



## Seufert Law Offices, PA

*We'll Get You Through It*



### From the Captain's Log 6 Degrees of Separation?

With the advance of technology, our world seems to be getting smaller each day. We text, email, twitter, or whatever method our teenagers use now, and a reply can come within seconds from ½ way across the world. In the “old days” it took months by mule train to cross the US, now in 5 hours you go from BOS to LAX. But while technology has shortened the distance, there is still an eerie sense that we as humans, with or without technology, have always had a degree of connectivity that maybe we don't always fully grasp.

Many years ago when I was starting my law practice in Franklin, a Nurse Practitioner named Pat Ford opened a medical office at Franklin Region Hospital called Healthy Generations. She treated many of my personal injury clients over the years so I would see her reports on a regular basis. Then a decade or more ago she “retired” and moved onto a boat with her husband to open up a charter sailing business in the islands. I had a chance to speak to her by phone shortly after she started her new sailing adventure, as she had been the treating doctor in one of my injury cases going to trial and I was asking her if she could fly back to NH if necessary. She agreed but the case then settled. But during our phone call she told me that the night before, while she and her husband were sleeping on their new boat, an intruder came aboard and stole all their electronics. Not a way to start a new life in the islands. We lost touch after that. Fast forward a few years (2012-2015) and I began taking winters off sailing in the islands also, but I don't think I ever crossed path with her boat.

About 5 years ago the assistant dock master for the Harbor Place Marina in Portsmouth NH asked for my assistance during the Tall Ships weekend to ferry passengers from the marina to the incoming Tall Ships anchored off of Portsmouth. For volunteering our boat in the effort we were treated to free dockage at the marina that weekend. A fellow sailor by the name of Bob Gibbons was in charge of making sure we got our free berthing at the marina. We struck up a conversation and Bob said that he and his wife Pat Gibbons lived aboard their sailboat full time, had sailed extensively in the island, and that she was a retired Nurse Practitioner. He said we should all get together some time for dinner and drinks, but schedules never gelled.


This month I was reading an obituary in the Concord Monitor that Patricia Ford-Gibbons, a retired Nurse Practitioner from Franklin, NH, and wife of Bob Gibbons of Portsmouth, recently passed. There was the picture of my old friend Pat Ford. That's 2 degrees of separation, not 6.

I went to her funeral and spoke to Bob, he remembered our 5-year old promise to get together and reminded me that we needed to catch up. I wish we hadn't waited so long. •

**ARIES**

**Patricia M. Ford - Gibbons**

PORTSMOUTH, NH — years of an adventurous life style, sailing the waters of the North Atlantic and The Windward and Leeward Islands, and the US Virgin Islands, operating a sailing charter business seasonally in Coastal New England water and the Virgin Islands, more recently touring the western states by RV. Pat and Bob enjoyed a very spiritual relationship that helped to maintain their relationship through the years together. She leaves behind her cherished...



### January 2020 News



# DUI/DWI— Serious Offense, Serious Penalties

There are consequences for a DWI conviction that the law requires and a Court will Order. The more serious the DWI charge, the more serious those consequences will be. All forms of DWI carry a loss of license, a fine and alcohol education classes. The more serious DWI charges, such as Aggravated or DWI subsequent, will result in a sentence of jail time. These are all consequences that by now everyone is familiar with. However, there are also collateral consequences that many people are not aware of.

New Hampshire does not require drivers to carry car insurance. But, with any DWI conviction, you will be required to file an SR22 form with the Department of Motor Vehicles. An SR22 form is a form that a car insurance company must fill out and forward to DMV. That form is proof that you have insurance. That kind of insurance is expensive for two reasons. One is that you have a conviction for DWI. The other is that the insurance required is insurance on your license, not your vehicle. It means that you are paying to provide car insurance to *any* car you drive.

You may also be required to have an interlock device installed on your car by DMV, even if the Court does not impose that requirement. An interlock device is essentially a breath test installed on your ignition. If you blow into that machine and have even a very small amount of alcohol in your system, your car won't start. The cost of installing and maintaining that device is the responsibility of the driver. The driver must also report to a predetermined location monthly to have a diagnostic test run on the interlock device. Any violation of the terms of use of the interlock device, to include a test positive for any amount of alcohol, subject the driver to additional loss of license.

One way to avoid the ramifications of drunk driving is to ***never drink and drive***. If you have been charged with DUI/DWI, call a DUI/DWI attorney to protect your rights. •



## Potholes on the Road to Driverless Cars



Tesla's "Autopilot" system is an optional driver-assistance feature which employs sensors that provide a 360-degree view around the car, extending up to roughly 750 feet. It processes visual, sonar, and radar information to make rapid adjustments as necessary.

Autopilot can provide lane assistance, regulate speed, automatically change lanes, detect objects, apply the brakes, and self-park. But an attentive driver is still required behind the wheel to respond when prompted.

Many automotive experts believe a weak spot in the Autopilot system is that Tesla does not incorporate high-detail mapping. Two fatal Tesla crashes in Florida—one in 2016, another in spring 2019—shared eerily similar circumstances. Both cars were autopiloted directly

into the side and underneath turning tractor-trailers, with no reduction of speed prior to the crashes. Cross-referencing high-detail mapping can enhance a driver-assistance system's ability to distinguish obstacles that need to be avoided and reduce the chances of being "fooled."

Other industry experts believe Tesla's marketing sends mixed messages (the name "Autopilot" itself is misleading). Drivers should keep their hands on the wheel while using Autopilot, but when Tesla demonstrates and speaks of their product, it has sometimes been presented as if it were a driverless ("autonomous") car, lulling some drivers into a false sense of security.

Technology can be exciting and wonderful thing, but for me, I'm keeping my hands on the wheel.

If you become the victim of a negligent driver—or flawed technology—contact an auto accident attorney to protect your rights. •



# Workplace Injuries

## You May Have Options Beyond Workers' Comp



Someone injured on the job may be under the impression that workers' comp is their only avenue for compensation. In general, this is true, but there are a few exceptions.

For example, if you were injured by a defective product, a products liability lawsuit against the manufacturer may be a possibility.

If a toxic substance caused you harm, the manufacturer might be subject to a toxic tort lawsuit. A worker may be able

to file suit against the manufacturer of the toxic substance and/or any manufacturers of safety equipment that proved to be ineffective.

You might be able to bring a personal injury lawsuit against your employer if you were injured due to their intentional conduct. If your employer doesn't carry workers' comp insurance, you may be able to file a civil court action against them.

If a third party is responsible for causing your injuries, filing a personal injury lawsuit against them is an option.

If an injury is disabling and prevents you from working, you may also be eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI and SSI).

Workers' compensation in the form of temporary disability or permanent disability payments is usually quite low and doesn't provide anything for pain and suffering.

If you are injured on the job, consult with an experienced attorney to safeguard your rights. •

### January 2020 Notable Dates

**January 2**  
National Buffet Day

**January 5**  
National Bird Day

**January 8**  
National Winter Skin Relief Day

**January 13**  
National Sticker Day

**January 21**  
Squirrel Appreciation Day

**January 24**  
National Compliment Day

**January 28**  
National Kazoo Day

**January 29**  
National Puzzle Day

## Lesser-Known Details of a Civil Rights Icon

Michael King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929. His father, a Baptist minister, informally changed King's name (and his own) from Michael to Martin Luther in 1934 after he attended a Baptist conference in Germany. There, the history of Germany's Martin Luther, the reformer who made his famous stand against the Roman Catholic Church in 1517, came to life and profoundly impacted him. His son made the name change legal in 1957.

King began college at age 15, obtaining a degree in sociology at Morehouse College. His next stop was Pennsylvania's Crozer Theological Seminary, where the future valedictorian struggled with two early courses in public speaking, collecting a pair of C's. He earned the title "doctor" at Boston University in 1955.

In 1958, King experienced the first attempt on his life. He was signing copies of a new book in Harlem when Izola Ware Curry plunged a 7-inch letter opener into his chest, barely missing his aorta. Doctors told him a single sneeze could have been fatal.

King and his family were huge "Trekkies." He once visited the Star Trek set to meet actress Nichelle Nichols, who played Lieutenant Uhura and was the first African American woman to play a regular role on network television. She had been pondering leaving the show, but King encouraged her to stay because she was a cultural role model. She stayed.

After King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963, an aide, George Raveling, asked him for the three-page document. King obliged. Raveling has kept the document, having turned down millions for it over the years. The famous "dream," however, is not mentioned. King improvised that part. It's safe to say he made up for his C's in divinity school. •



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*Protect Your Family, Protect Your Rights*



## 6 Degrees of Separation?

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## Cathy's Corner

# Father/Daughter Time

When our daughter was five, my husband took her to the Nutcracker Ballet at the Palace Theatre in Manchester. She was dressed in her best dress with her hair up in a bow. My husband was in a suit. They looked like a picture on a Christmas card. They had a wonderful time. It became an annual father/daughter tradition.

As the years progressed, they started going to the production of the Nutcracker at the Boston Opera House. The difference between going to the ballet in Manchester and Boston is significant, they have told me. The cities themselves are very different. Boston is a world class city. The Boston Opera House is a world class venue. Neither Manchester nor the Palace Theatre is on anyone's radar screen, which is a reason that I love New Hampshire.

Some things are the same. My daughter still dresses up, but without a bow or a velvet dress. My husband still looks handsome in his suit, with the addition of some gray hair (which almost certainly has been brought on as a result of being married to me). Of course now there is a picture on Facebook commemorating the event. Most importantly the opportunity for father/daughter time continues. Our daughter is grown and has the responsibility of marriage, working and owning a home. The one on one time with her father to plan and attend dinner and a ballet is a very good thing. ●

