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Newsletter April 2019

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April 2019

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April Is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month: Distracted Driving Continues to Increase in Florida

Distracted driving has already become an epidemic. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) estimates that there were more than 52,000 distracted driving accidents last year in our state – an average of 142 each **day!**

Tampa is no exception to this troubling statistic. Just last November, seven people including five children were hospitalized after being hit at a bus stop only 5 minutes from their school. Law enforcement officials believe that distracted driving was a factor in this accident and that driving while distracted by cellphones and other electronic devices, eating or drinking, or talking to passengers continues to be the main cause of other school bus stop accidents.



Parking Lots Are No Safer Than the Open Road

It's like a bumper car, says one victim of a parking lot accident caused by distracted driving. WFTS Tampa Bay reports 5,600 parking lot crashes in our area in 2018, a 16% increase in 3 years. Incredibly, this total for our area is more than all alcohol-related, pedestrian and motorcycle accidents **combined!**

And parking lot crashes are not merely fender benders. Last year, 32 people died in parking lot accidents in the Sunshine State. In Tampa, most parking lot accidents take place at Tampa International Airport and the International Mall.

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Our Offices and Hours

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Scheduled appointments after hours

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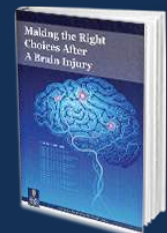
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In parking lots, drivers may be lulled into believing that just because they are traveling at a slow speed and are off the road, our distracted driving rules don't apply. However, this is not the case – texting while driving is prohibited in Florida even in parking lots. Texting is arguably the most dangerous of all driver distractions as it takes visual, manual and cognitive attention away from the task of driving.

However, at this time, texting while driving in Florida is a secondary offense, meaning that a police officer can cite you for this behavior only if you have been pulled over for another offense. A measure has been recently introduced in the state senate to make texting while driving a primary offense and to further restrict even handheld device use while behind the wheel.

Remove the distraction of your cellphone in the car by turning it off, tossing it in the back seat or closing it in the glove compartment. You can read more distracted driving safety tips at this FLHSMV website.

Staying Safe out on the Water

It's no secret that Florida is a boater's paradise. Our state has 8,436 miles of coastline, and Tampa Bay, Florida's largest open-water estuary, extends over 400 square miles.

However, all that boating fun comes with some risk, and recreational boating accidents occur too often. The U.S. Coast Guard (U.S.C.G.) Recreational Boating Statistics Report showed that there were 66 boating deaths in 2017 – the highest in the nation – along with 429 injuries.

Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor to fatal boating accidents. Other top causes include operator inattention, operator inexperience, missing or distracted lookout, excessive speed and machinery failure. Almost all of these factors are **preventable!**

Another sobering fact: Of those who drowned, 85% were not wearing life jackets.



Think Safety First When Venturing Out on the Water

- Each adult and child should always wear a life preserver. Read the U.S.C.G. life vests safety requirements.
- Stay away from alcohol when operating a boat or looking out. It's illegal and just as dangerous as driving under the influence.
- Before heading out, let someone know your "float plan" including captain name and contact information, itinerary, boat type and registry, number of passengers and emergency signaling and communication equipment.
- Stay alert to local weather conditions.
- Operate your vessel at a safe speed.
- Take boating education and safety courses from the U.S.C.G.

Additional Resources

- Have your boat's safety checked for free as offered by both the U.S.C.G. Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadron.
- U.S.C.G. Foundation Boating Safety Guide and Equipment and Departure Checklists.
- Boating Safety for Kids from SafeKids.org.

If you or a family member has been injured in a car accident, boating accident or any other personal injury, it's important to get an attorney experienced in these types of cases involved immediately. Call (866) 364-9529 for your initial free consultation. The Holliday Karatinos Law Firm, PLLC, injury attorneys in Brooksville and Lutz, Florida, can help you determine whether you need a lawyer for an accident or any personal injury case.

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Recipe of the Month

Chickpea Waldorf Salad

This simple chickpea Waldorf salad takes a lighter approach and offers a wonderful balance of sweet and savory with the perfect amount of crunch in every bite!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup plain full-fat yogurt
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 (14-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 ribs celery, finely chopped
- 1 medium apple, chopped into 1/4-inch chunks
- 1 cup red grapes
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup walnuts, roughly chopped
- 4 cups fresh spinach



Instructions

Prepare the yogurt dressing by combining the yogurt, apple cider vinegar, mustard, honey, salt, crushed red pepper flakes, and pepper in a bowl. Whisk until well-combined.

Combine chickpeas, celery, apple, grapes, onion, parsley, and walnuts in a large bowl. Stir in the dressing and toss until evenly coated. Refrigerate for about 30 minutes before serving, or up to 5 days.

Serve salad over fresh spinach. Serves 4.

Recipe courtesy of Andrea Bemis

What's Happening in North Tampa

May 11

Tampa Train Day
Tampa Union Station
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2X7IxHK>

May 18

97X BBQ Music & Arts Festival
Coachman Park
Clearwater, FL
<http://bit.ly/2VLXxLc>

May 25

Tampa Bay Margarita & Music Festival
Julian B. Lane Riverfront Park
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2KAgH5x>

May 25 - 26

Ice Cream 5K
Al Lopez Park
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2UinXTd>

June 2

Ozzy Osbourne: No More Tours 2
MidFlorida Credit Union Amphitheatre
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2XebUIB>

June 16 -17

The Great Father's Day Race 5K Run/Walk
Al Lopez Park
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2UXc8WX>

June 23

Tampa Bay Yoga Festival
Water Works Park
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2UiWHnN>

Jun 25

Luis Miguel
Amalie Arena
Tampa, FL
<http://bit.ly/2Paxaw9>



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Meet our Attorneys



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