



MELDON

LAW TALK

NEWSLETTER FROM THE LAW OFFICE OF JEFFREY MELDON & ASSOCIATES

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

Courtroom Humor

Judge: "Is there any reason why you couldn't serve as a juror in this case?"

Potential juror: "I don't want to be away from my job for that long."

Judge: "Can't they do without you at work?"

Potential juror: "Yes, but I don't want them to know that."

Attorney: "Doctor, as a result of your examination of the plaintiff, is the young lady pregnant?"

Witness: "The young lady is pregnant—but not as a result of my examination."

Attorney: "What is your name?"

Witness: (states name)

Attorney: "And what is your marital status?"

Witness: "Fair."

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Happy February—*Edison "lights up" the month.*

Thomas Alva Edison, born February 11, 1847, was the last of 7 children in a middle class Ohio family. Edison, who did not speak until nearly 4 yrs. of age, is considered one of the most prolific inventors in history, holding more than 1,093 patents in the U.S. alone. No one is more responsible for creating the modern world, than Edison. Though he is credited with the invention of the incandescent light bulb, he only improved upon it after testing 3,000 different filaments before finding one that worked. His inventions ranged from the early phonograph, telephone, and motion picture, to the creation of the first power generation and distributor systems—literally lighting up the world. Here are some of his quotes that also "light up" our lives:

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

"I have friends in overalls whose friendship I would not swap for the favor of the kings of the world."

"Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it is useless."

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

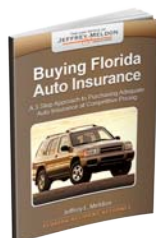
"Genius is one percent inspirations and ninety nine percent perspiration."

"Your worth consists in what you are and not in what you have."

"To invent, you need a good imagination and a pile of junk."



Office Reminder—*Uninsured Motorist Coverage is critical!*



Uninsured or Under-insured Motorist Coverage (UM) is the only way to protect yourself and family in the event of an accident, causing serious injury.

With more than 70% of drivers on the road in Florida having little, the minimum, or no insurance at all—**UM coverage is vitally important.**

Remember, Bodily Injury Liability Insurance covers the other person, if you cause an accident. It does not cover you or your family's expenses.

I recommend a **minimum** of \$100,000/\$300,000 of UM Coverage.

For more insurance information, please see my book, [Buying Florida Auto Insurance](#).

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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JEFFREY MELDON
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TOLL FREE
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In honor of our clients and subscribers from North Central and Central Florida—a new column, Community Spotlight.

Community Spotlight: Putnam County—rich in history and nature!

Here are some interesting tidbits and facts about some of Putnam County’s cities:

Palatka:

- Palatka is Seat of Putnam County and well known for its Music, Azalea, and Blue Crab festivals.
- Palatka, was originally named “Pilo-taikita,” Seminole for “crossing over” or “cows’ crossing.” In 1875, the city’s named was changed to Palatka, from Pilatka, by the post office, due to confusion with Picolata.
- Ravine Gardens State Park, a 59-acre-Florida State Park, is located in Palatka.

Interlachen:

- In the 1930’s, a train came through the town every 2 hours. Today, a caboose sits in the middle of the town as a reminder of its tourist haven history.
- In 1895, The Interlachen Academy was built and is the oldest wooden school house in continuous use in Florida. The building is now used for the High School’s JROTC program.

Crescent City:

- Eagles Nest Grove is located in Crescent City—the oldest continuous organic citrus grove in Florida.

Welaka:

- Welaka National Fish Hatchery is located in Welaka and is operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is a warm-water hatchery and the only National fish hatchery in Florida.

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:**

Dec. 16—Zach Boucias from Eastside High for Basketball— **“Now it is Zach’s turn to hit the court (after his two brothers), he also takes charge in the classroom. He can be anything he wants to be.”**

Dec. 22—C.J. Wakeley from Santa Fe High for Basketball— **“C.J. is taking his game to another level...including his GPA.”**

Dec. 29—J.D. Tomlinson from Oak Hall for Golf— **“J.D. is one of the top young golfers in the country, and where he really takes flight, is in the classroom. When it is time to break out the big wood, J.D. is always up for the challenge.”**

Jan. 7—Alex Vazquez from St. Francis High for Football— **“Alex, a stand-out defensive back understands it, on and off the field! Alex’s family, including his father and brother who both served in Iraq, stressed the importance of education from an early age.”**

Tire tread—“Honest Abe” can help keep you safe on the road.



How? Insert a penny, Lincoln’s head down, in your tire’s tread. If you can see the top of Abe’s head, it is time for new tires!

*Few people realize that their tires are the most important control device on their car. The steering wheel and the brakes aren’t much good, if the tires are not in contact with the road. **Tire tread is key.** The tire groves grip and provide traction with the pavement.*

* Proper tire inflation will extend tire life, prevent blowouts, and increase your gas mileage.

Wondering what you should do after an accident or injury?



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 family?**

Be safe, educated, adequately insured, and prepared!



Insurance Guide



1-800-373-8000

Consumer Protection Accident Guide Book

Have your **free** accident kit, including camera and guide at hand!

Office Blog: 6 ways to protect your children from back-over accidents.

In the U.S., no less than 50 children are backed over each week—two of whom will die. In total, about 18,000 pedestrians, most of whom are young kids and elderly, are injured in back-over crashes annually.

The problem? Blind spots. Rear view mirrors are not enough.

Many of these accidents happen in driveways and parking lots, involving children under age 5 and elderly, 70 years and older. Tragically, family members are responsible for the crash in 70% of fatal cases.

Until back-up cameras are standard in all vehicles, here are 6 things you can do to help avoid this tragic situation:

1. Walk around your car before backing out.
2. Double check your child's location before starting your engine.
3. Teach your children not to play in the driveway, street, or anywhere near a car. Even "parked" cars can "move."
4. Trim shrubbery and trees around the driveway and sidewalk to increase pedestrian and driver visibility.
5. Install a collision detector with an alarm or a rear-view camera.
6. Pay extra attention around holidays, crises, schedule changes, or busy times, since you may be distracted.



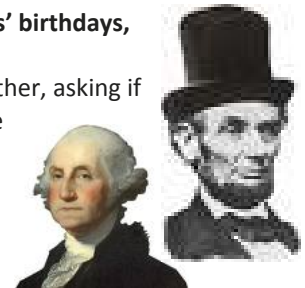
To find out your vehicle's blind-spot rating, check **Consumer Report's "Best" and "Worst" Vehicle Blind Zones**. Typically, as a class, pickup trucks have the longest blind zone. The 2006 Jeep Commander had the biggest rear-view blind zone measuring 44 feet for a 5-foot-8-inch driver!

"Trivial Pursuit" for February... *Presidents' Day Showdown*

The third Monday in February is Presidents' Day. The day honors two of our greatest presidents' birthdays, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. The following questions are True or False?

Q: Young Abe had a new hatchet. With it, he cut down a cherry tree. When confronted by his father, asking if he had cut down his precious tree, Abe responded, "Yes, Father, I can not tell a lie. I cut down the tree with my little hatchet." This gave him the nickname, "Honest Abe."

Q: In managing the country store, as in everything he undertook for others, Lincoln did his very best. On several occasions this meant walking long distances to make up for an overpayment or a shortage in a purchase. Many such innumerable incidents earned him the name, "Honest Abe."



Answers: False, that was Washington; True!

Be careful when involved in a crash with a drunk driver...

Punitive damages claims are often based on the actions of a drunk driver. Heads up—after an accident with a drunk driver, be careful not to sign any release with their insurance company in exchange for a check. [Here is why:](#)

- Often, the at-fault driver will have a small insurance policy of \$10,000 or \$25,000. Once you sign the release, he or she is off the hook for any civil damages (including, punitive damages.)

What to do:

- It is wise to consult with an accident attorney to see if you have uninsured motorists coverage that may provide an additional layer of insurance. (Also, you must get permission from your own company to release the wrongdoer.)

More info:

- There are often strategic considerations that favor not releasing the driver until your settle your uninsured motorist claim.
- **Whenever you are in a crash caused by a drunk driver, it is imperative to consult with an experienced and knowledgeable accident attorney before you sign anything.**

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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THE LAW OFFICE OF
JEFFREY MELDON
ASSOCIATES

TOLL FREE
1-800-373-8000

703 NORTH MAIN STREET SUITE A
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601



MELDON LAW TALK NEWSLETTER

Phone: (352) 373-8000
Toll Free: (800) 373-8000
Fax: (352) 373-8400
Email:
jmeldon@meldonlaw.com
On the web:
MeldonLaw.com

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Look Inside This Issue

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Ask Jeffrey: *Am I entitled to punitive damages in a car crash?*

Yes, possibly. Punitive damages may compensate a car accident victim for more than actual losses. **A car accident victim may be awarded punitive damages, if the defendant:**

- Is or may be charged with manslaughter for causing a death;
- Behaves in a wanton, reckless, reprehensible, and intentional way;
- Drives at an extremely reckless speed that caused a collision;
- Fails to stop at the scene of an accident, combined with other reckless behavior;
- Is voluntarily intoxicated and causes an accident;
- Is engaged in criminal behavior and causes a car accident;
- Knowingly fails to maintain a safe car that caused the accident.

In Florida, there are 2 types of damages that an injured person can claim:

1. **Compensatory Damages**, which are: economic expenses such as medical expenses and lost wages; and non-economic losses such as pain and suffering, etc.
2. **Punitive Damages**, which serve to punish or penalize the wrong-doer financially in an effort to prevent future misconduct.

It is important to know that:

- **Compensatory Damages** are generally paid to the victim by the insurance company in accordance with the individual's or company's insurance policy.
- **Punitive Damages** are paid by the wrong-doer, out of their pocket.

Jeffrey Meldon is a proud Life Member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum, a prestigious group of trial lawyers throughout the country. Membership is limited to attorneys that have won million dollar verdicts, awards and settlements for their clients. Less than 1% of U.S. lawyers are members!



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