with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.



What's the Good News?

“Very truly I tell
you, whoever
obeys my word will
never see death.”

John 8:51