



The Law Offices of  
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# DRIVING WITH ONE EYE CLOSED

## DISTRACTION AT 50 MILES PER HOUR

When I sit at a red light these days, a familiar scene plays out over and over. The light turns green, but the car in front of me doesn't move. I wait a few seconds, then tap the horn, and sure enough, I see a head pop up and a phone disappear. It seems minor, but it also says a lot about how comfortable we have become trying to do two things at once behind the wheel.

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and for me, that's something worth observing. As a personal injury lawyer, I see what happens when that habit of constantly looking at a phone shows up at 40–50 mph instead of at a stoplight. When a case reaches my desk, it's not because someone was mindlessly scrolling or texting at a green light. It's usually because someone never saw the car in front of them. Or the bike. Or the person in the crosswalk.



When it comes to distractions behind the wheel, most people think of texting first. That's a big one, but a lot of other things can also get in the way. Any time your eyes or attention leave the road or your hands leave the wheel, even for a moment, you are more likely to hurt someone. That might be due to reading or answering a text, scrolling for a song, or poking the GPS, but it might also happen when you reach into a bag or turn around to break up an argument between kids.

In a lot of my cases, I strongly suspect distraction played a role, even when the other driver never says it out loud. During the lawsuit, we can sometimes subpoena phone records to see if a call or text time matches the crash, but even that only tells part of the story. Some of the most dangerous distractions never show up in those types of records.

Distraction isn't always about carelessness, though. People also sometimes trust the technology in their cars a little too much. I have heard drivers say the automatic braking or lane assist would "catch it" if something went wrong. That's not something you want to count on. Those tools can help, but they are not a substitute for paying attention. They can make a crash less severe at times. What they don't do is make you immune to one.

I am not pointing fingers from a distance, either. I carry a phone like everyone else. I get the same buzzes and dings. That is why I tell people not to rely solely on willpower. You need a simple system that takes temptation out of reach. Put the phone in a glove box or your bag. Turn on "Do Not Disturb While Driving." Pick your music and set your GPS before you put the car in gear. If something truly can't wait, pull over.

If you have teenagers, be sure to talk to them about distractions and establish clear driving rules. And don't forget that they learn how to drive long before they get a license, and most of that learning comes from watching you. If they see you checking your phone at every red light, they will think it's normal.

Driving comes with responsibilities, and the choices we make can have devastating consequences for ourselves and those around us. Keep your hands on the wheel, your eyes on the road, and 100% of your attention on the task at hand. If a distracted driver has already turned your life upside down, my team and I are here to explore your options and fight to get you fair compensation.

*Marc L. Shapiro*



# BARKING AT THE RIGHT MOMENT

## THE DOG THAT SAVED A VETERAN FROM A STROKE

When Hank Ford ended his service with the U.S. Army and Marines, he felt completely alone. The veteran had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and struggled to trust people. But dogs were a different story.

When he received his service dog, a yellow Labrador named Tommy, he gained a steadfast companion who made each day a little less scary.

"Used to be, I walk into a place, and I'm looking for exits," Ford said in an interview. "I'm watching everybody. I'm just not trusting anything that's going on, and with him, all that seems to have gone away."

Though his four-legged friend had brought so much relief and calm to his life, he never expected Tommy would actually save his life. The pup prevented a massive stroke that could have had dire consequences.

Early one morning, Tommy broke all of his usual routines, barking at Hank at an odd time while the veteran snoozed. He was persistent, using his voice like never before and pawing at Hank's chest until he arose. Clearly, Tommy sensed something was wrong, and as soon as Hank stood up, he felt it too. His heart was pounding so hard he could feel it, and when he checked his blood pressure, he was shocked at the number.

Hank wasted no time driving himself to the hospital, and it was only then that he realized how crucial his dog's fast thinking really was. The doctor informed him he was experiencing an A-fib or irregular heartbeat. Left untreated, it could lead to life-altering or deadly strokes.

"They told me, had he not woken me up, I could have had a major stroke in bed, or not woken up at all," he said. "He saved my life."

Hank received treatment, and in the months since the incident, he's been feeling more like himself.

The veteran was incredibly thankful to Dog, Inc., the nonprofit that trained and provided Tommy to assist with his day-to-day mental health needs. Though the Lab was well-trained to handle his owner's PTSD, Dog, Inc. said his life-saving action went above and beyond.

Tommy's feat proves just how close the bond between a service dog and their human really is.



OUR CLIENTS SAY IT BEST  
Reviews That Make Us Proud

*"They helped me settle my case quickly and efficiently, making sure I was heard and taken care of every step of the way! I highly recommend them to anyone who asks!"*

—Anestaja

*"Best experience I could have hoped for. Never had to deal with anything like this before, and Marc and his team were knowledgeable and patient with all of my questions and concerns."*

*"They kept me up to date with the state of my case and worked hard to get the maximum settlement possible."*

—Glenn G.

*"This is the best law team you will ever experience, I swear. Literally everyone in Marc Shapiro's office is so very efficient, from the receptionist to the office manager, Marnee, and of course, the intelligent, brilliant attorneys who will represent you. They are dependable, so well organized, timely, and anyone can tell they have a command of knowledge in Florida law because of their extensive experience."*

—Cindy B.

*"My father and I were scheduled for a consultation call with attorney Randall Austin, and we were very pleased with how it went. Not only was he very professional and attentive to our dilemma, but he explained things we didn't know about in detail and with patience. We were guided on our situation and were even helped with medical references to our health issue. After various calls and consults with other law firms, we were finally satisfied with the help and information provided by this office. Would definitely recommend to anyone with inquiries about legal issues they might have."*

—Alejandro N.



# BIG RIGS, BIG RISKS, BIG CASES

## Why Truck Wrecks Aren't 'Normal' Crashes

When people hear "truck accident," they often picture a regular car wreck, just bigger. They see a bigger truck and bigger damages, but think the same basic rules apply. In reality, serious crashes involving 18-wheelers are a category of their own. More is at stake, with more moving parts, and a lot more has to be done early if you want to protect your case.

Part of it is simple physics. A loaded semi can weigh 20–30 times more than a passenger car, so when a truck driver is distracted, tired, or following too closely, the results are usually severe. On top of that, you aren't just dealing with one driver and one policy. In many cases, you face a web of responsibility involving the driver, the trucking company, the trailer owner, and the company that hired them to haul the load.

A different rule book also applies. Trucking cases often involve the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, company safety manuals, logbooks, inspection reports, and electronic data from the truck itself. The trucking company and its insurer know this, and they begin preparing their defense very quickly after a crash. Their team is usually on the scene long before anyone is thinking about a lawsuit.

Companies have risk managers, insurers, and lawyers who know exactly what to look for. They gather driver logs, download electronic control module data, and take detailed photos of the vehicles. If you wait too long on your side, some of that evidence can disappear. That's why it's so important to act quickly and take the right steps to protect your case.

If you're injured in a truck accident, the first priority is seeking medical care. Getting care from day one protects your health and your case. If possible, take photos at the scene and write down notes about what happened while they're still fresh in your mind. You also need to reach out to an experienced legal team as soon as possible. They can send letters to preserve evidence, obtain the relevant records from the parties, and bring in experts to analyze the evidence.

At *The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A.*, we understand the complexities of these cases and know what steps to take to get you fair compensation for your injuries. Contact us today to learn about your legal options.



### CRAB RANGOON MAC AND CHEESE

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 lb elbow pasta
- 8 oz Jack cheese, grated
- 8 oz cream cheese
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 1/2 cup pickled jalapeños, chopped (optional)
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 tbsp red pepper flakes
- 1/2 lb lump crab
- 12 wonton wrappers

#### Directions

1. Bring water to a boil for the pasta and preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Drop pasta into boiling water.
3. In a bowl, mix all the ingredients except pasta and wonton wrappers; stir well.
4. Just before the pasta is ready, add about 1/2 cup of pasta water to the cheese mixture; stir well.
5. Strain pasta and add to cheese mixture. Stir, then place it in a baking dish or individual ramekins.
6. Bake for 25–30 minutes until bubbly and creamy.
7. While baking, cut wontons into triangles and fry batches in oil until crispy.
8. Drain wontons and season with salt.
9. Serve pasta with the crispy wonton wrappers.

Inspired by [TheFoodInMyBeard.com](http://TheFoodInMyBeard.com)

## Word Search

R	Y	R	D	U	M	M	G	X	Q	S	E	K	S	U
M	E	A	E	S	L	N	M	C	M	G	G	B	H	D
U	G	G	E	T	I	R	C	S	P	N	C	U	O	Z
W	P	Q	R	T	S	T	E	B	F	O	N	D	W	F
D	Q	J	N	O	S	A	X	E	N	T	H	S	E	Q
K	N	A	Z	W	W	E	E	S	T	P	K	E	R	G
S	L	J	E	I	J	T	E	Y	K	N	W	R	J	E
P	K	E	S	V	C	R	H	L	W	O	U	Q	J	H
Y	T	G	N	K	V	U	D	I	U	U	U	L	C	M
S	G	V	V	A	X	F	Y	L	M	I	D	F	O	K
R	U	U	T	D	N	O	M	A	I	D	H	U	N	V
K	X	I	R	E	F	U	N	D	R	P	D	T	P	V
J	O	G	I	L	F	U	E	K	I	R	R	F	R	K
N	Y	K	V	Z	D	B	U	Z	F	L	F	C	P	D
I	I	S	E	X	A	T	G	E	Z	G	A	A	F	W

BUDS  
CONSERVATION  
DIAMOND  
EASTER

LILY  
PLANTING  
REFUND  
REGROWTH

SHOWER  
SWEETS  
TAXES  
VOLUNTEER



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# FOLLOW THE HERD

## Let Wildlife Migrations Plan Your Next Trip

Are you planning your next vacation but don't know where to start? Why not try following the herd? Every year, animals all over the world hit the road, sky, or sea for impressive migrations, and you can get a front row seat to nature's big show. From massive groups of wildebeests crossing the Serengeti to flocks of flamingos turning the Tanzania sky pink, these seasonal journeys are one-of-a-kind experiences for your bucket list.

### NATURE'S GRAND PROCESSIONS

If you want to go big, the Great Migration across the Serengeti is one of the largest annual animal voyages on the planet. Thundering groups of wildebeests, zebras, and gazelles can be spotted from July to August as they search for water and food. Travel to Sri Lanka's Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks if you want to snap a photo of a pachyderm.

Between July and October, hundreds of Asian elephants meet up there for an ancient tradition called "The Gathering."

### GREAT JOURNEYS OVERHEAD

An adventure that's for the birds, the flamingo flight in Tanzania is a colorful sky show unlike anything else. The flocks take to the air from June to September and January to March, following mighty rains. Go nocturnal in November as millions of fruit bats hang from trees and flutter in the dark searching for snacks. These night flyers put on an eerie display at dusk in Zambia every year and may change your mind about the critters.

### VOYAGES AT SEA

Set a course for the high seas to witness the longest migration of any mammals as thousands of giant humpback whales swim



across the planet. They cruise from the coasts of South Africa and South America to the warm waters of the Pacific and make stops in the icy seas of Antarctica. Though they come in much smaller packages, the trek of sea turtles to their nesting beaches has been an epic sight for over 100 million years. You can see them swim from the Indian Ocean to the shores of Sodwana Bay in South Africa before they lay their eggs.