

THE BUTTON LAW FIRM

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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BLF HITS THE WATER! Our Team's Boating Adventures

Everyone who has gone out on a boat has lived through at least one fiasco. For me, it happened when my family got our very first boat around the time I was 17. We decided to put it into Lake Texoma on a windy day. Unfortunately, we messed up and didn't put the sidepads out!

When we drove the boat forward to practice our parking, the metal dock ripped gouges right into the fiberglass. Luckily, only the boat was hurt.

You've probably noticed a couple of articles in our last few newsletters about the dangers of boating. Hopefully, you picked up a tip or two that will keep you safe this summer. But after that doom and gloom I figured it was time for our team to share the lighter side of boating.

One of my greatest joys is spending time on the water, and once my family mastered the boat we made amazing memories fishing, tubing, and wakeboarding (my sister's favorite), and just spending quiet moments together. Here are a few of our BLF family's best boating stories.

Jacqueline's Yucatan Adventure

"Last October, my husband and I got married in Cancun, and we decided to go on a boat and snorkeling tour that took us to a coral reef! We gathered a large group of friends, including much of our bridal party, to join us on the tour. A guide led the way in our mini speed boats, and when we reached our destination and jumped into the water, we saw some incredible fish! The whole tour was a blast."

Jacky's Canoeing Success

"When I was in college, I went on a team camping trip to a small town near our school. There was a tiny lake on the campground with a bunch of canoes and life jackets. My friends were excited and adamant about getting into the canoe, but I'm not really one to get near large bodies of water! I finally built up the courage to step in and ride across what felt like an infinite sea. I held on as tight as I could, sure we'd tip over any second! Finally, I let myself go and enjoyed the calming sounds of the water. Trying again is on my bucket list!"

Jessica's Boat Club Discovery

"I have always loved going out on the lake, but for years I didn't go often because my family didn't own a boat. Then, a friend of ours came to town and invited us out on Lake Lewisville. I assumed he had a boat, but that was incorrect! He was a member of a boat club. Literally a week after going out on a boat with him, our family made the decision to join a boat club as well to access all of the boats. We find it so relaxing. Once you get cruising, you forget about anything else."

Cristina's Dolphin Hangout

"I didn't find the courage to experience what it's really like on the open water until adulthood. I was invited to go kayaking at Oleta River State Park in North Miami. I was terrified — but I went for it! We navigated a maze of mangroves and huge wakes from passing boats, which tossed our kayaks about like toothpicks. We made it out to the bay and were lucky enough to see a pod



Cristina and Ashley kayaking at the Oleta River State Park

of dolphins jumping across our path. It was hands-down the coolest and closest dolphin encounter I've ever had!"

Ashley's Floating Karaoke

"During the COVID summers of 2020 and 2021, my 'QuaranTeam' took annual vacations in Seaside, Florida. We rented a pontoon boat and took it out to the sandbars and around the intercoastal. We worked for weeks to craft the perfect playlist for the boat and spent the entire day out on the water together lounging on our lily pad floats and just hanging out at the different islands. I'll never forget the moment when KC & JoJo's song 'All My Life' came on and we turned it up and sang at the top of our lungs in unison."

As you can see, some of us are more adventurous boaters than others. But with the right safety steps, everyone can have fun on the water!

-Russell Button

CONGRATULATIONS ON TWO YEARS!

CRISTINA IS STILL CRUSHING HER PARALEGAL ROLE

Our awesome paralegal, Cristina, has already been with BLF for *two whole years*. If you're a long-time Hot-Button Issues reader, you'll probably remember the story of the crazy road trip she and Ashley took from Chicago to Houston when she moved here in 2020. It was a wild ride that involved an early morning wakeup, a sick kiddo, and an even sicker Beagle!

Fortunately, the hassle was 100% worth it. Cristina has been killing it here since day one and recently took on even more responsibility. For the last few months, she has been working with Rosie to learn the ropes of litigation and handle the ins-and-outs of settlements for our clients that are minor children.



The rules around settling personal injury cases for kids under 18 are tricky, but Cristina is learning fast.

"I didn't realize that so much goes into it until I actually started working with Rosie on a couple of them. Then I thought, 'Wow this is a lot!'" Cristina says, laughing. "... It's pretty rewarding, because before I worked on the cases from start to *almost* finish. Now when I go through the settlement process for these minor cases, it's really cool to see it all come together in the end."

Cristina's favorite part of that work is watching families walk out the door after their settlements with the compensation and

justice they deserve. Overall, she says the best parts of year two have been watching BLF grow and training Jacky, her fellow paralegal who just celebrated one year with the firm.

"Jacky has been incredible. She might be the greatest team member I've ever met in my life, and I get to work with her on a daily basis!" Cristina says.

Outside of the office, not much has changed for Cristina in the last year. She and her husband are looking forward to the day their daughter starts second grade this fall. In the meantime, she's attending summer camp at a local church and absolutely loving it.

We're so lucky to have Cristina on our team. If you see her this month, be sure to tell her congratulations!

THE LOCAL FIX TO YOUR PEST PROBLEM

Why We Trust Able Pest Control

As daycare lawyers, it's part of our job to expose child care companies that aren't safe for kids and squash them out of the industry. Some days it feels like these bad actors are pests that just won't go away no matter how many we bring to justice. But when it comes to *literal* pests like termites, ants, and rodents ... well, we're way out of our depth! That's why we rely on Able Pest Control to keep our office in good shape.

Able Pest Control is a local, family-owned company run by Chris Hitt and Bobby Bartlett. Bobby started the company way back in 1993 and Chris came on board in 2020 after more than 20 years as Bobby's friend and neighbor. They've been keeping our office pest-free for over three years, and they also inspect Russell's house and his parents' home!

We love working with Bobby and Chris because they share the same values that we do. They really care about their clients, always keep a line of communication open, and they're passionate about what they do.

"Every day in pest control is a new challenge," Bobby says, "and not in a bad way! We're always trying to figure out ways to solve problems with bugs. We have a lot of tools and chemicals available,

but sometimes we still have to research someone's problem to figure out what created it and why they're having a certain bug issue. I enjoy that aspect of the job."

Chris and Bobby work together to sleuth out those problems and solve them with as few chemicals as possible. As Chris puts it, when you call Able Pest Control, "You know that Bobby or Chris will be the person who comes to the door to treat your problem, not some Joe, Sally, or Mary who is different every time."

Able serves the Dallas-Fort Worth area and treats ants, cockroaches, fleas, mice, mosquitoes, rats, spiders, termites, wasps, and more. You can call them for help or contract with them to check out your place regularly.

"A lot of times we can head off big problems when they're just little problems," Bobby says.

To learn more, visit AblePestControlDFW.com or call 817-543-2847.



Bobby & Chris of Able Pest Control.

MOUNTAIN BIKING GONE WRONG

BLF Goes to Bat for a Paralyzed Client

Imagine you're biking down a straight, level path on a lazy Saturday morning. You're on this ride to relax after a long week. Then, all of a sudden, the road beneath you veers upward and launches you into the air. When you crash to the ground, you're paralyzed from the neck down and your life is changed forever.

As unlikely as that situation sounds, it's almost exactly what happened to our client, who we'll call "Micah." He was mountain biking down an easy trail at high speed when — before he knew it — the path merged with a much harder trail. Micah hit a jump, and it shot his bike into the air. He crumpled to the ground, unable to move, and spent hours screaming for help before he was finally discovered and airlifted to a nearby medical center.

Micah's story is truly tragic, because it was preventable! If the bike park he was using had clearly marked its trails and jumps, he would have been able to pull off the path in time to avoid a traumatic crash. Since they didn't, he had to adjust to a new life that included months of surgery and therapy to regain the use of his limbs.

We're so glad Micah found our firm, and we threw all of our efforts into representing him. We held the bike park's insurance company accountable for his medical bills, lost wages, and pain and suffering. Micah's settlement enabled him to move forward with his life without the stress of medical debt and fear for his financial future.



It's rare that we see a mountain biking case in our office, but we put everything we had into helping Micah, just like we do our clients injured in car crashes, boating accidents, and at daycares. If you know someone with a personal injury case — no matter how unusual it is — know that you can always send them to our office. We'll do everything we can to help.

BLF HIGHLIGHT REEL



CLIENT REVIEW

"I had the opportunity to meet Ashley Washington at a legal seminar where she was presenting on the topic of premises liability. Ashley's understanding of the law and strategic approach to justice for the injured was inspiring. She even inspired me to listen to an audio book mentioned in the Hot-Button Issues new letter published by The Button Law Firm. I met Russell after reading a story in an issue of Hot-Button Issues, his team purchased him AirPods, which I felt spoke highly of how his team thought and felt about him. And another story about his rescue dog, Chuie. What I have learned is that The Button Law Firm, PLLC is committed to helping those who were injured through no fault of their own by offering professional attentive service while remembering the importance of having fun."

-Donal M.

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WHO PAYS AFTER A BOATING ACCIDENT?

Five Parties Who Could Be Responsible

Last August, a double-decker boat with 53 people onboard capsized on Lake Conroe, one of the most popular lakes for boating near Houston. A summer thunderstorm tossed the boat onto its side and flung passengers into the water. An 80-year-old man died in the waves, and EMTs rushed another passenger to the hospital.

Accidents on that scale don't happen every day, but they're more common in Texas than most people think. In 2020 alone, 50 people were killed in boating collisions here, and many more were injured. Brain and neck injuries are common in boating crashes, but we've also seen people survive with lower back injuries, spinal cord problems, lacerations, and broken bones.

If you or someone you know has been hurt like this, you've probably wondered who you can hold accountable for your medical bills, medication costs, pain, suffering, and other damages. Sometimes there's no one to blame but Mother Nature; but often, you can make a claim against those responsible for causing the damages.

In our experience, there are five parties that could be responsible:

- The boat owner
- The operator of the boat you were in
- The manufacturer of the boat
- The operator of the other boat that collided with the boat you were in
- A rental company or third-party operator

Finding out who is to blame for a boating accident can be tricky, but it's not impossible. A good attorney can help you gather evidence, prove negligence, and even take the case to court. Our team helps boating accident victims secure compensation, hold the at-fault parties responsible, and get closure for those affected and their families.



Hopefully boating injuries never impact your friends and family. But if they do, our BLF team is here to help. Reach out to us at Intake@buttonlaw.com or **214-888-2216** to take the first step toward recovery.