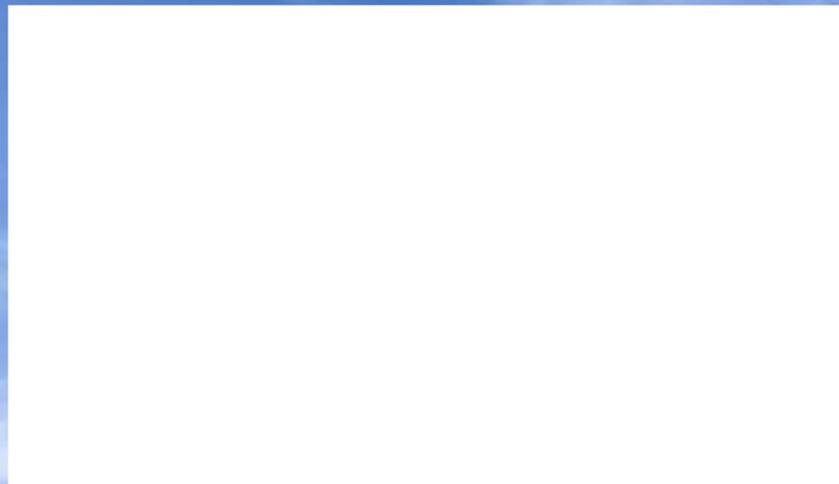


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## Sgt. Fieldy Comes Home



Early in their deployment, their vehicle struck a pressure plate while they were on patrol. Fieldy and Caceres were all right, but one of the other Marines in their company was badly injured in the explosion. The injured Marine could not be evacuated by helicopter until the landing zone was secured. Fieldy found another IED in the area and alerted Caceres. The bomb was quickly disarmed, and the injured soldier was taken to safety.

This wasn't the only IED Fieldy found. His sharp nose and dedication helped save thousands of lives. After his deployment, Caceres returned home, but Sgt. Fieldy served several more tours without him. While Fieldy continued to protect soldiers and civilians by tracking down IEDs, Caceres worked tirelessly to make sure he could bring Fieldy home when his service was over. Military working dogs can be adopted by former handlers, law

enforcement, or qualified civilians when they retire. After three years apart and a total of four tours served, Sgt. Fieldy was reunited with Caceres. In 2016, Fieldy received the K9 Medal of Courage Award, and in 2018, he won the American Humane Hero Dog Award for his service.

"These dogs are out there with us," said Caceres when he and Fieldy accepted the Hero Dog Award. "The dangers we face, they face them too. They deserve to be recognized. We ask so much of them, and all they want is to get petted or play with a toy. They're amazing animals, and Fieldy is just an amazing dog. I can't begin to express the gratitude I have for him."

If you are interested in supporting our nation's working dogs or would like to adopt a retired working dog yourself, you can learn more at [Missionk9rescue.org](http://Missionk9rescue.org).

There are around 2,500 military working dogs currently in service, and their efforts help save the lives of countless soldiers and civilians every day. One of these brave military dogs is Sgt. Fieldy, an 11-year-old black lab who was trained to locate the No. 1 threat in Afghanistan: IEDs. Sgt. Fieldy was deployed to Afghanistan with his handler, Cpl. Nicolas Caceres, in 2011.

January/February 2019

## MAKING WISH LISTS AND DISCOVERING WHAT'S IMPORTANT

### 3 Legal Pads and a Lot of Reflection



While most people take the month of January to record their resolutions for the upcoming year, I've structured my goal-setting process slightly different. Instead of waiting for the new year to kick off, I view December as the optimal time for evaluation and foresight.

I start by taking out three legal pads. On the first, I create a wish list of experiences, things, or objectives I really want: a family vacation, more time off spent with friends, a new car, etc. Generating a list of goals that are fun and fulfilling gets me motivated for the more pragmatic aspect of the goal-setting process and the behavioral changes necessary to achieve them. It creates a buzz in my brain and gets me excited for the new year. On the next pad, I ask myself, "What are some of the things I need to do personally or professionally to work toward the items on my wish list?" For most of the items, I know I'll have to make small but necessary behavioral changes in order to make any progress.

In December of 2018, one of the items scribbled across my first legal pad was "Spend more time with my kids." I took out my second pad and started brainstorming ways I could reach that goal. At the time, my son was playing travel soccer. I decided that I wanted to drive him to practice every evening so we could share some quality father/son time. Sounds simple enough, right? Wrong. His practice started at 6:30 every night, and in order to get to my house, pick him up, and take him to practice,

I needed to leave the office by 5:30. As an attorney, I couldn't simply leave the office earlier; my clients would suffer. In the end, I had to start going into work an hour earlier to maintain the balance between time spent with clients and time spent with my son.

Going in an hour earlier might seem like a small tweak, but it actually caused a major behavioral change in my daily habits. I candidly admit I'm not a morning person, so I had to make some personal adjustments and force myself to get out of bed in the morning. Additionally, I had to force myself to go to bed earlier. All of this allowed me to take my son to his practices, and it was one of my favorite parts of the day. Those subtle (but difficult) habit changes were necessary in order for it to happen.

I've explained the purpose of my first two legal pads thus far, but my third pad is equally if not more important. It contains my wish lists of years past. As I sit down to make new goals, I take stock of my previous ones and note whether I achieved them. If I didn't, I question whether I should keep them on the list for the upcoming year. If I decide to keep them, I put an "R" next to it for "repeat." Some I've kept on repeat for over 20 years. In fact, they've become a way of life for me.

The three wishes that stay on top of the third legal pad with an "R" next to them every year are God, family, and work. I've decided that if I'm serving all three, I know where I am supposed to be and what I am supposed to be doing. Of course, there are always extras that I want to sneak in, such as watching more college football or playing my guitar more often. But those extras can't make it into the mix if I haven't taken care of my core three. With a busy practice, a wonderful wife, and two young children, I simply can't do more than those three, but truthfully, I am the happiest I've ever been because of it. They are based on true joy, and life just doesn't get better than that.

*-Gary Christmas*



**MOM  
REALLY  
DOES KNOW  
BEST**

### 3 WIVES' TALES PROVEN TRUE

"Make a face like that, and it'll stay that way forever." You may have heard something like this from Mom's book of wisdom. Maybe you never disputed the idea that mother knows best. But as you grew up, it slowly became clear that hair doesn't grow back faster and thicker if you shave it, cracking your knuckles doesn't cause arthritis, and gum doesn't stay in your stomach for months after you swallow it. After a whirlwind of wives' tales over the years, many common claims have been put under scrutiny. Wives' tales have been known as pseudoscience and blind intuition, but even as many were disproved, some surprisingly proved to hold weight. Here are three wives' tales that have proven to be true.

#### **Garlic Cures Colds**

For decades, moms have professed the healing properties of garlic, suggesting it can cure colds and help the body fight sickness. It turns out they were absolutely right. Garlic has antiviral properties that strengthen the immune system and nutrients that help combat illnesses. The effects of garlic can actually be more effective than over-the-counter flu medications. Some studies

show that regular consumption of raw garlic lessens the likelihood of getting a cold, so if you feel a tickle in your throat, try a clove before you open the medicine cabinet.

#### **Heartburn Means a Hairy Baby**

It's hard to list wives' tales without bringing up one about pregnancy. Many are solely based on intuition, but a few that sound odd are legitimate. In 2007, a study done by Johns Hopkins attempted to debunk the myth that heartburn during pregnancy would mean a hairy baby at birth. Instead of proving it wrong, they found that 82 percent of women with severe heartburn during pregnancy gave birth to hairy babies. Turns out the hormones that cause heartburn in pregnant women also affect fetal hair growth.

#### **Joint Pain Predicts the Weather**

Did you ever look at your mom with skepticism when she would predict rain because her knees hurt? If so, you might owe your mom an apology, because there is a scientific connection. The drop in barometric pressure that's common during storm weather causes pain in arthritic joints.



**CHECK OUT THIS RECENT SETTLEMENT!**  
HOW OUR TEAM HELPED A CLIENT GET HIS LIFE BACK

Every day in South Carolina, innocent people are severely injured due to the negligence of others. These injuries often stem from careless driving, defective products, slip and fall accidents, and a host of other causes. When these people are hurt, face costly medical bills, and can't go to work due to their injuries, getting compensation isn't a luxury; it's a necessity to live.

While these types of accidents happen all the time, you rarely hear stories regarding the kinds of settlements and verdicts reached in county courthouses and lawyers' offices around the country every day. To that end, the team here at Christmas Law Firm wants to highlight a settlement where attorney Gary Christmas was able to help an injured client get the help he desperately needed after he was injured through no fault of his own.

Just recently, an assembler working in the area was tasked with carrying a heavy load of wires while at work. Unfortunately, he fell,

which resulted in many severe injuries. He had a long stay in the hospital while seeking treatment and healing from wounds to his cervical spine, left shoulder, left biceps tendon, left hand, left middle finger, right shoulder, right upper extremity, lumbar spine, right lower extremity, and right knee.

Obviously, these injuries left him unable to work and with a heaping pile of medical bills. After spending ample amounts of both money and time trying to recuperate from his fall, the client came to Christmas Law Firm simply looking for a way to get his life back.

Fortunately, in November of last year, attorney Christmas obtained a \$299,000 settlement to help pay for the damages and injuries the client suffered, as well as to assist paying for his medical bills. Congratulations to attorney Christmas and our industrious and deserving client!

## DON'T FALL PREY TO THESE MYTHS

What You Should Know About Slip and Fall Accidents



When cold winter temperatures combine with weeks of rain, the possibility of slipping and falling increases. Even if you are an expert at dodging all the puddles from your car to your office, once you get inside the front door, you can still slip on the water brought in on the bottom of a coworker's shoe. For this reason, our team here at Christmas Law Firm wants to dispel two of the most common myths pertaining to personal injury lawsuits that you and many others might have fallen prey to.

#### **Myth 1: There Is No Case**

Because the vast majority of slip and fall cases occur purely by accident, many people believe that a lawsuit is not a viable option. This is untrue, and it deters many injured people from consulting with a lawyer who can help them get compensation for their thousands of dollars in medical bills and loss of work. These falls are often the result of negligence by a store manager or property owner, and if the accident could have been prevented, the injured party should be compensated.

#### **Myth 2: There Are No Time Constraints**

While the decision to sue is subjective and completely depends on the injured party in question, there is a statute of limitations to keep in mind if you were recently hurt as the result of someone else's negligence. In most states, the clock starts the moment you were injured, and you typically have approximately two years to file your case.

Because slip and fall cases are more prevalent this time of year, it's imperative that you can discern fact from fiction regarding these types of personal injury cases. If you have suffered a slip and fall injury in the Summerville, Charleston, or Mt. Pleasant area, be sure to reach out to our team as soon as you can so we can advise you of your options.

## LAUGH OUT LOUD!



## A NEW NAME AND A NEW LOCATION



Check Out These New Office Changes!

While our team has enjoyed being a part of Howell & Christmas Law Firm for the last 20 years, we have exciting news for our family of outstanding clients! First, we are pleased to announce that this year, we have opened our own office, Christmas Law Firm. Second, our firm is expanding — we have now opened our office in Summerville, South Carolina to better serve you. We are very excited to officially become a part of the Berkeley County area and are especially thrilled to be closer to you. Please feel free to stop by and check out our new office anytime. We look forward to seeing and serving you there!