



## Seufert Law Offices, PA

*We'll Get You Through It*

### From the Captain's Log Tough as Nails



My 89-year-old mother says that every time I visit her in FL my next newsletter story is about her. Well, she is wrong. This time it is her coming to NH that spurs the story. The story goes like this. She had not been to NH for a Christmas for some time so decided this year to come up for a week to see all her grandchildren and great grandchildren. She flew into Logan, and I picked her up and we drove home. We chatted for a while in the living room and then we all went to bed, her in the spare bedroom on the 1st floor and the rest of us in the upstairs bedrooms. A little while later my wife woke me up to say that Mom had fallen and was screaming for help. I ran downstairs and she was crumpled up on the floor with her right leg not anatomically correct, it was mostly sitting crossed over her left leg, her right hip having completely dislocated. I could have passed out at the sight, she should have passed out, but there she was asking for help. She has had both hips replaced and the right one has never been right. She said she was just swinging her leg up onto the bed (it is quite high with a super deep mattress) and the right hip just popped out and she grabbed the bed sheets and slid herself down to the floor. I called 911 and within minutes the Franklin Fire EMT's were assisting her. They were fantastic. They gave her morphine and fentanyl to reduce what I was seeing in her eyes as agonizing pain and then gently lifted her onto a stretcher and off to the Franklin Hospital. I met her at the ER and went into the room with her. A doctor and med tech quickly came into the room, followed by a nurse. They took her to X-Ray, which confirmed the obvious. Rather than transfer her to an acute facility (being the day before Christmas that could be a long wait) they suggested that they could try a closed reduction in the ER. We agreed and the nurse kept injecting more morphine and more fentanyl while the doctor stood on her bed with her right leg over his shoulders while he turned and manipulated her hip. The med tech stood on the opposite side of her bed pulling and pushing her lower torso in unison with the doctor twisting and pushing. The doctor asked her about the pain level being 1-10, she said 25. He said it does not go that high, she said you 'wanna bet? He ordered more morphine and more fentanyl until she said 23. He twisted and pushed some more and 1 hour of this dance later a popping sound. My Mom immediately passed out, either from relief or exhaustion. An hour later the doctor woke her up, she said she felt better, and he said she could go home. Two days later the kids were hosting a Christmas party, and she walked into their house with all smiles.



I've seen some pretty tough guys, but my mom would whip any one of them in a bar fight. •

### March 2025 News





## *'But Coffee's Supposed to Be Hot!' —* A Retrospective

In “frivolous lawsuit” conversations, the McDonald’s hot coffee case is frequently spotlighted — incomplete facts, and mistaken distortions and key omissions of fact skew public perception.

In 1992, 79-year-old Stella Liebeck, a passenger in her grandson’s car, purchased coffee at a McDonald’s drive-thru. Upon exiting the drive-thru, her grandson stopped in the parking lot so she could add sugar to her coffee. The cup tipped over between her legs as she was removing the lid, and 190-degree coffee spilled onto her lap. Liebeck suffered severe burns to her inner thighs and other sensitive areas that necessitated a hospital stay, painful wound-cleaning procedures, and skin grafts.

Liebeck filed a claim against McDonald’s, contending the coffee was dangerously hot, and offered to settle the case for \$20,000 to cover medical expenses. McDonald’s countered with \$800. The case went to trial.

At trial, it was demonstrated that the McDonald’s operations manual required its employees to serve coffee at 180°–190°F, which can cause near-immediate scalding. Recommended serving temperatures are in the 130°–150°F range, giving spill victims a roughly 5-second escape hatch from severe burns.

Equally damning, it was revealed that over 700 complaints, claims, and suits had been filed against McDonald’s in the prior 10 years over the same issue. McDonald’s changed nothing — didn’t even print warning labels.

Liebeck’s \$200,000 damages award was reduced to \$160,000 since she was found 20% at fault. The judge cut the jury’s \$2.7 million punitive damages award to \$480,000. Upon the defendant’s appeal, a confidential settlement amount was reached.

Truly frivolous lawsuits rarely take flight. Judges can immediately dismiss cases that have no basis in law. Personal injury attorneys can be sanctioned for squandering a court’s time and taxpayer money. *And attorneys don’t get paid unless they win their cases.* Frivolous cases don’t tend to be winners. ●





# Roused From Hibernation

## March 2025 Notable Dates

**Mar. 4**  
Mardi Gras

**Mar. 5**  
Ash Wednesday

**Mar. 9**  
Daylight Saving Time  
begins

**Mar. 17**  
St. Patrick's Day

**Mar. 20**  
First day of spring

**Mar. 28**  
Weed Appreciation  
Day

**Mar. 31**  
Bunsen Burner  
Day

Spring has arrived, and that means the reemergence of bicyclists in many parts of the country. But the winter-to-spring transition can be perilous.

Motorists sometimes let down their guard in watching for bicyclists since they've been sparse for a few months — that's not a good excuse, just reality. As with motorcyclists, visibility issues loom large. Spring showers can further limit visibility, as can early-morning and twilight lighting, rendering bicyclists more vulnerable to harm.

Some simple precautions can help keep bicyclists from becoming an accident statistic:

- **Wear a helmet!** Laws vary from state to state, municipality to municipality. According to National Institutes of Health studies, wearing a helmet reduces the likelihood of a serious head injury by 60%; traumatic brain injury, 53%; facial injury, 23%; and fatalities and overall serious injuries, 34%.
- In all 50 states, bicycles are either classified as vehicles or bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorists. Obey all traffic laws, and move to the far right of the road when motor vehicles are passing.
- Ride sober, over 20% of bicyclist fatalities included bicyclist impairment (NHTSA).
- Never assume a motorist sees you.
- Wear a brightly colored helmet and clothing that are also reflective to improve visibility.
- Equip your bike with lights and reflectors, properly inflate the tires, and practice good maintenance.
- Avoid distractions: music, podcasts, cell phones, etc.
- Check the weather forecast before heading out.
- Give proper clearance to parked cars to avoid "dooring" — you're riding along, a door suddenly opens in your path, you hit it (or swerve left), and mayhem ensues.

If you suffer a bicycling injury due to someone else's negligence, contact our firm to protect your rights. •

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*Protect Your Family, Protect Your Rights*



Tough as Nails  
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## Message in a Bottle

NASA's Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 spacecraft were launched 16 days apart in 1977 to explore the four outer giant planets of our solar system. (Fun fact: Voyager 2 was launched first.) By 1989, the mission's goals were largely achieved. Since then, both Voyagers have exited our solar system and continue gathering valuable scientific information.

Both craft also contain a "Golden Record": a gold-plated copper disk mounted in an aluminum container. Each disk carries a tapestry of images, sounds, and music to convey Earth's rich diversity of life to potential extraterrestrials who happen upon it. Like a eulogy, only good stuff is featured.

The Golden Record includes a 90-minute music compilation. There's no Van Halen concert, but it does feature 28 tracks ranging from Beethoven and Mozart to traditional songs from across the globe to Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode" — music that evokes emotion and connection.

There are spoken messages in 55 languages. "Take me to your leader" is not among them. Astronomer Carl Sagan's young son gave the English language greeting. Sagan was part of the Golden Record content team.

Analog-encoded photographs (115 of them) include a page from a book, the Taj Mahal, illustrations of DNA's complex structure, Olympic sprinters, and a woman licking an ice cream cone. In general, pictures of people, animals, landscapes, and structures dominate.

Natural and human-made sounds of Earth are covered, too, such as whales singing, children laughing, fire crackling, and waves crashing. (Fortunately, loud gum chewing was excluded.)

Voyager 1 and 2 will need over 38,000 and 40,000 years, respectively, to come within two light-years of another star. But that's OK. The Golden Records have all the time in the world cosmos. ●