



STAYING *in Touch*

February 2014 Newsletter | VOLUME 3 - ISSUE 2 | www.ktparkslaw.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Saving the coastal waters
- Children & Identity Theft
- Snow, snow go away!



Personal Injury



The recommendations for car seats using the LATCH anchoring system have changed. Car manufacturers only guarantee that the lower anchors will hold up to 65 pounds, but this weight limit must include the car seat itself. The weight of the car seat will now be listed on the tag. Weigh your child and any older car seat. If the combined total is more than 65 pounds, your child needs to upgrade to the next car seat. More information can be found at <http://goo.gl/iy5MWY>.

Kellam's Corner



I hope everyone survived the Snowpocalypse(s)! The snow and rotating illnesses hit us hard at the firm (both at work and home), but happy to say we all survived. In fact, despite these issues, January was the most productive month thus far for the firm and things are continuing to grow. As always, we appreciate the trust you place in us in allowing us to represent you and take care of your referrals.

February is a busy month personally too, with a slew of birthdays (my father, wife, brother, and brother-in-law) and, of course, Valentine's Day. February also marks the beginning of dance competition season for Avery - I'll be sharing pictures and details in upcoming Newsletters as the season progresses.

Did you know?



New Zealand remained devoid of human beings no more than 800 years ago. The Polynesians were the first to settle and develop into a culture known as Maori. European introduction of guns and disease decimated their numbers by the 19th century. New Zealand is now a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy under England.



"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions."

– Stephen Covey

IDENTITY THEFT

Children are easy targets for identity thieves not only because it could be years before anyone checks children's credit reports, but also because their credit is essentially a blank slate. There are several things you can do to help protect your children from identity theft. The first is to keep all birth certificates, social security cards, and passports locked up and not in your wallet or purse. Next, be very cautious about who receives your child's social security number - this information is only mandatory for official purposes- schools, doctors, opening a bank account, and paying taxes, to name a few. If an organization like a summer camp wants a social security number, ask why they need it. If it does not sound like a valid reason, don't give out the information.

Do not be afraid to ask how the information is handled. How do they store it, who has access to it, what safeguards are in place, and what do they do with the information when they no longer need it? You should also keep a list of everyone who receives the information. If anything happens, this could make it easier to track down the thief if someone's identity is stolen.

You can also check your child's social security earnings record. Sometimes a thief will create a new identity with your child's social security number. Visit <http://goo.gl/Lcj-FRJ> to request a report. You can also request a free credit report from the three main bureaus every year. There will

only be a credit report if someone opened a line of credit in his or her name.

Teaching your children about internet safety is extremely important for fraud prevention as well as safety reasons. Make sure they know not to give out personal information, no matter how trivial it may seem. Social media sites are one of the biggest problem areas, as it seems that everyone, not only children, shares too much there. Thieves are constantly scanning these sites, looking for names, addresses, dates of birth, etc. Make sure YOU never make posts like "five years ago today I gave birth to William Sam Smith;" as now the full name and date of birth of your child is available for the taking by a potential thief. Privacy settings may not be enough to keep your information private.

Lastly, keep an eye on the mail for bills, credit offers, letters from debt collectors, or notices from the IRS. Your child could be denied government benefits if they are being paid to another person with your child's social security information. If you go to open a bank account for your child and are told one already exists or are denied due to a low credit score, then fraud has already happened. As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.



Deb Dishes:

I found No Frill Grill at Hilltop! Ok, so maybe I did not find it, but I went for the 1st time and had this delicious meal. Crab cakes, scrambled eggs on English muffin with hollandaise sauce served with cheesy hash browns, asparagus, grapes and a strawberry. It was very tasty and quite filling. Bryant said his chicken strips were extra good, and he's very picky! They have a diverse menu so deciding what to get was tough.

What to do when you are snowed in and have played every board game you can with a six year old? You head to the kitchen! I had seen this easy biscuit recipe floating around Pinterest in several forms and had to try it. You mix up 4 cups of Bisquick, 1 cup sour cream, 1 cup of Sprite or 7-up. Melt ½ cup butter in a 9x12 baking dish. Turn wet dough onto floured/Bisquick surface, sprinkle a little more on top & flip over. Using your hands, flatten out to be about the size of your baking dish. Cut into squares or using a square cookie cutter – we made ours decorative of course! Bake about 10 mins at 425°, until golden brown. You can always print a copy of this recipe and others from our website @ <http://www.ktparkslaw.com/library/recipes/>.

On The Local Front



KEEPING OUR COASTAL AREA THRIVING

In the 1930s the combination of a severe hurricane and a wasting disease caused by a marine slime mold decimated the Chesapeake Bay's seagrass population. In the years since it has struggled to return, but pollution hampers its ability to grow. In 1999 the Seaside Seagrass Community Restoration Program was started, with the purpose of harvesting eelgrass seeds (a type of seagrass) and preparing them to be planted in the fall. Despite their efforts, the Virginia-Pilot recently reported that storm water runoff has caused a drop in seagrass levels by almost 50% in the past ten years, the lowest since the 1980s. While the Virginia Institute of Marine Science reports that pollution due to wastewater treatment plants and agricultural runoff is decreasing, pollution from urban and suburban areas is on the rise. Hampton Roads has a huge amount of impervious surface areas –areas like roads and buildings that don't absorb water– which means rain just washes over these surfaces, collecting pollutants like automotive oils, fertilizers, pesticides, and pet waste, carrying them to our waterways. We need to work on reducing our pollution output. Seagrass creates a habitat and feeding source for marine life, adds oxygen to the water, and helps prevent erosion. Seagrasses are also an "indicator species," reflecting the overall health of our ecosystem. This has a direct impact on our bay scallops, blue crabs, oysters and striped bass populations. You can find more information, volunteer or make a donation at <http://goo.gl/r0keaf>.

Family Time...



As much as the snow has inconvenienced us, at least it wasn't up to our heads. Gretel had a heck of a time, as you can see!



Is that a Pokemon or Granma's Bugg? Deb's grandson Bryant attempts to make snow angels in the soft winter snow. Although he was very excited about the snow, he didn't last more than 20 minutes out in the cold!

We welcome your referrals!

We value all our clients. If you refer someone to us, we promise to answer his or her questions and provide first-rate, attentive service. We want to thank you for your referrals and for coming back to us when we can be of service.

Family Law:

Divorce can be extremely difficult for children. Encourage your children to share their feelings, whether with you or another trusted adult. Talk to the school guidance counselor for advice. Tell your children it is not their fault and both parents still love them. Be patient and allow them time to adjust to all the changes divorce brings, especially when moving on, such as adding a step-parent and step-siblings into the mix. Try to find ways to minimize their stress and yours, with support groups or fun family activities.





LAW OFFICE OF
KELLAM T. PARKS, PLLC

4164 Virginia Beach Blvd, Suite 204
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-1762
pho: 757.453.7744 | fax: 757.453.7578
www.ktparkslaw.com



Law Office of Kellam T. Parks, PLLC



Law Office of Kellam T. Parks, PLLC



Ktparkslaw



Kellam Parks, Esquire

Visit our blog @ www.ktparkslaw.com/blog

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Saving the coastal waters
- Children & Identity Theft
- Snow, snow go away!

Tech Tip:

This month I am discussing digitizing photographs. Since we use quality scanners at the office, my sister has taken advantage of the technology and is scanning in old pictures for storage and sharing in social media (she loves “Throwback Thursdays” on Facebook, sometimes to her little brother’s chagrin!)

First, make sure that the scanner and pictures are clean. Use a dust-free lens cloth or compressed air on the photos prior to scanning to ensure no debris remains. Most scanners come with scanning software and you will want to spend some time learning the ins and outs of how it works for best results. Generally, you want to scan in color (even if a B&W photo). As to the format you choose to save the photos, I recommend defaulting to a high setting and uncompressed format for archiving (compression loses informa-

tion/degrades the photo quality). I use 600 dpi (dots per inch) and the TIFF format. This will result in much larger file sizes, but storage is cheap and if you want to edit the photos later or share them, you can save that file as a JPEG and work with it in that format.

As to editing the photos, there are many software choices from the very robust and expensive Adobe Photoshop to the more user-friendly and free Picasa from Google for Windows or iPhoto on the Mac. I personally use Picasa. You can use these programs to do simple things such as cropping and “touch up tool” for small blemishes or more complex things such as color stabilization.

With these simple tips, you’ll have a digital archive of your old photos in no time.

New address? New phone number? New Email? Help us stay current by letting us know. Call Deb at 757.453.7579 or email her at dmontagna@ktparkslaw.com. If you wish to unsubscribe to this newsletter, please call Deb. Thanks!