



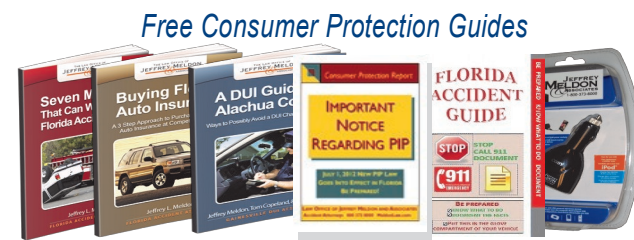
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photo happenings...

Photos from the Meldon Law team's annual holiday dinner. This year's gathering was held at the KC Crave Restaurant in Gainesville, which included a secret Santa gift exchange, live music, and good friends.



Attorney Spotlight : Attorney Carey Meldon



Attorney Carey Meldon spoke at the annual Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (F.A.C.D.L) holiday party, where he serves as the current President of the local 8th Judicial Circuit chapter, including Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Union Counties.

FACDL is the only statewide organization in Florida dedicated solely to criminal defense and is affiliated with the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Before joining the Law Firm in October, 2009, Carey practiced law in Daytona Beach with the State's Attorney Office for almost four years. During his employment as an Assistant State Attorney, Carey personally handled thousands of criminal cases ranging from misdemeanor DUIs to capital felonies.

In 2008, the 7th Judicial Circuit State's Attorney's Office promoted Carey to the Special Prosecution Unit where he handled high profile sex crime cases, including sexual battery, child pornography and molestation investigations.

Carey was born and raised in Gainesville and attended the College of William and Mary where he played on the varsity tennis team and focused his education on the subjects of history and economics. He later studied law at Stetson's College of Law.

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February 2014

MELDON LAW TALK NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Newsletter Publication from Meldon Law

Attorneys

Jeffrey L. Meldon
Tom L. Copeland
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Personal Injury

Wrongful Death

Criminal Defense

Valentine's Day Jokes >>>

- What do farmers give their wives on Valentine's Day? Hogs and kisses!
- What do single people call Valentine's Day? Happy Independence Day!
- Do skunks celebrate Valentine's Day? Sure, they're very scent-imental!
- Did you hear about the romance in the tropical fish tank? It was a case of guppy love.
- Why is Valentine's Day the best day for a celebration? Because you can really party hearty!
- Why is lettuce the most loving vegetable? Because its all heart.



Keeping Our Hearts Strong

February is American Heart Month.

Heart disease is a major problem. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Every year about 715,000 Americans have a heart attack. About 600,000 people die from heart disease in the United States each year—that's 1 out of every 4 deaths. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.

Some health conditions and lifestyle factors can put people at a higher risk for heart disease and its complications. You can help prevent heart disease by

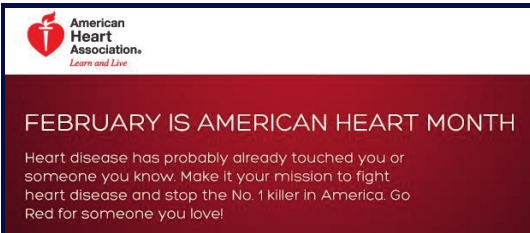
making healthy choices and managing any medical conditions you may have. As we begin our journey to better heart health in 2014, here are a few ways to help you plan for prevention. *Eat a Healthy Diet.* Choose healthy meal and snack options including plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. *Exercise Regularly.* Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight, while lowering your cholesterol and blood pressure. *Monitor your blood pressure.* High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis.

Have your cholesterol checked. Your health care provider should test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years. Talk with your doctor about this

simple blood test. *Reward yourself.* Find enjoyable things to do to decrease your stress. Round up some colleagues for a lunchtime walk, join a social group, or have a healthy dinner with your family or friends.

Do you know the 5 major symptoms of a Heart Attack?: 1) Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck, or back. 2) Feeling weak, light-headed, or faint. 3)Chest pain or discomfort. 4)Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder. 5) Shortness of breath. For more information on the topic of heart disease, please visit www.heart.org

“There is nothing more important than our good health—that’s our principle asset.” - Arlen Specter



Case of the Month

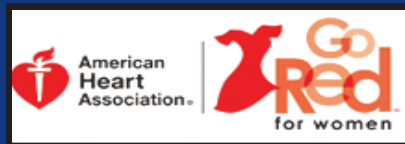
Despite Your Possible Preexisting Medical Condition, it's always Best to Call an Attorney to Weigh your Options.

Our office recently settled a case involving a client who was injured in a motor vehicle accident and wound up having a cervical fusion. The issue with this particular case was that our client's surgeon had recommended the same surgery before the vehicle accident occurred. The client had not yet scheduled the surgical procedure, but did have an MRI scan only two days before the car accident. Our legal team was able to get a very good settlement for our client by proving that the MRI scan after the car accident showed some additional changes



to the condition of our client's neck. Our client's treating physician was able to document an "aggravation to a preexisting condition". Under Florida law even if you have a preexisting condition, you can be compensated for an aggravation to that condition. In fact, a person who is already suffering from a preexisting condition would be the most susceptible to further injuring that particular part of their body. Sometimes attorneys refer to this type of client as an "eggshell plaintiff" which refers to how easy it is to crack an eggshell (or in this case make an existing injury even worse).

In the Community



National Wear Red Day 2014. Friday, February 7, 2014 is National Wear Red Day! Plan on wearing red to show your commitment and passion for fighting this cause. In 2003, the American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute took action against a disease that was claiming the lives of nearly 500,000 American women each year – a disease that women weren't paying attention to. A disease they truly believed, and many still believe to this day, affects more men than women. Stemming from that action, National Wear Red Day was born. It's held on the first Friday in February every year to raise awareness about heart disease being the No. 1 killer of women.

This month's topic of interest: February 2014

At Meldon Law we strongly believe that public education is the first step in the prevention of an accident or in the recovery from one. Here's a topic worth discussing.



Texting, Dialing While Driving Raises Crash Risk.

A recent real-world study conducted by the Virginia Tech University Transportation Institute, confirms that dialing, texting or reaching for a cell phone while driving raises the risk of a crash or near-miss, especially for younger drivers. But the research also produced a surprise: Simply talking on the phone didn't prove dangerous, as it had in other studies. And even though talking doesn't require drivers to take their eyes off the road, it's hard to talk on the phone without first reaching for it or dialing a number-things that raise the risk of a crash, researchers note. Earlier work with simulators, test-tracks and cell phone records suggest that

risky driving increases when people are on cell phones, especially teens. The 15 to 20 year old age group accounts for 6 percent of all drivers but 10 percent of traffic deaths and 14 percent of police reported crashes with injuries. For this study, researchers installed video cameras, GPS systems, lane trackers, and sensors in the cars of 42 newly licensed drivers 16 or 17 years old, and 109 adults with an average of 20 years behind the wheel. The risk of a crash or near-miss among young drivers increased more than seven times if they were dialing or reaching for a cell phone and increased more than four times if they were sending or receiving a text message. The risk also rose if they were reaching for something other than a phone, looking at a roadside object or eating. Among the older drivers, only dialing a cell phone increased the chances of a crash or near miss. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Governor's Highway Safety Administration, at least 12 states have banned the use of hand-held cell phones while driving and 41 ban text messaging, including the state of Florida whose law banning texting while driving became effective on October 1, 2013.



Congratulations To our Jeffrey Meldon/WCJB-TV20 Scholar Athletes of the Week!

Meldon Law has sponsored the **Scholar Athlete Program** since 1997. Every week of the school year a high school senior in the North Central Florida area is chosen as the Scholar-Athlete of the Week and given a \$100 scholarship and a plaque. At the end of the school year we hold a banquet for all the winners and their families. Last year nearly 200 people attended the Scholar Athlete Banquet where one male and one female were chosen as **The Scholar Athlete of the Year**. The winners receive a \$1,000 scholarship plus a beautiful glass trophy commemorating their achievement. Starting in 2003 the Meldon Law Firm teamed up with **WCJB TV20** to promote the event widely on the local ABC network.



We are here for you...

Serving the "Heart of Florida". We are a team of experienced personal injury attorneys, trial lawyers, negotiators, litigators, case managers, and support staff that have been proudly working to get accident victims the justice they deserve for over 40 years in Gainesville, Ocala, Lake City, Inverness, and throughout the state of Florida. The types of cases we handle include but are not limited to: Accidents involving cars, trucks, motorcycles, bicycle, or pedestrians, dog bites, slip and falls, medical malpractice and criminal defense. Feel free to contact our office to let us know how we can help you. Call us at (352) 373-8000 or visit us online at www.MeldonLaw.com today!

Office Highlights

Legal Assistant/ Case Manager Lisa Allen does her part to stay fit and healthy by running in local and statewide races.

Lisa Allen serves as a Legal Assistant/Case Manager in the Personal Injury/Litigation Department here at Meldon Law. A self-proclaimed fitness buff, Lisa says she's always looking for ways to take part in staying fit and healthy, and has been running in local races for charity and other causes the past five years. "I love to run, it makes me energized and is a great stress reliever" adds Lisa.

Lisa ran in the *Walt Disney World*® Half-Marathon presented by Cigna®, which included a 13.1 mile course through the *Magic Kingdom*® Park, then on to *Epcot*®. Lisa finished the race with a net time of 2:29:35, or an average of 11.25 minutes per mile.

Lisa has began training for the *Clint Lacinak Scholarship Shamrock 5K Run* to be held in Gainesville on March 15, 2014.



Photo collage of Legal Assistant/ Case Manager Lisa Allen taking part in the *Walt Disney World*® Half-Marathon on January 11, 2014

February 's "Trivial Pursuit" >>>



Questions:

1. Cupid is whose son?
2. In what year was Valentine's Day declared an official holiday?
3. Valentine's Day evolved from what ancient Roman festival?
4. In which of Shakespeare's plays does he refer to Valentine's Day?
5. What percentage of Valentine Cards are purchased by women?
6. During the 1980s what industry began to promote their product as a good Valentine's Day gift?
7. Approximately how many Valentine's Day cards are sent each year?

Answers: 1. Venus, 2. 1537, 3. Lupercalia, 4. Hamlet, 5. 85%, 6. The diamond industry, 7. 1 Billion

Our Most Recent Scholar Athletes!

Dec. 12, 2013: Cody Peterson from Eastside H.S. of Gainesville for Soccer—Cody has held the position of starting goalkeeper for the Rams for past three seasons. In the classroom Cody holds a 4.6 weighted GPA and hopes to attend Yale, Rice University, or UF upon graduation.

Dec. 19, 2013: Ella Khan from Forest H.S. of Ocala for Soccer— Ella has served as captain of the Forest girls soccer team for the past two seasons. This season Ella is second on the team in goals and leads the team in assist as the Wildcats midfielder. Ella and the Wildcats are off to a 14-0-1 start to the season while in the classroom Ella has a 4.7 weighted GPA.

Dec. 26, 2013: Jessica Kinsler from Gainesville H.S. for Weightlifting— Jessica is the two time defending state champion in the 154lb weight class in girls weightlifting. In the classroom Jessica maintains a 3.08 GPA and has dreams of one day making Team USA and lifting in the Olympics.

Jan. 2, 2014: Kyle Weeks from Chiefland H.S. for Basketball— Kyle averages just under 15 points a game to lead the Indians offense. Off the court Kyle maintains a 3.4 GPA and hopes to play basketball in college.