

Mark A. Anderson's

LAW TALK



December 2009

*Merry Christmas from the Anderson Law Firm
We hope you have a happy and safe holiday season!*

The Anderson Law Firm's New Office



We have just completed a move to our new office and we are very glad to be settled into our new digs. Our new office is right outside of downtown Fort Worth, just north of I-30 between Henderson and Summit. We feel that this new location makes us more accessible to our clients.

When I bought the 50 year old office building, I thought it was typical in design of a 1950's style office building, and that simplistic style appealed to me. What I didn't know is that the original owner actually designed the building him-

self. He had traveled extensively in the Far East and wanted to include wholly enclosed atriums within the building similar to what he had seen in Japan. After the renovations were completed, the original owner's nephew, from whom I purchased the building, came by to tour what we had done and said his uncle would be proud of how the building now looked. Hearing about the Japanese influence, it makes me want to put in a Koi pond in one of the atriums. But that is all I need, more animals.

Please feel free to come by anytime and take a tour of our new offices. We would love to show them to you.

Merry Christmas from the Anderson Family!

(This piece was originally written for my Dad's family newsletter, but I don't think it is plagiarism if I wrote it in the first place).

Here is a quick update on my family. Our daughter, Turner, is nine years old and is very much enjoying her 3rd grade year. She stays extremely busy with all of the activities of a third grader. She especially likes Brownies, but her parents don't like the fact that they get stuck eating all of the Girl Scout Cookies.

This past year I coached Turner's soccer team, the Dolphins. This was an all girl's team made up of Turner's classmates and they played in a co-ed league. They did extremely well, according to their Coach. Turner could never understand when the Coach made a substitution and pulled her out of the game, as she would plead "But you're my Daddy and you're the Coach..."

Turner's basketball season is around the corner and practices have just started. I will be the Coach even though I can't even dunk the ball on their 8' goals. This is Turner's first year of basketball, so it is not determined if she will plead to stay in the game or lean on the Coach to stay on the bench. And then when basketball ends, soccer starts again....

The family pets rule the Anderson house. Andie is a three year old overweight and wonderful Golden Retriever who sleeps in the bed as if it's her own. Andie has a new companion, Ellie, a two year old Labrador Retriever. Ellie was rescued a few months ago and she is still settling in at the Anderson house. She is very sweet, is scared of her shadow and is a vivacious licker. She licks absolutely everything in her reach (if you have visited my office recently, you have likely met Ellie the Licker). Of course, the family cat, Lucy, is still alive at the young age of 18. She is a medical miracle and definitely on her 9th life.

Kim also feeds and nurtures approximately ten "outside" cats. The exact number is difficult to determine at any given time. One of the most eventful things to happen recently in the Anderson house is when one of the "outside" cats snuck in the house and decided to hang out for awhile. Kim, trying to be a good hostess, took the feline guest a can of tuna fish to entice her to leave. The cat - now definitely a scaredy cat, was spooked and leapt from the second floor landing to the chandelier anchored 25 feet above the floor. At that moment, "hanging out" at the Andersons had an entirely new meaning. Kim and I tried everything we could to coax the cat down. The situation became frantic when the scaredy cat thought that the chandelier came with a litter box attached. Oops. Kim even called the Fort Worth Fire Department, but they told her she had been watching too much late night TV. After two hours of pleading with this very frightened kitty, plus an intervention with the neighbors and many suggestions from friends, there was finally a happy outcome. Our feline friend walked a strategically placed plank and she was free once again.

Rounding out the animal kingdom are Turner's rather large goldfish, Coral and Swift. These two fish are on their third fish tank, as they keep growing and growing. Turner desperately wants a small dog and really liked Uncle Ray's new Yorkie, T-Bone, when they met over Thanksgiving. But Kim is holding out, as she ends up being Chief Animal Cleaner Upper, among other titles.

The Andersons, and all of their animals, wish each and every one of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Wonderful and Safe New Year.

NEED A NOTARY?

If you need the services of a notary, please stop by the office anytime between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm. We will be happy to provide notary services

FREE OF CHARGE!

Here are some Christmas facts and trivia we thought you might find interesting.

While we are all familiar with the **Christmas holiday on December 25**, there are other gift-giving holidays celebrated in December as well.

European children are familiar with **St. Nicholas Day, celebrated on December 6**.

The day celebrates St. Nicholas, a Catholic bishop who lived in Greece around 300 A.D. He was known for giving gifts to those in need, especially children. Now, his day is celebrated across Europe with feasts and gifts.

Boxing Day is celebrated on Dec. 26 in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Hong Kong. The name Boxing Day comes from the English tradition of giving the gift of a "Christmas Box" to less wealthy people, and from wealthy employers to laborers, servants and trades-people. Some even think this is where the tradition of the Christmas bonus came from! Boxing Day is a public holiday in many places.

Here are some more interesting bits of Christmas trivia:

- Alabama was the first state in the U.S. to recognize Christmas as an official holiday in 1836. Oklahoma was the last state to declare it an official holiday in 1907.
- America has an official national Christmas tree and it is located in King's Canyon National Park in California. The tree is a giant sequoia called the "General Grant Tree," and is over 300 feet high. It was made the official Christmas tree in 1925.
- More than 1.76 billion candy canes will be made during the Christmas season.
- While children in North America put out stockings at Christmas time, Dutch children put out shoes. They set their shoes out to receive gifts any time between mid-November and December 5, St. Nicholas' birthday.
- The season has inspired some names of U.S. cities; Arizona and Indiana both have towns named Santa Claus, and Arizona and Florida have towns named Christmas.

An Important Warning for Parents: Please Read This!

I had a most disturbing encounter the other night I must share with you. I was at a local Black Eyed Pea restaurant for dinner with my wife and daughter when we were approached by a very gentle, unassuming older man who had the booth next to us. He complimented my nine year old daughter then complimented my wife. He then began to charm us with stories of when he was a pediatric neurosurgeon here in town. The conversation continued, the stories were engaging and it all seemed normal, even though as I type this I wonder why I thought it was normal as we had never seen this man before. On the way home, it started to click—why was this nice older man so interested in us? Or, upon reflection, so interested in my daughter.

Within a minute of getting home, I had googled him and found out I had just introduced my innocent daughter to a convicted child molester. His last (known) victim was a nine year old girl. He had lost his medical license when he received two convictions years ago. Kim called the molester (he had given us his number) and gave him an earful. The Police were sympathetic, but he had broken no laws.

Our kids are great at following the rule of not talking to strangers. I know my daughter is. But now I am acutely aware of how I need to do a better job of screening who enters my daughter's life through me. I am telling you, this guy was smooth. The internet is such a great resource for quick investigations. The Texas Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry can be searched many ways, including by name or zip code. The DPS's site can be found at **<https://records.txdps.state.tx.us>**. This site has all sorts of information, including name, address, current picture and basis for sexual conviction. I was surprised to learn that there are 82 registered sex offenders in my home zip code and 98 such perverts in my work zip code.

This world has all kinds of people. These bad guys use the internet to their advantage. Believe me, I am going to use the internet to my advantage as well and know who I meet from now on, and be much more careful about to whom I introduce my daughter. I encourage all parents to become familiar with this site.



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**ACCIDENT &
INJURY LAW**



STAY SAFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON: DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

At the Anderson Law Firm, we have become very familiar with Texas DWI laws. While we have never represented anyone charged with a DWI, we have been hired many times by the victim of a DWI accident. These are often times very serious accidents, sometimes resulting in the death of the innocent victim. It's strange, but the DWI driver always seems to walk (or stumble) away from the accident unharmed. So here are some things to know about Texas DWI law:

- **A driver is presumed to be intoxicated if his or her Blood Alcohol Content is .08 or above.** For a 130 pound person, that means about 2 drinks over a 1 hour period. And for a 200 pound person, that means approximately 3 drinks over a 1 hour time period. Of course, everyone's metabolism is different and how much you can drink and still be under the legal limit depends on many factors including weight, sex, and how much a person has had to eat.
- **Having an open container in the passenger compartment of a car is illegal.**
- **A driver can refuse a breathalyzer test, but it will result in a license suspension.** If a court order is obtained, a driver cannot refuse a blood test.
- **In the last year of statistics available, 2007, there were over 88,000 DWI arrests in Texas.** Worse than that, there were almost 1,300 fatalities as a result of drunk driving in our state. But the good news is that the fatality number has been decreasing recently, so hopefully all of the public awareness campaigns have had a positive effect by keeping this important issue front and center.