

## Inside this issue:

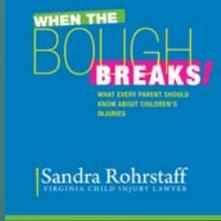
Happy New Year! 1  
Be It Resolved

FAQ: What is My Case Worth? 2

Wrongful Death Lawsuits 2

Customer Service 3

Football Party 4  
Buffalo Chicken Dip



### Read these free books before talking to an insurance company

You can request free copies by calling 703-260-6070 or by e-mailing us at [Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com](mailto:Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com).



Sandra's twin grandchildren are 2½ years old

## Be It Resolved...



If you are like many people, you made one or more resolutions for the new year. Eating healthier.

Going to the gym more often. Being kinder to your worst enemy. Working on getting a new job. Growing your business. Whatever.

And, if you are like most people who make resolutions, you will forget about them or give up on them in a matter of weeks – or even days. Some of you have probably already fallen off the resolution wagon by the time you read this.

This year, my resolution is to keep my resolutions. I used to think resolutions were just aspirations, things I wanted or hoped to accomplish. Now I know that for a resolution to be any more than an empty dream, one must work at making it happen.

I was recently reading an article written by my friend Ben Glass about how he accomplished a particular goal. Ben's goal had to do with running his first half-marathon; however, Ben is a focused, detailed, goal-accomplisher, so his example of how he reached his goal of running his first half-marathon can be applied to all the goals he has set for himself. Here are the specific actions Ben articulated, set deadlines for and made happen.

**1. Set the goal.** Ben was challenged in November to run 13.1 miles in a race at the end of February. That was a very real deadline, so his goal would either be accomplished on the date of the race or not.

**2. Write the goal down.** There is something very important about writing down goals. So, Ben filled out the application for the race. It takes extra effort on your part to do the writing, but it also creates a real-world record of your goal – which goes one more step to committing to the goal. Filling out the application was a major “writing down” of the goal.

**3. Figure out the steps necessary to accomplish the goal.** Ben had never run more than 6 miles at a time when he set the goal of running a half-marathon, so he read a few books and got copies of *Runners World* magazine to get tips on how to train to get to 13.1 miles.

**4. Set out specific steps for specific days to move toward the goal.** Ben got out a calendar and, using what he had learned in his reading, set out a daily/weekly training schedule to break the training up into sensible, achievable pieces. He never had to wonder “what am I going to do today?” when it came to his training schedule.

**5. “Publish” the goal.** Ben did something else that was very important: He told everyone he knew that he was running his first half-marathon at the end of February. He had plenty of bitter, cold mornings between November and February to roll over in bed instead of getting outside to train, but the pressure he put on himself by telling friends he was going to do it, got him out running.

There you have it, an outline for success in keeping resolutions. My resolution for this year is to find ways to make my clients raving fans of our firm, while at the same time creating real time away from the office to enjoy my family. I have written down daily/weekly/monthly tasks to help me reach my goal. Will I get every single one of them done? Not likely, but what I do know is that by writing down specifics, if I miss a week (life does interfere, after all), I will know exactly where to pick up and how to move forward.

What changes have you resolved to make in 2013?

# 2013



## FAQ - What is my case worth?



We get asked this question all the time. People are sometimes unhappy when I say, "I don't know." Generally, here's what I can tell you:

1. Your case is worth zero if the person who injured you was not negligent. In other words, if there was no negligence, you don't have a case to pursue.
2. Your case is worth zero if you were not injured, regardless of how negligent the other person was. The law does not compensate for "what if . . . ?" or "could have. . ."
3. Even if the person who injured you was negligent, your case may not be worth pursuing if there are no funds for compensating you. Usually, the source of funds is insurance coverage of some sort. So, if the careless person had no insurance (and you did not have any insurance that would substitute for the

uninsured careless person), your case is probably worth nothing regardless of how badly injured you are because there would not be any way to collect compensation.

4. Even if the negligent person was insured and you were injured seriously, your case may not be worth enough to repay you fully for all your losses – because the insurance payment will only be as much as the limits of protection. If the careless person had very little insurance and you had none that could be used as a substitute to pay you, your case would only be worth what the limit of insurance is, regardless of how seriously you were injured.

When a lawyer says she cannot tell you how much your case is worth, she is not being evasive; she is being honest. Beware of a lawyer who can tell you at the first meeting what your case is worth. That question cannot be answered without considering many facts.

## Wrongful Death Lawsuits

Why should anyone bring a lawsuit when a loved one is killed in a car wreck or from a medical mistake? Why does the law even allow family members to bring a lawsuit for the death of a loved one? It does not benefit the person who died.

Some years ago, I was representing the mother and sister of a teenager who was killed when the driver of a car crossed the double-yellow line and hit head on the car in which the teen was a passenger. During negotiations, we demanded several hundred thousand dollars to compensate the mother and sister for their loss to settle the case before trial.

An acquaintance of mine heard about the case and was outraged. She was not outraged that someone had crossed the double-yellow line and killed two teenagers (my clients' family member and another teen). No, she was outraged that the family would have sued over the death. She thought the family was trying to get rich from the death of their daughter/sister – although she did think they ought to be repaid for her funeral expenses.

Many people agree with my acquaintance. So, what's the deal with wrongful death lawsuits?

First, only close family members (the beneficiaries) can bring a wrongful death claim – parents, siblings, children, grandparents, etc. A fiancé cannot be a beneficiary, nor can an unmarried partner (or a best

friend who is not also a close relative).

Basically, the law recognizes the importance of the relationship the deceased person had with close family members. Wrongful

death claims provide an avenue to compensate individuals for the loss of that relationship. The allowed losses (damages) include not only repayment for the loss of financial support, but also for the loss of emotional and spiritual support as well. A child can be compensated for the loss of the opportunity to hear all the family stories from a parent; a parent can be repaid for the loss of the opportunity to raise an only child – and to tell that child all the family stories.

Wrongful death claims arise out of every kind of wrongful act that could have been brought by the deceased if they had not died – car accidents, medical carelessness, nursing home negligence, day care events, faulty premises, etc.

If you do not yet have a copy of our consumer guides *Now What?* (a guide to personal injury cases in Virginia) and *When the Bough Breaks* (a guide for parents), call us at 703-260-6070 and request your free copy, or email [Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com](mailto:Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com).



*The law recognizes the importance of the relationship*

## Customer Service; the good, the bad, the ugly

Everyone has heard that “the customer is always right” (even when they’re wrong). If a customer receives good service, they may tell a few friends about it. But, if they receive bad service, they’ll tell at least ten people about it. Well, I’m here to talk about good and bad customer service I’ve recently received.

### The Bad... Marlo Furniture

Several months ago I went shopping for some new furniture at Marlo Furniture in Alexandria. When I first entered the store, I was put off by several sales people who kept hounding me. I had to tell them to back off. I was in the store for an hour before finding exactly what I wanted. I decided to ignore my first impression of the slimy sales people and buy a chair, table and floor lamp. I was really excited about the chair I picked out. Unfortunately, that’s when things started going down hill. There were many inconsistencies in what the sales person told me and what actually happened. Later, I realized he was just telling me what I wanted to hear to make the sale. The delivery of the furniture was a huge mess. They were going to call me to schedule a delivery of the furniture when the items came in. The delivery time period was longer than I was told it would be. During numerous phone calls and several weeks, the chair ended up being out of stock, and it was no longer available. I finally got the table and lamp and got my money back for the chair, but the damage had already been done to my opinion of Marlo. And now I’m telling more than ten people about it.

### THE GOOD



When we started writing newsletters over two years ago, we’d first used a printer in McLean. About one year ago, we decided to switch printers and found AlphaGraphics just 10 blocks away from us. The people there are friendly and professional. You can tell that the people that work there love their jobs and enjoy their coworkers. They give off a positive and welcoming atmosphere. I’m never

treated like a number. They listen to me and work with me. They even have a nice, small, quiet office dog, Rosie, who sometimes greets you when you walk in. They continue to exceed my expectations in their efficiency, fast turnaround on my orders, and their patience when I have a few changes. After being satisfied with our newsletters, we trusted them to print our business cards. The cards were better quality and less expensive than our first printer. Again, we were happy customers.

A little bit more on some of the members of their team... The first team member I met in person was Alma Amaya, the Assistant Store Manager. She has worked at AlphaGraphics for over 10 years. Their business has the potential to stress out their employees with the deadlines and time constraints they face every day. But, they don’t let that affect their good customer service. Alma says that one of the most important parts of her job is to “make people feel comfortable and confident that their job will be turned around in a realistic time frame and that it will be done so efficiently.”

Alexa Sekel, Account Representative, has worked there for two years. She’s a people person and loves working directly with the customers. Alexa says “part of providing good customer service is going beyond what is asked of us and that our customers know that they can trust us to do so.”



Here’s part of their team: (from left) Alexa Sekel, Jay Thomas (part owner), and Alma Amaya.  
AlphaGraphics, 1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 100,  
Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 549-2432



## FREE VALUABLE BOOKS

You can request free copies by calling 703-260-6070 or by e-mailing us at [Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com](mailto:Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com).

T 703.260.6070  
F 703.260.6305

[RohrstaffLaw.com](http://RohrstaffLaw.com)  
[VirginiaChildInjuryLawyer.com](http://VirginiaChildInjuryLawyer.com)



Sandra & Janelle  
Mother & Daughter  
Working to Help Other Families



Janelle joined The Reston Chorale two years ago and is having a blast. Go to [RestonChorale.org](http://RestonChorale.org) to see their concert schedule.

## Thanks For Your Referrals!

We always appreciate people who refer matters to us.

This month, we thank: Michele Bartoli Cain (attorney), Thomas Curcio (attorney), K. L. (client), and Steve Neal (attorney). These cases involved issues of injury from automobile negligence, child injury, dental malpractice, dog bite, wrongful death, and medical malpractice.

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](mailto:Janelle@RohrstaffLaw.com).

## The Most Awesome-ist, Man-friendly, Kick-butt, Football Party-Show Stopper, Buffalo Chicken Dip EVER!

### Ingredients:

- 2 (10 ounce) cans chunk chicken, drained (you can use fresh chicken, just grill it or cook it)
- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup Ranch dressing
- 3/4 cup pepper sauce (such as Frank's Red Hot®)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

### Serve with:

- 1 bunch celery, cleaned and cut into 4 inch pieces
- 1 (8 ounce) box chicken-flavored crackers
- Chips work too!

### Directions:

Heat chicken and hot sauce in a skillet over medium heat, until heated through. Stir in cream cheese and ranch dressing. Cook, stirring until well blended and warm. Mix in half of the shredded cheese, and transfer the mixture to a slow cooker. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the top, cover, and cook on Low setting until hot and bubbly. Serve with celery sticks and crackers, or bread, chips, or other veggies.

**BONUS:** you can totally do this in a crock pot!

