



# Seufert Law Offices, PA

*We'll Get You Through It*

## From the Captain's Log Tis' the Season



By the time you all read this the tree will be down, the gifts put away, and the credit bills piling up. But that is not the subject to this piece. It is about Boston and the people of Nova Scotia. As history has it, on 12/6/1917 a terrible ship collision occurred in Halifax harbor, Nova Scotia killing thousands and setting fire to the entire city. While pre-911, the people of Boston quickly heard of this tragedy and immediately rallied to the cause and sent ships and supplies to help its Halifax neighbors. Nova Scotia has never forgotten what their neighbors did and annually gifts a beautiful spruce tree to Boston as a remembrance, and thank you. It is then erected in Boston Commons, decorated, and a sign hung for the commemoration. This year my family wanted to go to Boston to see the Christmas lights and we strolled by the decorated tree and the other happenings in and around Boston. We also strolled past the Frog Pond

and ice skaters, Downtown Crossing shops, and then the North End for dinner. It's funny how traditions carry us forward into the New Year, but lest we never forget the struggles of those before us and resolve to leave a little kindness in our wake. To all our clients and friends, may 2022 bring you some comfort and joy. ●

### January 2022 News





# Vehicular Accidents and Spinal Cord Injuries

The spinal cord is the central support for the body's muscular system and relays the messages from the brain to the rest of the body. Any injury to this vital body part can be devastating.

The number one cause of spinal cord injuries, accounting for more than 40 percent, is motor vehicle accidents. Crashes can fracture, dislocate, crush, or compress one or more of the vertebrae of the spinal cord. When bits of bone tear into the tissue embedded in the spine, the nerves are damaged. The crash does not have to be catastrophic, spinal cord injuries can occur in low, medium, and high speed impacts. The opposite can also occur, even in a medium and high speed crashes no injury can occur and the occupants walk away.

Spinal cord damage may lead to full or partial paralysis, respiratory difficulty, circulation problems, muscle tone deficiency, problems with bladder or bowel control, poor sexual health, and greatly diminished skin sensation. Chronic muscle and joint pain, as well as depression, may also result.

Sadly, many of these injuries will need to be dealt with every day for the rest of a person's life. Round-the-clock care for a stretch of time – if not permanently – is necessary for some. Surgeries, rehab, and medication may disrupt one's life, too. Everyday activities prior to the accident may now be impossible or greatly complicated.

It goes without saying that immediate and long-term loss of earnings is a distinct possibility. Don't let financial worries exacerbate an already challenging situation. If you are the victim of a spinal cord injury via an auto accident that was the fault of another, contact an experienced auto accident attorney to safeguard your rights. Your attorney can file an injury claim to alleviate your financial concerns and also compensate you for mental and emotional suffering, enabling you to focus on what's most important—your health. ●

# An Overview of Voluntary Arbitration

## January 2022 Notable Dates

**Jan. 1**  
New Year's Day

**Jan. 4**  
Trivia Day

**Jan. 12**  
Take the Stairs Day

**Jan. 16**  
Appreciate a Dragon Day

**Jan. 17**  
Martin Luther King Day

**Jan. 21**  
Squirrel Appreciation Day

**Jan. 27**  
Chocolate Cake Day

Arbitration comes in two (2) forms, voluntary and forced. It is a method of resolving disputes outside of court process. Personal injury attorneys sometimes recommend *voluntary arbitration* as the best means to resolve a smaller claim quickly. Parties then agree to refer their case to a neutral arbitrator (or panel of arbitrators) — chosen by mutual consent — who reviews evidence, listens to attorneys and witnesses, and comes to a decision. Forced, or involuntary arbitration, on the other hand is found in most consumer contracts, such as cell phone, utility, internet services. In forced arbitration there is no agreement by the injured party to arbitrate the dispute and they are forced into a system that is neither voluntary nor fair, but unfortunately if you want to have a cell phone, or use the internet you agree to forced arbitration for any disputes that arise.

### Advantages of arbitration:

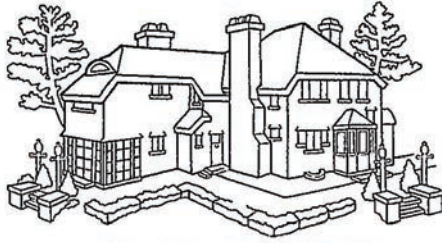
- The process is quicker, and there is greater time flexibility.
- Arbitration is frequently less expensive than going through the court system, since the rules of evidence are more relaxed compared to a court case. For example, expert witnesses may send documents rather than appear in person. In addition, the arbitrator's fee is usually split between the two disputing parties.
- Arbitration is typically a private procedure; the dispute and resolution can remain confidential. A court trial is public.

### Disadvantages of arbitration:

- In court, rules of evidence may prevent some evidence from being considered by a judge or jury. However, an arbitrator might include that evidence in the arbitration proceeding. Arbitrators may be guided by "apparent fairness" rather than strict observance of the law — a more subjective approach.
- Witnesses must personally appear and testify, affidavits and reports are not admitted.
- The process can take years to resolve.

Voluntary arbitration can be a valuable tool in some situations. For expert, thoughtful legal representation for a personal injury matter, please contact our office. ●

Seufert Law Offices, PA  
Attorneys At Law



59 Central Street, Franklin, NH 03235  
(603) 934-9837

[www.seufertlaw.com](http://www.seufertlaw.com)

*Protect Your Family, Protect Your Rights*



Tis' the  
Season

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## Dividing Assets In A Divorce

A couple who has filed for divorce may decide to divide their debts and assets by agreement. If they can agree on the division of property then most likely that decision will not be left in the hands of a judge. However, even if the parties want to work together the division of debts and assets can be complicated. Sometimes the parties cannot agree on such a division and the decision is made by a judge after a hearing. The judge bases that decision on the laws in New Hampshire regarding property division.

New Hampshire is essentially a “community” property state. The law provides that all property, tangible and intangible, real or personal, belonging to either or both parties, whether title to the property is held in the hands of one of or both of the parties, owned before – or acquired during the marriage, can be allocated by the court to either of the parties.

In addition, New Hampshire is an equitable distribution state. As a result, community property is divided equitably but not necessarily “equally”. The presumption is that equal division is equitable. However, judges may take into account each spouse’s ability to support themselves, the length of the marriage, sacrifices made during the marriage, the age and general health and ability of each party to earn an income, whether the property was acquired before the marriage and the respective efforts of the parties in acquiring the property.

If divorce appears imminent, contact a divorce attorney who can give you advice to help you through the process. •

