

## THE BUTTON LAW FIRM

## HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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## MEDITATING ON GRATEFULNESS

## A New Law Firm Family

Some time ago, I started a tradition that's become a part of my everyday ritual. I call it "patio time." At the end of the day, I like to go outside and sit on the patio. I don't take my computer, phone, or anything that's going to beep or blink. I just write down my thoughts. It's designated time to reflect on the day, my goals, and what's important.

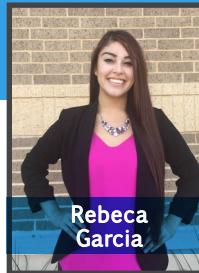
I'm huge on reflecting. Whether it's my first cup of coffee in the morning or patio time in the evening, I like to sit with my thoughts, meditate on gratefulness, and stay in the moment. Mindfulness and meditation not only help manage stress, but they actually create changes in the brain, strengthening certain areas against disease.

So, it's no wonder that during patio time one night, I had a realization. I was enjoying my law practice, but there was something missing from the firm: a team. Teamwork has always been important to me, even as a kid. Growing up playing basketball, I quickly learned that you're nothing without a strong team. It's a mentality I've learned from my sports icons. Any time they've ever won, it's all about the team. Just look at what Tom Brady says when he's congratulated on a win: "We're an amazing team. My wide receiver did a great job of getting open." He uses "we," not "I," because he knows any success is a result of their combined effort.

With my law firm, I've realized the same concept applies, and so I've welcomed a couple new all-stars to the Button Law Firm. Ashley, an attorney, and Rebeca, a legal assistant, have joined the practice, and I'm very thankful for our individual skills and ability as a team.

My reflection made me realize that I want more of a team approach to how we tackle cases, and I wanted to bring on someone who can compensate for my weaknesses. That's Ashley. She is brilliant with the writing, research, and procedure of law, and her strengths have allowed me to be a better trial lawyer.

Ashley's mind was made up to be a lawyer after a life-changing event she experienced as a child: "When I was 5, my mom gave birth to my twin brothers, and one of them was born premature. He passed away due to the negligence of the doctor. We dealt with medical malpractice when I was a kid, before I even knew what being an attorney was. Growing up, I always heard from my mom and dad how the lawyer was going to help us, and I thought, 'Whatever he does, that's what I want to do,' because



Rebeca Garcia



Ashley Washington



Sheba, Russell, Rebeca, and Ashley

my family spoke so highly of him. Since then, I've had one goal: to be the attorney that helps somebody and changes their life for the better."

Originally from Florida, Ashley says her first time in Texas "felt like home," and she is happy to call it that now. She and her husband have two dogs that take up most of their time outside of work. They do make the trip back to Miami often to visit her family, and the Miami Marlins are still her favorite team despite being "a very difficult team to be a fan of."

When I met Rebeca, who's now our legal assistant, I immediately knew she was going to be exactly what we needed. She is challenge-oriented and her mind is always set on the process of getting the work done. She's a self-starter. Whatever needs to be done, she'll figure out a way. Rebeca loves our mission, and she's always organized and eager to learn more.

Here's a bit more from Rebeca in her own words: "I always knew I wanted to go into the legal field. I have a lot of investigative skills and I love figuring out problems. The work is challenging but also very rewarding. Every case is different, so you are always finding new techniques and strategies to get to where you want to be."

Rebeca has lived in Dallas all her life, and she calls herself a "die-hard Texan." She loves the Dallas Cowboys and the Texas lifestyle. Outside of work, she shares her passion for animals by volunteering at shelters, and she also enjoys family time and a good crime show.

If you visit the office, I look forward to introducing you to these talented folks in person. We're a team, and we'll work collectively to get you the closure you need.

Have a happy Thanksgiving with your family. I hope you have just as much to be grateful for, and don't be afraid to take some patio time to remind yourself of it.

Russell Button

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# HOW TO HOST A SOUP SWAP



'Tis the season for delicious, hearty food, and nothing quite hits the spot on a cool winter evening like hot soup. Everyone has their favorites, whether it's a classic bowl of chicken noodle or a Tuscan white bean and garlic soup, so why not share the love at a soup swap? Similar to white elephant gift exchanges, guests arrive at a soup swap with a several helpings of their favorite soup and leave with something entirely new! Here's how you can host your own.

## Step 1: Send out the invites.

The more the merrier. Invite all your soup-loving friends. Instruct everyone to prepare at least 4 quarts of soup. If you invite six guests, make sure everyone brings their soup in six separate containers. Everyone should go home with the same amount of soup they brought. The soup that guests will give away should be frozen, but remind guests to also bring a separate warm serving of soup for tasting.

## Step 2: Prepare the tasting stations.

Soup can get a bit messy, so lay down a simple tablecloth on your table for easy cleanup later. Prepare a handful of blank labels — you can use chalkboard paint, scrapbook paper, or really anything fun — for guests to fill out and place on their soup when they arrive. You'll want to provide plenty of spoons and maybe some bread, crackers, or other snacks.

## Step 3: Get to swapping!

As guests arrive, give them the opportunity to socialize. This is a fun event, so while everyone is sampling the soup, play some music, offer drinks, and let them chat it up. After an hour or so, it's time to get down to business. Soupswap.com recommends having guests draw numbers for tasting order. Try each creation one at a time until you're out of soup! You don't have to follow this structure, of course. Find a method that works best for you and your guests.



## Bonus: Use Mason jars.

Readily available in bulk at most grocery stores, Mason jars are leakproof and easier to transport than plastic storage containers. Plus, they're inexpensive and fairly easy to replace. No one likes hounding their friends for precious glass containers weeks after a party.

Soup swaps are guaranteed fun all year long. Looking for more advice to help throw the perfect soup swap? The Kitchn, a popular food blog, has everything you need to know at [thekitchn.com/january-soup-swap-gatherings-from-the-kitchn-214906](http://thekitchn.com/january-soup-swap-gatherings-from-the-kitchn-214906).

# NOVEMBER CASE STUDY

## Parking Lot Trap



### WHAT HAPPENED?

A DFW company had a parking lot where the public would park to walk up to their building. Half of the parking lot was repaved due to numerous safety issues for their customers and employees. However, the DFW company made the choice to leave the other half in its unsafe condition. On June 20, 2014, our client parked her car and stepped

out. Her left foot got stuck in a crack that had developed between the old pavement and the new pavement. It caused her to twist and fall hard. She tried to break her fall. This caused her to shatter her forearm and wrist. It required emergency surgery and a plate with screws that will be left in her for the rest of her life. She had months of therapy to try to get back to her new normal.

### HOW WE HELPED

Luckily, we were called the next day. We immediately sent out someone to take photos of the parking lot to show the different sides as well as the area that our client's foot got stuck in. Unsurprisingly, less than a week later, we went back out to the site to take more photos and the company had repaved the entire parking lot to remove all unsafe conditions. After months of the company's provider denying liability and responsibility on its own, we sent a final demand that showed how this fall was completely preventable. We gave them the photos of the lot the day of the fall and the lot less than a week later, which was all the adjuster had seen up until that point. On the last day before we filed the lawsuit, the insurance company caved and realized we had caught them in a lie. They paid our complete demand in a timely manner.

Because our client called us immediately, we were able to catch a company in their attempt to cover up the dangerous condition. We had the evidence that they didn't want us to have. Additionally, through my reputation as a trial lawyer, we were able to stand strong and be unafraid to file the lawsuit when we said we would. This combination is what won a settlement far beyond what the insurance company wanted to pay.



When you're hurt at work, there are so many questions running through your head, not to mention the pain you're feeling. You're probably tempted to just go home and rest, especially if you've had medical treatment.

But there are important steps you need to take right away after a workplace injury. If you are unable to carry them out, find someone who can, because protecting yourself after you've suffered an injury at work is as important as preventing one in the first place.

So, what are the first steps after a workplace injury?

#### 1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION

Even if your employer does not have workers' compensation and doesn't offer to send you to a doctor, make sure you find one to go to. If you need help figuring out why your employer is not helping with this, please just give us a call. We will help you.

## HAVE A LAUGH



## PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS AFTER A WORKPLACE INJURY

#### 2. REPORT THE INJURY TO YOUR COMPANY

In most situations, your employer will already know about your injury and reach out to you. But if they don't, you must report the injury to your employer. This ensures there is a record of it and an opportunity for the employer to do the right thing. If there is a dangerous piece of equipment that needs to be fixed or another company that needs to be made aware of a dangerous employee, your employer should do this. It also allows documentation of the injury in the required timeline to get compensation (usually required within 72 hours of an injury).

#### 3. ASK QUESTIONS

If you don't know what to do or have never been down this path before, you are not alone. Whether it's researching as much as you can or reaching out to us, I encourage you to do it. Then, once you have exhausted your research and options, let us know. We can help you understand what your rights are and whether you even need a lawyer to resolve your claim.

All workplace injuries deserve a thorough investigation. Know your rights and your options. We want to provide you with the information to make the best decision for your case, your career, and your family. Read our free information and give us a call with any questions you have. We are here for you.

## ROASTED PARMESAN PESTO POTATOES



**It only takes 3 ingredients to make these crispy, flavorful potatoes. They're the perfect side dish for any meal.**

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds red potatoes, quartered
- 2 tablespoons basil pesto
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons grated fresh Parmesan cheese

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. In large bowl, combine potatoes and pesto. Toss to coat. Transfer potatoes to large baking sheet or shallow roasting pan. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Roast 20 minutes and remove from oven.
3. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese evenly over potatoes and put pan back in the oven. Roast for additional 10–15 minutes or until potatoes are tender and crispy. Remove from oven and serve warm.

*Recipe courtesy of TwoPeasAndTheirPod.com.*

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## OTIS Unlikely Hurricane Hero

In late August, the nation was put to the test after Hurricane Harvey struck Texas, displacing millions from their homes and taking dozens of lives. Activists, charitable organizations, and ordinary people sprang into action to provide needed relief.

Journalists, professional and otherwise, brought back stories and images of the destruction and aftermath. Among those stories was one dog who went viral for exemplifying that resilient Texas spirit.

Otis, a German shepherd mix, belongs to a 5-year-old boy in Sinton, Texas, just north of Corpus Christi. He's cherished by his owner, but if you talk to other residents, you could say he belongs to the whole town.

"He's a special dog," said Salvador Segovia, the grandfather of Otis' owner. "He's been instrumental in helping my grandson following numerous hospital visits for seizures and asthma."

Apparently Otis has a free pass other dogs in Sinton don't have. He can saunter down to the Dairy Queen and score a free hamburger. Salvador says he's also the only dog allowed to lie down in front of the county court house and refers to him as "a local celebrity." He has

an affable personality and a quiet demeanor. But, as the hurricane proved, Otis also had a fighting spirit.

When Harvey struck, dogs, cats, and people went into survival mode. For Otis, that meant gathering resources. The morning after the storm, a woman snapped a picture of a damp Otis trotting down the street. In his mouth, he toted an entire bag of dog food, and not a small one.

The woman posted the picture to Facebook. "This dog is walking around Sinton, Texas, carrying a [sic] entire bag of dog food with him. LOL #refugee," the caption read.

The image resonated with people and quickly went viral, being shared over 50,000 times. The people of the Lone Star State have long prided themselves on their pluck and resilience.

"Must be a Texas dog cause [sic] he can survive without help," one commenter wrote online. Another site called him "the hero Texas needed."

Otis' canine resilience was both humorous and inspirational. The most powerful images in a crisis aren't of Air Force One or of celebrities donating millions. They're of ordinary people — and pets — striving, surviving, and making their way back home, just like Otis.