

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Chicken Poetry | 1 |
| Liz Gray, Elder Law & Estate Planning | 2 |
| Swing-set Warning | 3 |
| Our Promise | 3 |
| Oreo Truffles | 4 |

THAT IS THE CHICKEN I WANT TO BE

It's that time again – school is almost over for the year. There are parties and proms and graduations and vacations to plan. There are new schedules to juggle as your family gets ready for more changes, and lots of articles and ads everywhere reminding you of the things you need to buy and to do and warnings about teenage driving and children on bikes and dangers everywhere.

This is not one of those articles. This article is about exuberance.

Several years ago, *The Washington Post* published a weekly column called "Poet's Choice." It was started by the then-U.S. poet laureate, Robert Hass. Mr. Hass regularly shared a different poem in his column and wrote an "introduction" about the poem or the poet. For a time, then, I was reintro-

duced to the joy of reading poetry.

I would guess that for many, finding a quiet time to read anything is a challenge and suggesting poetry as an option might seem laughable. However, let me try to entice you.



One of the poems Hass featured in his column was "Passing A Truck Full of Chickens At Night On Highway Eighty," by Jane Mead, from *The Lord and the General Din of the World* (© 1996). One thing I can say about Ms. Mead, she sure knows how to write titles!

I cannot quote the entire poem because I do not have permission from the publisher, but I can tell you that the title grabbed me immediately, and then the first line of the poem sealed the deal: "What struck me first was their panic." She's talking about a truck load of caged

chickens on their way to some unknown-to-them-but-imagined-by-us destination. Her attention, though, is drawn to one particular chicken whose eyes were not full of panic, but were full of the excitement of adventure: "She had the look of a dog in the back of a pickup, that eager look of a dog who knows she's being taken along." Her poem concludes, "That is the chicken I want to be."

Children can be so much like that chicken. Eager, excited, jubilant, wanting to see what comes next. Somehow, we get so wound up in keeping track of the family's schedule and getting dinner on the table and cleaning clothes and running errands and getting to work on time that we forget to be excited about what's next.

I cut that column out of the paper so long ago that it's yellowed. I have kept it in my calendar and find myself pulling it out and reading it again and again, because I hope that's the chicken I occasionally can still be.



IMPORTANT NEW BOOK

If you've been injured, read this book before talking to an insurance company. To get your FREE copy, go to our website, www.RohrstaffLaw.com or call us at 703-260-6070.

Estate Planning & Elder Law

*One of the benefits of being a lawyer is that I get to meet all kinds of other great lawyers who help people in ways that I cannot – except that I can introduce you to them. Today, I am introducing **Liz Gray**, an elder law attorney in Fairfax.*



Elizabeth L. Gray is an elder law attorney with the firm Matsen, Miller, Cossa & Gray, PLLC. Liz helps seniors and people with disabilities – and the family members of both – through planning, counseling, education, and advocacy.

Liz often is asked the difference between a conventional estate planning attorney and an elder law attorney.

Her explanation makes it clear:

The job of an estate planning attorney concerns “What Happens When I Die?” Estate planning is creating a plan for issues surrounding death and incapacitation, avoiding taxes, planning around probate, and transferring assets to one’s heirs.

On the other hand, an elder law attorney focuses on “What Happens as I Grow Old and Infirm?” Elder law is creating a plan for aging in place and planning for how to pay for it.

Elder law planning helps families and individuals avoid costly and emotionally difficult situations that can arise as a loved one grows old and potentially loses the ability to make decisions on his or her own.

By drafting what are known as *incapacity documents* (Powers of Attorney, Advance Medical Directives/ Medical Powers of Attorney, some Trusts) the client and family are spared the need for guardianship or conservatorship proceedings which:

1. Are expensive (involves at least 2 attorneys);
2. Are public;
3. Leave to a Judge the decision of who will be responsible for the incapacitated person; and
4. Strip the loved one of some of his or her rights (like the right to vote).

A frequent misconception that Liz encounters is the notion that only the wealthy need the services of an elder law attorney. Nothing could be further from the truth. The costs associated with the care of an aging person can be very high, and there may be benefits available to help in certain situations. An elder law attorney understands the complexities of applying and qualifying for benefits, and can help families at all income levels plan ahead for the most optimal results.

Liz assists her clients with the following:

- Comprehensive estate planning – preparation of Trusts, Wills, Powers of Attorney, Advance Medical Directives/Medical Powers of Attorney
- Medicaid long-term care planning
- Public benefits planning
- Special Needs planning
- Probate & trust administration
- Elder abuse cases
- Guardianship/conservatorship
- Other services as necessary

For more information about Liz and the legal services provided by her firm, visit www.fairfaxelderlaw.com or www.mmcglaw.com or call her at 703-896-7696.

METAL SWING SET IN THE BACK YARD?

Don't let your child NEAR it unless it's anchored into the ground. Cement works well. I'm serious about this.

Three-year-old Ann Reese Grote was walking behind a metal back yard swing set on Christmas Eve, pushing her stroller with her three favorite dolls. Friends were swinging when suddenly the swing set fell over, striking Ann Reese. She died later that day.



If you have such a swing set in your backyard, anchor it now. If the day care center or the home where your child stays while you are at work has a metal swing set that is not anchored, do not let your child go anywhere in the yard until it is anchored.

It is so easy to think, "But this can't happen to my family." I hope that is true. However, I am sure Ann Reese's family never imagined such a thing could happen to them. Please make sure your metal swing set cannot come out of the ground!

Our Promise to You

People go to lawyers in times of stress. They hope the lawyer can help them solve their problem. Lawyers often say, "Let us help you!" or "We are here to serve!" Frankly, our goal is not to be like other lawyers. Our goal is to give you the best experience you can have. While most lawyers are competent at what they do (we are no exception), we make and keep these promises to our clients:

You are treated with respect. I'm always unhappy when I hear from prospective clients that their prior attorney's staff was rude to them.

We know your name. You will not be asked, "Are you a client of the firm?" Everyone who works in our office knows your name.

We know about your problem. Everyone in the office has a job to do that helps get your problem solved, and we have frequent meetings about what is going on. No one person knows everything about your problem, but we all know something and know how to help you with your problem – even

when we say, "I'll find the right person to answer your question and get back to you."

WE RETURN PHONE CALLS. The biggest complaint about lawyers is that they do not return clients' phone calls – or emails. Clients want to know what is going on! We promise to always return your phone call – or email.

We let you know what we are doing to get your problem solved. I have spoken to people who did not hear from their lawyer for years! How in the world does that client know what the lawyer is doing for her? The answer usually is "nothing". There are times during the process that things are quiet, and there are other times in the process that are quite busy. Whichever it is, we let you know.

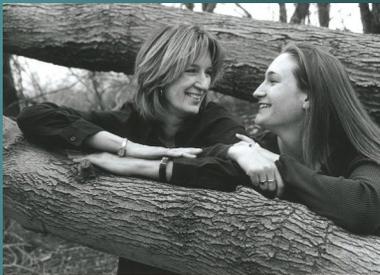
We want to know what you think about your experience with us. Please visit www.rohrstafflaw.com, or email us at Janelle@Rohrstafflaw.com



Sandra's Twin Grandbabies
Malynn & Jack - 34 mos. old
(Mike's (Sandra's son) kids)



T 703.260.6070
F 703.260.6305
www.RohrstaffLaw.com
http://VirginiaChildInjuryLawyer.com
Sandra@RohrstaffLaw.com



Sandra & Janelle
Mother & Daughter Working
to Help Other Families

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, or if you or someone you know would like to receive the Rohrstaff Reader in LARGE PRINT, please call Janelle at 703-260-6070, or e-mail her at Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com.

I wrote this book to help injured people in Virginia. Over the years, I saw that there was no reliable source of good information for people who have been injured in Virginia. There either was NO information or BAD information. People make better decisions when their questions are answered accurately. So, I wrote this book. It explains what happens when someone has been in an accident and gives tips for getting through it the best way possible. It's not legal advice (every case is different - really), but it is full of valuable, reliable information. After reading this book, you should consult an attorney for legal advice.

NOW WHAT? is available FREE of charge to Virginia residents. You can request a copy by calling 703-260-6070 or at our website, www.RohrstaffLaw.com, or by e-mailing us at Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com. Let me know what you think of it.

OREO TRUFFLES

Here's a super simple recipe that transforms Oreo cookies into a very special treat.



1. Mix together three cups of crushed Oreo and one 8 oz package of softened cream cheese until well combined.
2. Shape cookie/cream cheese mixture into 1" balls.
3. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt about 16 squares of baking chocolate (you may need a little more or a little less depending on how thickly you coat the truffles).

4. Using two forks, roll each cookie/cream cheese ball around in the melted chocolate until coated. Allow excess to drip off, and place on a sheet of wax paper.
5. Decorate with cookie crumbs, coconut, chopped walnuts, sprinkles... whatever you like!

6. Place in refrigerator for at least one hour to set.
7. Store truffles in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator for up to one week.

We always appreciate referrals. This month, we thank: Ben Glass, Kelly Houck, and Jennifer Harris. These cases involved issues of *medical malpractice and personal injury*.