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## Brave Little Cher Ami

three-month push by the Allies during the final throes of World War I to force the Germans to surrender. It became the bloodiest battle in U.S. history. For six days, the encircled division endured relentless attacks and suffered heavy casualties, but their orders were clear: don't retreat and don't surrender.

The division dispatched two homing pigeons with requests for help, but both birds were shot down. When friendly fire began raining down on the 77th, Major Charles White Whittlesey felt he had no choice but to send the last pigeon, Cher Ami. The pigeon's desperate note read:

*"We are along the road parallel to 276.4. Our own artillery is dropping a barrage directly on us. For heaven's sake, stop it."*

As Cher Ami rose from the brush, she was shot down, to the despair of the watching soldiers. However, after a few seconds, she

fought her way back into the air, flew through a torrent of gunfire, and made it to division headquarters 25 miles away. She had been shot in the breast, the eye, and the leg.

Because of Cher Ami's brave flight, 194 of the original 554 men of the 77th Division survived the battle. One month later, World War I came to an end. Cher Ami survived the war as well, thanks to the surgeons who performed emergency surgery on her. One soldier even carved her a little wooden leg. She became a well-known hero to both soldiers and children in the States. For her service in Verdun, the French Army awarded her the Croix de Guerre, and she was inducted into the Racing Pigeon Hall of Fame.

Cher Ami finally succumbed to her wounds in June of 1919 and is now on display in the Smithsonian alongside Sergeant Stubby, a terrier who served 18 months on the Western Front.



Long before the invention of radios and cellphones, homing pigeons were used to send messages as early as the sixth century. During World War I, war pigeons carried lifesaving messages past enemy lines for the American and French armies, often being wounded in the process. In 1918, Cher Ami, a black check hen used by the U.S. Signal Corps, became the most famous of them all.

On Oct. 2, the United States 77th Division was trapped behind enemy lines in the Argonne Forest during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, a

May/June 2019

## A TRIBUTE TO AN AMAZING WOMAN

### My Mother, Vivian

I was raised by a phenomenal woman, my mother, Vivian, and although she passed away in 2002, I still take time every Mother's Day to acknowledge the profound influence she had on the man, husband, father, and attorney I am today. She was and continues to be the impetus for everything I've become.

When my parents divorced, my mom found herself in a difficult position. When she and my dad got married, she had dropped out of college to start a family. So, when she found herself with three kids and no professional job experience, she decided to go back to school at night, all while working full time during the day and raising my siblings and me on her own.

Watching her unmatched work ethic is how my siblings and I found our own ambitions. When I was a teenager, she was working as a court reporter. In the 80s, there was some computer software, but nothing close to what we have today. Mom let me earn an allowance by reading and editing the depositions. In South Carolina history, there were a lot of cases that lasted a relatively long time, so going through the transcripts was more like reading a book. I fell in love with the characters. The attorneys in these "books" became my own personal superheroes, which encouraged me to pursue law. It was one of the best decisions I've made, and I know I have my mom to thank for that.

While she spent a lot of her adult life working and going to school, she still found a way to be remarkably nurturing. In fact, I remember that if

we got even a tiny cold, we were immediately in the doctor's office. Now that I think about it, to this day, my kids' pediatrician wants to kick me out of his office because I bother him so often. I don't go there for unnecessary reasons; it's more for peace of mind.

Now that I'm a parent, I realize how superhuman it was that my mom was able to accomplish all she did. My wife and I are frequently exhausted just trying to keep up with everything we need to do, and there are two of us! It was through my mom's loving demeanor, unparalleled work ethic, and fierce independence that she was able to provide for us while simultaneously achieving her own goals.



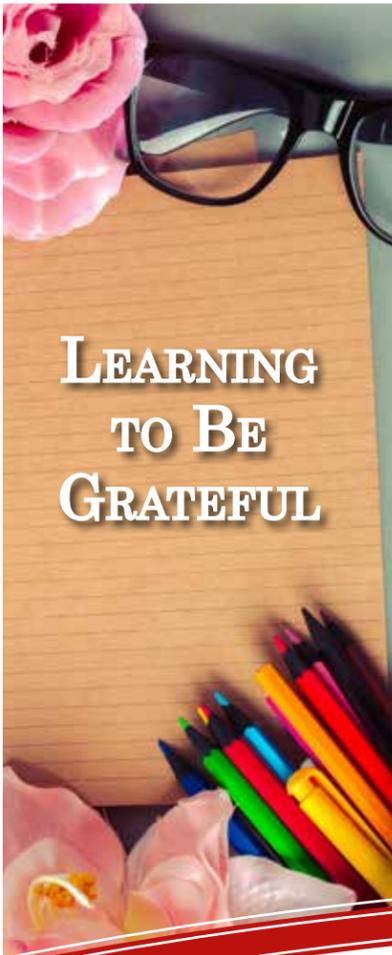
**IT WAS THROUGH MY MOM'S LOVING DEMEANOR, UNPARALLELED WORK ETHIC, AND FIERCE INDEPENDENCE THAT SHE WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR US WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ACHIEVING HER OWN GOALS."**

The last time I saw her was in 2002. She had been diagnosed with leukemia, a blood cancer that is often considered a childhood illness. She was only 52 when she passed. At the time, I knew she passed at a young age, but now that I am 47 and closing in on that age, I understand how young she really was. Even through the cancer, she was still the strong, selfless person she had always been. I remember her constantly worrying more about how her condition would affect us than about her own health.

I know everyone thinks that their mother is the best, but I have a hard time believing that anyone was better than mine. To my mom, thank you for everything, and Happy Mother's Day.

*-Gary Christmas*





## LEARNING TO BE GRATEFUL

### SOME WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN APPRECIATE THEIR TEACHERS

Teacher Appreciation Week runs from May 6–10 this year, and there are plenty of ways students of all ages can thank their educators for everything they do. Being a teacher isn't an easy job, and the people who make it their profession are passionate about helping kids learn. Depending on how old your child is, they may need a parent's help in showing their appreciation. Here are a few ways parents and children can appreciate teachers together.

#### Thank-You Notes

This gesture is simple and sweet and can be very thoughtful. Telling a teacher what makes them outstanding can often be just as valuable as a gift. Help your child write an appreciative note and then write one yourself. Teachers often have to maintain the happiness of students, administrators, and parents. Your card could relieve some of the stress of that balancing act and let them know that you acknowledge their efforts.

#### A Homemade Meal

Making a homemade meal (or dessert) shows teachers that you went the extra mile to appreciate their hard work. You could make a favorite dish of yours or try to find a new recipe online. Either way, encourage your child to help you with the process so that the meal is truly a gift from both of you.

#### Donating School Supplies

Many teachers use their own money to buy school supplies for their classroom. This is just one of the ways teachers go above and beyond on a daily basis, and buying some extra school supplies can help ease that cost. Take your child shopping with you and help them pick out supplies that you know their teacher will appreciate.

Your children spend several hours a day with their teachers, so fostering relationships with them is vital. Use this day to help your children understand the importance of teachers, to teach them the power of gratitude, and to encourage them to show respect for everyone who helps them in life.

# BE CAREFUL THIS CINCO DE MAYO

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BARS AND RESTAURANTS

More sunshine brings warmer temperatures, and warmer temperatures mean more time spent out of the house exploring with friends and family. Bars and restaurants can serve as great places to kick back, relax, and enjoy a drink or two, but fun times drinking in the sunshine can quickly get out of hand if the establishment doesn't step in when necessary. Most people know that dramshops (businesses that serve alcohol) are responsible for not overserving their guests. However, you might not be aware that these establishments can be held legally liable if one of their overserved patrons gets in a car accident on the way home from the bar.

In South Carolina, there are currently no specific dramshop laws outlined in the state code. However, drunk driving accidents are still taken very seriously. For example, if an individual is injured by a drunk driver, they can file a civil claim against the bar for its recklessness.

In these types of dramshop cases, attorneys must prove the bar or restaurant behaved recklessly, posing great risk to other people. Usually, this is done by providing evidence that the bar or restaurant served a customer who was already intoxicated. In practice, when an establishment stops serving alcohol to a

drunk patron, they are trying to protect not only other patrons and drivers but also themselves from being held liable if that customer gets into an accident.

If you've been injured by a drunk driver who was served too many beverages at a restaurant or bar, it may be difficult to prove the establishment is responsible without a skilled attorney at your side. It could be important to contact a personal injury lawyer to help you through your dramshop case so that you may effectively pursue appropriate compensation for your injuries. Give us a call to take the next step forward in your case.



## CHECK OUT ONE OF OUR RECENT SETTLEMENTS!

### Making a Sad Part of Life a Little Brighter

Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) involve damage to the skull or the brain, which is caused by some type of physical force. Sadly, these kinds of impairments happen more frequently in South Carolina than one might think. In fact, according to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), an average of 1,117 deaths, 2,800 hospital discharges, and 11,500 emergency room visits occur each year due to TBIs.

The impetus for these types of injuries vary, but falling happens to be the biggest nonfatal reason for TBIs, accounting for 35 percent of all recorded incidents. Automobile crashes are second at 22 percent, followed by being struck by something at 11 percent, and assaults at 10 percent.

One family here in South Carolina suffered a terrible tragedy last year after their young child received a TBI in a semitruck accident. While there isn't much solace that can be offered to families in situations like this, our legal team at Christmas Law Firm wanted to do all we



could to prevent the child's parents from drowning under a mountain of medical costs. Fortunately, we were able to get them a settlement of \$10,290,290. While it won't take away their child's injury, it will help reduce their stress in other areas of life.

As an experienced Charleston personal injury lawyer, Gary Christmas has represented hundreds of clients throughout his career and continues to vigorously fight to help injured people receive compensation. If you or someone you know is the victim of a TBI, please don't hesitate to give our office a call.

## 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!



## Shrimp Sausage Skewers

Inspired by PaleoLeap.com

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 pound raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
  - 1/2 pound cooked sausage, cut into 1-inch pieces
  - 2 zucchini, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
  - 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
  - Wooden skewers, soaked in water for 30 minutes
- Creole Seasoning Ingredients**
- 2 tablespoons paprika
  - 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
  - 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
  - 1/2 teaspoon cayenne or chili powder
  - 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
  - 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme

### DIRECTIONS

1. Heat your grill to medium-high.
2. In a bowl, combine all ingredients for creole seasoning.
3. In a large bowl, combine the shrimp, zucchini pieces, and sausage pieces, and cover them with the olive oil.
4. Add creole seasoning and mix well until all ingredients are covered.
5. Load up skewers with alternating pieces of shrimp, sausage, and zucchini until they're full.
6. Grill skewers until shrimp are well-cooked (6–8 minutes).