



THE  
INJURY &  
DISABILITY  
LAW CENTER

Personal Injury, Social Security Disability, and Workers' Compensation

# The Sentinel

575-208-1608  
www.idlawcenter.com

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## Meet Isabel Lemus Our Personal Injury Case Manager

Because my brother Josh and I built The Injury and Disability Law Center together, it is literally a family business, but our definition of family goes beyond each other. People often ask why we didn't name our practice Worley Law, and my answer is always that it takes more than two men to take care of a city's worth of people who need help. We consider our entire team family and strive to extend that same welcoming feeling to every client who walks through our doors. Unfortunately, those hundreds of people added up to more names than would fit on our wall or letterhead — so The Injury and Disability Law Center we became.

No one visits our office when things are going well for them, so our first question to new clients is always the same: "How can we make life better for you?" Sometimes, all they need is legal help, but usually the situation is more complicated. An injury can affect every facet of a person's life, including their finances, job, hobbies, and family. When that's the case, no one on our team is better equipped to help than Personal Injury Case Manager Isabel Lemus. One of the most important things we can do for our clients is listen, and Isabel has a real gift for that.

I've worked with Isabel for more than 10 years now, and her personal touch with clients never ceases to amaze me. Being able to listen closely to someone in crisis and offer them a port in the storm is an invaluable skill that she offers in spades. Every day, she assures our clients there is a way back to happiness, health, and security,

and that we can plot the course together. She makes them feel like part of the family, and, after their cases succeed, many of them tell us they truly loved working with Isabel.

Here at the office, Isabel oversees all of our personal injury cases. She ensures progress is being made on each case, follows up with clients to check in on their treatments, and keeps the insurance companies up to date. She's also the first to greet many of the people who walk through our doors, and she always treats them as warmly as possible because she knows they're probably having a bad day. Her favorite thing about her job is the one-on-one relationships she forms with clients, who she often stays in touch with.

"I know them for the rest of my life," she says. "They become my friends."

When she isn't at the office, Isabel likes to paint or spend time outside in her garden, where she grows vegetables, flowers, and anything else she can coax out of the dry New Mexico ground. The only thing she refuses to grow are cacti — our state has enough of those already. At work, she gets along well with everyone.

"I love the environment here," Isabel says. "We have a great team that works together, and everyone has a positive outlook. It's rare to find that anywhere."

If she could tell every client one thing about the firm, Isabel says it would be that if they



come into our office, they're going to be treated like family.

"We try to treat everyone the way we want to be treated," she says.

Josh and I set the vision at The Injury and Disability Law Center, but we need our entire team on board to carry it out. Isabel embraces our family values wholeheartedly, and our office wouldn't be the same without her.

On behalf of our clients, Josh, and myself, we want to thank you, Isabel, for all that you do!

**"One of the most important things we can do for our clients is listen, and Isabel has a real gift for that."**

*-Jeremy Worley*

# The 4-Legged Heroes of Ground Zero

## HONORING THE CANINES OF 9/11

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, thousands of New Yorkers took to the streets to clear rubble, offer supplies, and search for survivors. It was a powerful act of resilience in a deeply trying time, and while most of the individuals helping with the disaster stood on two feet, more than 300 canines also answered the call to service.

Dogs of all breeds and backgrounds, including search and rescue dogs, police dogs, service dogs, and therapy dogs, were brought in to help find and care for survivors in the wake of the destruction. They worked tirelessly alongside rescue crews as they searched through the debris.

Search and rescue dogs and their handlers worked 12–16-hour days, searching for survivors and victims. They worked through dangerous conditions: Many dogs burned their paws as they dug through hot rubble, and both handlers and canines inhaled toxic dust. The task was both physically and mentally exhausting for the dogs during their shifts.



Some dogs that found deceased victims refused to eat or interact with other animals. Search and rescue dogs became increasingly stressed and depressed the longer they searched without any results, mirroring their handlers. It wasn't uncommon for handlers to stage mock "findings" of survivors to keep the dogs' spirits up.

Fortunately, the sacrifices these dogs and their handlers made did not go unnoticed. Many dog owners were inspired to earn their search and rescue certifications after the events of 9/11, promising to aid in future disasters and hopefully lessen the impact of such catastrophes.

After 9/11, various researchers conducted many studies examining the effect this kind of work has on animals, both physically and mentally. Many of these studies wouldn't be possible without the AKC Canine Health Foundation, so if you're looking to give back this September, visit them at their website to see how you can help: [AKCCHF.org](http://AKCCHF.org).

# What Happened in Reed Springs?

## HOW A SMALL TOWN WENT BANKRUPT OVER A POTHOLE

In 2002, the quaint town of Reed Springs, Missouri, declared bankruptcy. The hard decision came after the town was forced to pay \$100,000 to Sally Stewart, a woman who sued Reed Springs after she tripped over a pothole during a shopping trip. News of a greedy woman ruining a small village to make a quick buck sparked outrage across the country. But Stewart wasn't the real villain of this story. A little digging into this case reveals a much deeper conspiracy.

Stewart had been visiting Reed Springs in 1998 when she tripped on a pothole hidden beneath some overgrown grass on the sidewalk. But this was no small stumble. Stewart tore two ligaments in her ankle and



had to undergo surgery. To help pay for the medical bills, Stewart, who'd never sued anyone before, initially filed a personal injury lawsuit against the owners of the store in front of the pothole. However, the Missouri Court of Appeals determined the city of Reed Springs was liable for Stewart's injuries.

The court ordered Reed Springs to pay Stewart \$100,000, over half the city's annual budget. Despite the high price tag, in normal circumstances, this verdict wouldn't have forced Reed Springs to declare bankruptcy because the town's insurance would have covered the bill. Unfortunately, at the time of Stewart's accident, the mayor of Reed Springs was a corrupt man named Joe Dan Dwyer.

Dwyer left office while being investigated for insurance fraud, child pornography, statutory rape, witness bribery, and perjury, and he was later sentenced to seven years in federal prison. Among his many indiscretions, Dwyer also let the town's insurance policy lapse. Reed Springs didn't have insurance when Sally Stewart got hurt, which is why they had to write a check out of their own budget and ultimately declare bankruptcy.

In this case, what started as a simple pothole accident quickly unveiled the lasting damage of an unscrupulous politician. Perhaps this case serves as reminder about why it's important to vote in local elections.



# TAKE A BREAK

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9	6	7	3	5	8	4	1	2



## THE BEST NATIONAL PARKS TO VISIT THIS FALL

Have you ever wanted to experience the colors of a Boston fall while enjoying the peace and tranquility of the great outdoors? Autumn leaves are a universally appreciated sign of the changing seasons, and there's no better place to see those vibrant yellows, oranges, and reds on display than in one of America's national parks. So, if you've got some free time this autumn, here are some parks worth seeing.

### Acadia National Park, Maine

While the maple, birch, and poplar trees of Acadia begin to change color in September, mid-October is the best time to witness autumn in full swing. The park is crisscrossed with unpaved trails that date back to a time of horse-drawn carriages, preserving an idyllic setting. If you want to see the colors in full effect, take a drive to the top of Cadillac Mountain, the highest point along the North Atlantic seaboard, and watch the sun crest over the vibrant leaves. To fully experience fall in the Northeastern U.S., Acadia National Park is a must-see.

### Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee and North Carolina

Further south, the autumn colors of the Smoky Mountains are no less breathtaking than those in the Northeast. This park offers many scenic lookout points accessible by car, so don't worry about hoofing it into the forest if that's not your thing. Park wherever you like and watch the warm colors of ancient maples, oaks, and cedars change before your eyes.

### Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

While the West might typically be associated with evergreen pines, the deciduous trees of the relatively small Grand Teton National Park pack a colorful punch starting around the third week of September. It's also breeding season for elk in the area, and their high, eerie whistles can be heard in the evenings. Popular destinations in the park include the Christian Pond Loop and String Lake.

Just because the weather is cooling down doesn't mean you have to abandon your favorite national parks until next summer. The natural beauty of America can be experienced at any time of the year, so start planning your next autumn outdoor excursion!



## CACIO E PEPE

### Ingredients

Inspired by Bon Appétit

- 6 oz pasta, ideally spaghetti or bucatini
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter, cubed and divided
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese, ideally Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1/3 cup finely grated pecorino cheese
- Kosher salt, for pasta water and to taste

### Directions

1. In a large pot, bring 3 quarts of salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook, stopping 2 minutes short of desired doneness. Drain pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of pasta water.
2. In a large pan over medium heat, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Add pepper and cook until toasted and aromatic, about 1 minute. Add reserved pasta water and bring to a simmer.
3. Transfer pasta and remaining butter to pan and reduce heat to low. Add Parmesan and cook until melted, tossing pasta throughout. Remove pan from heat and add pecorino, continuing to toss until cheese is melted and sauce coats pasta.
4. Transfer to bowls and serve.



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# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Meet Isabel Lemus
- 2 Honoring the Canines of 9/11  
A Surprising Reason for Bankruptcy
- 3 Cacio e Pepe  
The Vibrant Colors of America's National Parks
- 4 Why Are So Many People Deciding Not to Retire?

## FINDING FULFILLMENT IN YOUR GOLDEN YEARS Why More Adults Over 55 Continue to Work

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, upward of 40% of people aged 55 and older are continuing to work past the normal retirement age. There are a number of reasons why people are choosing to stay employed, with one of the biggest being a lack of retirement funds, but some are also using work to keep their minds and skills sharp. In fact, most of the jobs that the 55-plus crowd goes after keep them engaged with the community and help them lead more active lives.

The BLS categorized the jobs many older workers are currently pursuing:

- Real estate appraisers/assessors
- Property/real estate/community association managers
- Technical writers
- Tax preparers
- Construction/building inspectors
- Crossing guards
- Clergy

These seven jobs are projected to grow between 8–14% over the next six years according to BLS data. They often pay well and don't always require a full-time commitment. Many even offer flexible schedules, which can help older workers spend more time with peers or loved

ones. This balance is exactly what many older workers are looking for, especially those who are "part-time retired."

More importantly, however, most older workers find these jobs fulfilling. They allow older folks to interact with the community and stay active, both of which, research suggests, are essential to healthy living as people age. For many, working past retirement, or not leaving the workforce entirely, can be a win-win-win: It's a win for your bank account, a win for your health, and a win for the community.

