



MELDON

LAW TALK

NEWSLETTER FROM THE LAW OFFICE OF JEFFREY MELDON & ASSOCIATES

Lawyer Jokes (Inspired by The Sky's Bob Rose)

Charged for early shopping:

It was Christmas, and the Judge was in a merry mood as he asked the prisoner, "What are you charged with?"

"Doing my Christmas shopping early," replied the defendant.

"That's no offense," said the Judge. "How early were you doing this shopping?"

"Before the store opened," countered the prisoner.

Too much to drink—Beware!

If you see a fat man who's jolly and cute
Wearing a beard and a red flannel suit
And if he is chuckling and laughing away
While flying around
In a miniature sleigh
With eight tiny reindeer
To pull him along...

Then lets face it,
Your eggnog's too strong!

December 2010 Volume III, Issue II Visit us online @ MeldonLaw.com

Christmas in Florida: We may not have snow, but...

Yes Virginia.... there really is Christmas in Florida, in fact:

- **There actually is a Christmas, Florida.** Located 20 miles east of Orlando, on Highway 50, originally called Fort Christmas due to the time of year that the fort was built in 1837. People come from all around to postmark their Christmas cards, "Christmas, Florida."
- **Historians say the first Christmas observed in North America was celebrated here, in Florida.** Hernando de Soto and his army spent years exploring the American South. De Soto's Winter Encampment in 1539-1540 was located in what is today, Tallahassee, Florida. There, the Spaniards would have celebrated with a special Christmas mass. However, according to historians, since de Soto and his men were under attack by the natives, their Christmas celebration would have been hurried, but, very religious.



Wishing you and yours, no matter where you live, a happy, healthy, safe, and warm Holiday Season!

Safety Reminder: Space heaters—safety the top consideration!

Space heaters can keep you warm, but they can also be dangerous—even deadly! Our hearts go out to the family and friends of the 5 children killed in the recent Citra house fire, likely caused by a space heater. In their memory, and in light of the cold months ahead—**9 safety reminders for space heaters:**

1. **Keep the heater at least 3 feet away** from anything combustible—furniture, drapes, bed linens, newspapers, wood, clothing, trash, throw carpets, walls, etc.
2. **Plug the heater directly** into the wall outlet with a 3-prong plug.
3. **Turn off the heater** when you leave the room or go to bed. **Unplug it** when you leave the house.
4. **Place the heater** on a flat, level, firm, and stable surface.
5. **Install and maintain** at least one smoke detector on each floor of your home.
6. **Do not use electric heaters** in bathrooms or near water.
7. **Keep children and pets away** from space heaters.
8. **Fuel burning heaters** pose additional dangers of an open flame and possible exhaust.
9. **Make sure** your heater is not damaged and is approved by a nationally recognized testing company.



Heads up: Space heaters are also used in work places! Due to associated risks with space heaters, most facilities at Harvard University prohibit their use.

A Note From Jeffrey: Welcome and Thank You!

My Staff, Associates, and I **welcome our new clients** that joined the Meldon Law Family this past month and send our **personal thanks to all that referred friends and family and have gone out of their way to send notes of appreciation.** The Law Office of Jeffrey Meldon is **proud to represent people in the "Heart of Florida"** for accidents, personal injury, wrongful death, medical malpractice, dog bites, slip and falls, and criminal defense. **Consultations are always free.** My thank you's go out as well to those that took the time to request topics they would like to see addressed in the Newsletter. **Thank you and please, feel free to call the Office if I can be of assistance.**

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THE LAW OFFICE OF
JEFFREY MELDON
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In honor of our clients and subscribers from North Central and Central Florida—a new column, *Community Spotlight*.

Community Spotlight: *Levy County...nature's wonderland.*

Here are some interesting tidbits and facts about Levy ("Lee Vee") County:

- In 1821, there were only two counties in Florida—Escambia to the west and St. John to the east. Out of these two counties were formed the 67 that exist today.
- Levy County was formed in 1845 out of Alachua and Marion Counties.
- David Levy Yule is the county's namesake. Yule developed a 6,000 acre plantation on the Homosassa River; was one of Florida's first two U.S. Senators; and helped construct the first railroad in Florida, linking the coasts between Cedar Key and Fernandina.
- **Of the 1,412 square miles of Levy County, 294 are water (20.81%).**
- Bronson is the seat of the county, which also includes Williston, Cedar Key, and Chiefland.
- **1/5 of the county is set aside for state and national wildlife areas, parks, preserves, and springs—making it part of Florida's Nature Coast.**
- **Goethe State Forest, Manatee Springs, Cedar Key's National Wildlife Refuge, and Scrub State Preserve** are just some of Levy County's opportunities to enjoy Florida's natural beauty.
- According to 2009 Florida Traffic Crash Statistics, Levy County, as a small population county, (35,000-100,000), ranks #11 out of 14 for crashes.

Jeffrey Meldon/TV20 Scholar Athletes of the Week: *Congratulations!*

Every week during the school year a deserving high school senior is awarded the "Scholar-Athlete of the Week" title, a \$100 scholarship, and a plaque. The award is announced on TV 20's Thursday evening sports news @ 6:00 pm and includes a video clip of the student and their achievement. **Here are the recent winners:**

Oct. 16—**Teddy Lausier II** from St. John High for Golf—"Whatever Teddy needs to get done, he'll get it done."

Oct. 28—**Eryn Croft** from Gainesville High School for Volleyball—"Eryn attacks her school work with the same force as she does on the volleyball court."

Nov. 4—**Jamantye Thompson** from Chiefland High for Football—"Jamantye hasn't let up, running over his school work and football practice as he does would-be defenders."

Nov. 11—**Holly Pole** from Vanguard High for Volleyball—"Holly will rise to whatever challenges are put in front of her."

Understanding New DMV Requirements—*Not as easy as you may think!*

In January 2010, Florida instituted new documentation requirements for residents obtaining or renewing a Driver's License or Identification Card—and they can make your head spin! These new requirements apply to you if you are applying for your 1st license; renewing if you already used your one time convenient renewal option; replacing a lost or stolen license or ID; or legally wanting to change your name.

Basically, you must prove 3 things:

1. **Primary Identification**—such as birth certificate, valid passport, etc
2. **Proof of Social Security Number**—such as Social Security Card, W-2, etc
3. **2 Proofs of Residential Address**—such as Voter Registration Card, recent utility bills, etc

**Gather
Go
Get**

Our suggestions to save time and headaches, *either*:

- Go to www.GatherGoGet.com and fill out the form so you know what will be required;
- Or visit www.dmvflorida.org and under Drivers License, click on ID Requirements.



Wondering what you should do after an accident or injury?



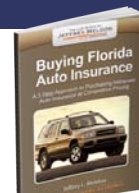
Consumer Protection
Accident Guide Book



Now available on audio CD!

Most people think it will never happen to them. However, statistics show that one in five will be involved in a traffic crash. **How can you protect yourself and your family?**

Be safe, be educated, be adequately insured, and be prepared!



Insurance Guide

**FREE
Accident Kit
with Camera**

FLORIDA LAW
ACCIDENT &
GUIDE
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Have your **free** accident kit, including camera and guide at hand!

Office Blog: *Red means STOP!... don't let these excuses stop you from stopping!*

What are the top 10 excuses for running a red light? According to, **STOP!** Red Light Running Coalition of Florida:

1. I was late for an appointment.
2. I was speeding and in a hurry.
3. I had to make a call on my cell phone.
4. There were no police cars in sight.
5. I was simply daydreaming and not paying attention.
6. I really didn't think it was any big deal...who cares?
7. I was busy looking at my newspaper (or travel directions).
8. I was following the car in front too closely and couldn't see the light.
9. Come on..... I hate to wait at traffic lights!
10. These red signals are just too long!



Facts are:

- In 2007, red-light running caused more than 900 deaths and 154,000 injuries nationwide.
- **Motorists are more likely to be injured in red-light-running accidents than any other type of wreck.**
- **Florida ranks 7th** in states with highest death rates in "red-light running crashes" (3.1 deaths per 100,000 residents).
- In 2008, **Florida was the deadliest state for bicyclists and pedestrians**, which may be related to failure to obey traffic signals at intersections, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission.

Red means stop; green means go! It is one of the first traffic rules we learn in drivers education.

Meldon & Friends' "Trivial Pursuit" for December

Q: In 1856, the 14th president of the U.S., President _____ was the first president to place a Christmas tree in the White House.

Q: Christmas seals originated in Denmark to help children with TB. The first American Christmas seal was created in 1925. Today, proceeds from the sales of Christmas seals in the U.S. benefits the _____ to help fight all types of lung diseases. (*First American Christmas seal, above right*)

Q: The U.S. did not invent holiday stamps. The first Christmas stamp was made in _____ in 1898 with the words, "XMAS 1898." Issued in 1962, the first American Christmas stamp said, "Christmas 1962." (*First American Christmas stamp, below right*)

Q: December was originally the 10th month of the Roman calendar. True or False

Q: On Dec 7, _____, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor located in _____ on the island of _____. This action prompted the United States' involvement in _____. President at the time of the attack, _____, proclaimed December 7th, "a date which will live in infamy."



Answers: Franklin Pierce, American Lung Association, Canada, True, 1941, Hawaii, World War II, Franklin D. Roosevelt

Recent Settlement—1 Moral of the Story

Recently, we helped a man, who was seriously injured in a car crash. **After lengthy stays at a hospital, nursing home, and a rehabilitation center, he was left with several hundreds of thousands of medical bills, lost wages, and a permanent disability.** Here is the story:

- The at-fault driver had **\$100,000 Bodily Injury (BI) Insurance**.
- Our client had **\$100,000 of Under Insured Motorist Coverage (UM)**.
- Before we accepted the \$100,000 of BI on behalf of our client, we conducted an asset investigation of the at-fault party.
- We determined the at-fault party had significant assets, and we were able to get them to pay **\$50,000 out of their own pocket**.
- In addition to his Worker's Compensation benefits, which paid most of his medical bills and lost wages, we also obtained a settlement for our client of **\$250,000**.

MORAL OF THE STORY

In my book, Buying Florida Auto Insurance, I recommend a *minimum* of \$100,000 of BI insurance. However, **please note**, for people that have significant assets, \$100,000 may not be sufficient protection of your personal assets, in the event you cause an accident resulting in serious injuries. **I strongly recommend \$300,000 to \$500,000 of Bodily Injury Liability Insurance as well as Umbrella Coverage, if you have sizable assets.**

Note: This publication is intended to **educate** the general public. **It is not intended to be legal advice.** Every case is unique.

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Happy Holidays

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Ask Jeffrey: *What is the 2011 UF football schedule?*

Glad you asked. I am also excited to make plans for it. Here it is:

Sept. 3 Florida Atlantic, TBA
Sept. 10 Alabama-Birmingham, TBA
Sept. 17 Tennessee, TBA
Sept. 24 at Kentucky, TBA

Oct. 1 Alabama, TBA
Oct. 8 at LSU, TBA
Oct. 15 at Auburn, TBA
Oct. 22, Bye
Oct. 29 Georgia in Jacksonville, 3:30 p.m.

Nov. 5 Vanderbilt, TBA
Nov. 12 at South Carolina, TBA
Nov. 19 Furman, TBA
Nov. 26 Florida State, TBA

Go Gators!



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