

## HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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4315 W. Lovers Lane, Suite A, Dallas, TX 75209 | 1900 W. Illinois Avenue, Suite 101, Midland, TX 79701

## HOW WE TELL THE STORY THAT NEEDS TO BE TOLD

## A Love of Learning

Friends and peers often ask if I'm working on anything interesting, and recently, I realized that my answer is almost always an enthusiastic yes. As an attorney, I am constantly studying something new.

Lately, I've been diving into forensic age progression and its application to the law. For example, we might want to show what a deceased father would look like at his daughter's college graduation or wedding or what someone who's now a quadriplegic would have looked like had they not been injured. Through this visual representation, we can begin to show what our clients have been through, and most importantly, what's been taken from them. I've been reading about this technology as if I were going to be an artist for the FBI. I even ordered the manual that they use to teach classes.

My job gives me the constant ability to learn something new, and I love that. For another case, I started studying trail building and mountain biking. Another situation has us learning all about escalators — I feel like I could probably fix one myself at this point.

We know daycares inside and out because we've studied them so that when a case comes in, we can ask the important questions right away. It helps us work faster and know what went wrong quickly, so we can start working to make it right.

What I'm learning now will last me a lifetime. It doesn't just help one case, either. It has the potential to help clients in the future who are in similar situations. The more we know, the more we can bring to the case.

It isn't just textbooks or manuals that we get to learn about — it's our clients. We get to know our clients really well because this is their life. If we're going to accurately tell their story, we need to know who they are. I've had the opportunity to know so many interesting and special people. I get to know their inner circle: their family and friends who come around them when a catastrophic event has altered their life. Getting to know different people and all the obstacles they've overcome, as well as watching them pursue their dreams after



they've recovered, is the coolest part of what we get to do. Helping people move forward is the best part.

When clients come to us, we recognize that they are putting their lives in our hands. It's powerful to have the opportunity to learn about people and then take that knowledge to tell the story that needs to be told.

When you look at people who have found success in their industry — from Denzel Washington to Bill Gates — they're the people who never stop learning. Even Denzel Washington still goes to acting classes and has acting teachers. I've heard that Bill Gates spends one week a year in a cabin in the mountains, somewhere really secluded, and he studies, reads, and game plans for his whole year. For people like Washington and Gates, success is a byproduct of constantly wanting to be your best. It's a quality I notice in the people I look up to: They are constantly bettering themselves through learning.

Last month, our previous intern, Nicole, started back up with us after graduating from law school. I'd been working for a few weeks to develop a training program for her, complete with reading assignments and some documentaries to watch. Putting it all together made me realize that not everyone gets excited about this kind of thing. This is for the people who have a love of learning, and they're the ones who thrive.

*-Russell Button*

# WHAT MAKES THIS TEAM SO GREAT

## REFLECTING ON 2 YEARS HERE

When I joined The Button Law Firm two years ago, I already knew Russell as the passionate, hard-working, exceptional attorney he is. It was wonderful to find out that everyone Russell brings to The Button Law Firm is on this wavelength. Our team makes this an extraordinary place to be. Reflecting on my two years at the firm, here are three of the reasons I love working with this group of people.

### 1. IT'S THE SHARED MOMENTS.

My favorite part of what we do is preparing our clients for their deposition because I really get to know them as individuals. Our team puts countless hours into preparing our clients for their cases. Oftentimes, we have to go back to the drawing board and make a new plan. No matter how we get there, the goal is always the same: giving our client closure. Every deposition prep reminds me of how much we all have in common as people, no matter what path we've been on.

### 2. WE PARTNER WITH INCREDIBLE PEOPLE (TURNED FRIENDS).

We get to work with the most amazing lawyers. We surround ourselves with like-minded, hard-working, passionate people. We co-counsel with several lawyers who bring new ideas and approaches. For me, this has also provided lasting friendships. Toby Cole, Scott Snellings, and Heather Long are three of these lawyers turned friends. Toby works out of Houston and is one of the best souls I know. Scott works out of Frisco and is one of the kindest, most hard-working people I know. Heather is the trial lawyer that every woman hopes to be. Through late nights working on cases, group and family dinners, and some of the toughest times in my life,

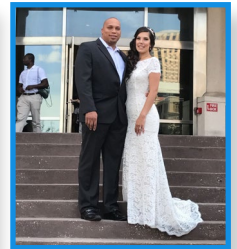
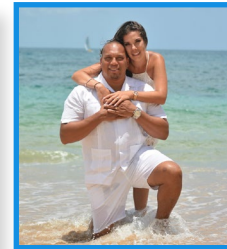
these friends have been there for me. I am so thankful that I have been able to get to know lawyers like Toby, Scott, and Heather.

### 3. WE'RE HERE FOR EACH OTHER — THROUGH IT ALL.

Finally, our team is here for each other through the good, the bad, and the really bad. I lost my dad unexpectedly on Aug. 7. This past month has been the absolute hardest of my life. Russell and our team have picked up the slack to give me the time I needed to take care of my family's needs. Every person in our office had their workload doubled because I had to be out. No one thought twice about it, and I received constant calls and messages checking in on me and my family. Our firm is so much more than just a law firm or an office. We are a team and a family, and we show up for each other, no questions asked.

I love my job and my team, and I'm grateful for all the little steps along the way that led me here.

*-Ashley*



## TAKING OWNERSHIP

### What It Means to Be a Leader

What does it mean to be a leader? I've given this question a lot of thought over the last few years. Leading a team means providing clear direction and constantly giving feedback. A true leader takes ownership of everything. When something goes wrong, it's on you. Could you sit down and blame someone else? Sure, but it's not going to help your team, your business, or yourself.

The finger of blame should always point back to the top. If someone didn't do a good job on a project, it's my job to evaluate how I didn't set them up for success. Did I not supervise them well enough, or are they not the right person for that project?



Being a leader is also about giving your team the tools they need to succeed. It starts with taking ownership of what you do so you can translate that to what your team does. Clear direction means thinking through every part of a project well. That way, when you pass it off to someone else, it's not just jumbled thoughts. It's my job to define the parameters and organize a project in such a way that someone else can easily make sense of it.

At our firm, for example, I've been working on revamping our marketing program. For a while, it was more idea-based, and I gave it to my team to run with. However, on a systematic level, it wasn't as smooth as I wanted it to be. I realized I hadn't given them clear parameters for success. So, I jumped back in and created a platform for our projects. I'm going to run it how I run everything else: with clear direction and the tools in place to let my team succeed and make the best choices for each project.

When you have the right team in place, you're able to focus on the parts of your business you're best at. Once you've given them clear direction and taken complete ownership of each success and failure, it's a lot easier to make every decision. Things begin to flow, and you can fully accept the joys and responsibilities of being a leader.

# HOW WE HELPED AN INJURED SMALL-BUSINESS OWNER

## Answering the Important Questions for Our Clients

In October 2015, the longtime owner of a DFW HVAC company was walking out of a car dealership when he suddenly fell. It wasn't just a coincidence — the dealership had a blind drop-off curb with no warnings to customers. In fact, three other customers had fallen on this same curb when exiting the dealership and had required surgery for their injuries.

When the HVAC owner fell, his knee twisted underneath him, and he landed on his lower back. This fall required him to have knee surgery and undergo injections into his spine, leading to a surgery recommendation for his lower back.

He didn't want to hire a lawyer, but when the insurance company for the dealership ignored him and left him to deal with his serious injuries on his own, he turned to The Button Law Firm.

### HOW WE HELPED OUR CLIENT THROUGH THE PROCESS

Our client's first question was one we would all ask in this situation, "How do my medical bills get paid?" In his particular case, he had health insurance, so that covered the treatment he needed along the way. In the end, we reimbursed what he had paid out of the settlement, also called a subrogation claim. When we resolved the case, we were able to get a reduction on the amount he had to pay back, putting more money in our client's pocket.

Our client's second question was, "How long will this take?" When a client calls our office, our typical timeline for resolution is six months to a year (with some exceptions out of our control). This case had some unique twists and turns. The defendants did not want to tell us who had control over the area; in fact, parts of the dealership were under construction at the time our client fell. Because the defendants did not want to give us this information, we had to bring everyone into the case to figure it out, taking more time to resolve the matter.

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR THE COMMUNITY

Our client wasn't just worried about his well-being; he also wanted to make sure others didn't have to go through the same thing he did. "How can I make sure this blind drop-off curb is safe for future customers?" he asked us. After hearing this question, we knew he was our type of client. Part of our role is to ensure that whatever happened to our clients doesn't happen to anyone in the future.

Our client allowed us to pursue a lawsuit to create awareness of this blind drop-off. After he fell, the dealership was forced to paint the area to warn future customers of the danger. The visual cues and awareness of the issue should lead to safety changes in the future.

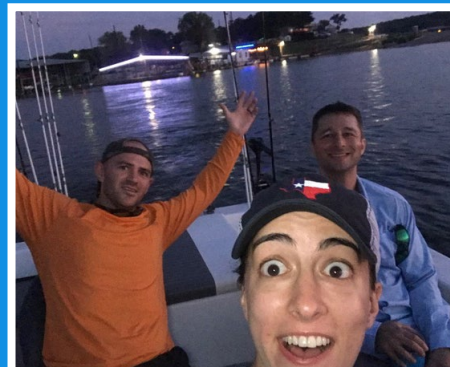
## BUTTON LAW FIRM HIGHLIGHT REEL



Mario graduated from diesel mechanic school



Nola's (Ashley's dog) birthday



Russell, his sister Roxana, and brother-in-law Dom, fishing on Lake Texoma



Juan, Jose, and Russell after wrapping up their premises case



## WE'VE MOVED!

4315 W. Lovers Lane, Suite A  
Dallas, Texas 75209

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## A DAY AT THE SPA

### Chuie Gets a Makeover at Billi Bonze

During the summer, life can get hectic with travel for work and play. That was the case for Russell this summer. Between work and family trips, Russell's best friend, Chuie, went a long time without getting groomed, and she was long overdue for a haircut. In the summer, a shorter cut is especially important because it helps Chuie stay cool in the hot Texas sun.

Since moving offices, Russell had yet to find a new groomer in the neighborhood, and he was on the hunt for a good local spot. That weekend, Russell and Chuie were headed to the lake, so he wanted to make sure she got a haircut before their adventure. He stopped by one of the grooming spots near our office, but they were all full for the day. However, they told him to check out the place across the street, Billi Bonze, as they had more groomers available.

Russell walked into Billi Bonze and immediately noticed how happy all the dogs were. He was greeted by a friendly front desk person, who, it turned out, is the owner of Billi Bonze, Margaret. Margaret said they'd be able to fit Chuie in that day, and while Chuie waited for her appointment, she would get to hang out in her own kennel and have plenty of fun. Margaret introduced Russell and Chuie to the whole staff and made them both feel welcome. Russell left Chuie knowing she was in good hands.



When Russell came back to pick her up, not only did Chuie look great — she'd had a bath and was clean and groomed just like the picture Russell had shown of her — but he also noticed how happy she was. He could tell she'd been having plenty of fun while she was there. It was every pet owner's dream. It's safe to say Russell and Chuie have found their new friendly neighborhood groomer.