

# CLIENT CONNECTION

**PERENICH** the law firm  
tampa bay personal injury attorneys



## WELCOME TO OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

### Hit and Run Accidents: Don't be Another Victim - Protect Your Family!

Hit and run accidents are all too frequent in Tampa Bay. All too often they result in fatalities and life-threatening injuries. The after-effects of these crashes leave victims and their families searching for answers and trying to put their lives back together after the tragic loss of a loved one or from traumatic injuries that result in permanent disability, enormous medical bills and loss of income.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 03 Wheelchairs 4 Kids

Perenich The Law Firm was a proud sponsor for Wheelchairs 4 Kids at the 4th Annual Kimberly Knorr Golf Tournament.

### 04 Client Corner

Leon Newberry, III is our spotlight client for our first quarter newsletter.

### 05 Here We Grow Again!

Lauren and Nathan are Perenich The Law Firm's newest staff members!

## PROTECT YOUR FAMILY!

Statistically, the Florida Highway Patrol recently reported over 12,000 hit and run accidents in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, in 2018 alone! This staggering figure clearly speaks to the devastating impact these crashes have on so many victims, but sadly it doesn't tell the whole story. Between 2015 and 2019, there were more than 500,000 hit and run crashes in our state. Over a thousand people were killed in these crashes in that same 5-year span. In 2019, more than 85% of the fatalities happened during the hours between dusk and dawn and resulted in 206 deaths. This alarming percentage of fatalities during nighttime hit and run crashes is not an aberration. Year after year, the statistics reveal that hit and run crashes nearly always happen at night.

How can we as a community of concerned citizens and responsible drivers protect ourselves and our families from the scourge of hit and run accidents?

First and foremost, it's important to understand that hit and run accidents are covered under our own auto insurance policies, but if and only if, the policy contains Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Coverage (UM). UM coverage, if purchased and not waived, affords policyholders full benefits and compensation for their damages up to the amount of the UM policy limits. If stacking UM coverage is purchased, the UM policy limits are multiplied by the number of vehicles under the same policy and with the same carrier.

This means insurance companies are legally liable to their own policyholders having UM coverage to the extent the person is injured in a hit and run accident. The policyholder is

entitled to collect the full amount of damages from their own insurer to the same extent they could collect damages from the unknown at-fault driver or vehicle owner. The only limitation is the amount of the UM policy limits and the degree of the victim's losses. In the case of a fatality, the surviving family members are also entitled to compensation for their mental suffering as well as any economic losses from the decedent's earnings.

The only obligation upon the policyholder is to promptly notify their insurance company about the accident and to cooperate with the carrier's investigation. If the at-fault driver cannot be ascertained, UM coverage is in place to provide compensation and benefits to ameliorate the losses. Even if the hit and run driver is later identified, the victim may still obtain compensation from their own carrier under their UM coverage over and above any bodily injury liability coverage available from at-fault driver and vehicle owner's insurance company. With this in mind, we strongly urge everyone to purchase stacking UM coverage of at least \$100,000 per person. **Under no circumstances should anyone ever waive, reject or limit their legal right to stacking UM coverage.**

With the statistics showing the higher risk of hit and run accidents during nighttime hours, it's clearly an advantage to avoid driving at night. Nighttime accidents invariably increase the likelihood of DUI crashes and the chance of a DUI driver leaving the scene of a crash. This is especially true for accidents on weekends and holidays. Our legal experience has led us to conclude that drunk drivers, and especially those with prior DUI's or driving on a suspended license, are more inclined to leave the scene of a crash.

Dash cams are also a useful tool in investigating hit and run accidents. Dash cams are now a surprisingly affordable device that records the driving behavior of other motorists. They can be installed both to the front and the





## Bacon and Brussels Sprout Pizza

Since brussels sprouts are in season, this might be a nice treat to enjoy this spring!

### Recommended Equipment:

Baking Stone/Sheet  
Cast Iron Skillet  
Pizza Paddle

### Ingredients:

1 prepared (store bought or homemade) pizza dough  
4 slices of bacon  
8oz. brussels sprouts  
washed, trimmed, and sliced

8oz. mozzarella cheese  
shredded  
Kosher salt to taste  
Black Pepper to taste  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin  
olive oil

### Instructions:

1. Allow pizza dough to come to room temperature (at least 25 minutes).
2. Place baking stone/sheet in oven and preheat to 500 degrees F.
3. In a cast iron or heavy skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crispy. Remove and place on paper towels to drain. Chop roughly when cooled.
4. Add the brussels sprouts and salt and pepper to taste to the skillet (in the bacon grease) and cook over medium-high heat until seared and tender. (about 5-7 minutes)
5. Meanwhile, roll out pizza dough on a floured pizza paddle. Drizzle top of the crust with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Remove pizza pan or stone from the oven and slide the crust from the pizza paddle on top. (Be very careful!)
6. Mix ½ of the mozzarella, chopped bacon, and cooked brussels sprouts in a small bowl. Spread on top of the crust. Top with remaining mozzarella.
7. Place pizza in oven and cook for another 7-10 minutes at 500 degrees, or until cheese is melted and beginning to brown.
8. Slice and serve!

## WHEELCHAIRS 4 KIDS GOLF TOURNAMENT



Perenich The Law Firm was a proud sponsor for Wheelchairs 4 Kids at the 4th Annual Kimberly Knorr Golf Tournament. Wheelchairs 4 Kids is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children with physical disabilities. Grant Balfour (former Tampa Bay Rays pitcher) was the celebrity on our team!



## CLIENT CORNER



Leon Newberry, III is our spotlight client for our first quarter newsletter. On November 28, 2016, Mr. Newberry was injured in a motor vehicle accident. As Mr. Newberry was traveling north on McMullen Booth Road in Clearwater, another vehicle travelling behind him was swerving in and out of traffic. The vehicle then carelessly changed lanes and collided into Mr. Newberry's vehicle. The impact was so severe that the at fault driver's vehicle went up on two wheels and caused Mr. Newberry's vehicle to be propelled into the adjacent lane before striking the median divider.

Mr. Newberry was in pain at the scene of the accident and was transported to a local hospital by ambulance. Following the accident, Mr. Newberry retained Perenich The Law Firm and attorney Greg Perenich to represent him.

Our office worked very closely with Mr. Newberry's physicians to ensure his injuries were properly documented to demonstrate how the accident caused negative effects to his active lifestyle and activities. The at-fault driver's insurance company attempted to deny that Mr. Newberry's injuries were caused by the accident. But Greg met with his treating doctors who clarified that Mr. Newberry suffered new injuries and experienced an aggravation of his prior conditions.

"Greg and everyone at Perenich The Law Firm were great! They kept me informed during my case and were always available to answer any questions. His team took the burden off me when it

came to the insurance companies so that I could just focus on doing what the doctors said and getting better. I trust this firm and would not hesitate to refer family and friends. I highly recommend Perenich The Law Firm."

Unfortunately, Mr. Newberry was again involved in another motor vehicle accident on July 1, 2018, that was not his fault. Since he was so happy with the result of his first case, he again retained attorney Greg Perenich at Perenich The Law Firm for his second case. The timing of these accidents is never convenient, as Mr. Newberry has had a series of many unfortunate events occur while trying to recover and treat his injuries.

We have many clients like Mr. Newberry who are unfortunately involved in additional accidents or have other legal needs. We are always available to assist them in those circumstances and are happy to help or refer them to local colleagues that we

## PERENICH PARTNER UPDATES

**Congratulations to Greg and Tim Perenich!**

Greg has recently accepted the role as Chairman of AdventHealth North Pinellas Foundation. He has also assumed the Chair position of the Kimberly Home Board of Directors. Both charitable organizations improve the health and well being of families in our community.

Tim has recently been elected on the Board of Directors for the Pinellas County Guardian Association. This organization promotes the welfare and quality of service for wards by development and improvement of the capabilities of Professional Guardians through education, programs, lectures, discussion, and various methods of instruction.

## ONGOING EDUCATION

At Perenich The Law Firm, both the Partners and Staff are committed to staying educated so we can better serve our clients and their cases.

Congratulations to both Greg & Ursula for completing a 7-hour continuing education course on Evidence. Both received a certificate of completion on How to Get Hearsay, Emails, Business Records, Social Media and More Into Evidence.



rear of any vehicle. We have also found that early investigation of hit and run crashes is especially useful in allowing our investigators to obtain surveillance from surrounding businesses near the scene. With early representation, we can begin our investigation right away before video evidence is lost or destroyed. Depending upon the seriousness of the crash and injuries, law enforcement officers do not always obtain surveillance near the scene that may prove to be helpful in determining fault and the identity of hit and run drivers.

In addition, it is best to seek medical help immediately after a hit and run crash by calling 911 for assistance if possible. Do not under any circumstances resort to self-help methods by trying to follow the get-away vehicle or persons leaving the scene. Allow the authorities to do their job at the scene while you wait. Attempting to engage in a chase after a hit and run accident is dangerous to you and other motorists.

Seek immediate medical attention and do not wait for all of your symptoms to manifest themselves before getting skilled medical treatment. If you have any doubt as to whether you need medical assistance

after a hit and run accident, it is always best to err on the side of caution and obtain emergent medical care right away. Do not fall into the trap of hesitating to obtain medical care on a concern that the at-fault driver cannot be held liable to pay your medical bills. Every resident of the State of Florida that owns a motor vehicle is required to purchase Personal Injury Protection (PIP) otherwise known as No-Fault Coverage. Your PIP coverage equally applies in the event of a hit and run crash and pays 80% of the medical bills in most instances up to \$10,000. Beyond that amount, your UM coverage is available for reimbursement of the out of pocket bills and unpaid medical expenses.

Lastly, allow our attorneys at Perenich The Law Firm to review your auto insurance policy periodically to make certain you have the correct type of coverage and an appropriate amount of coverage. We offer this service free to clients, former clients and friends of our firm.

If you or a loved one were injured due to a hit and run accident, please call our office for a free consultation with one of our attorneys at Perenich The Law Firm.

*Gregory J. Perenich, Esquire*

## PERENICH THE LAW FIRM WELCOMES LAUREN AND NATHAN!



Lauren and Nathan are Perenich The Law Firm's newest staff members! We are excited to have both join our growing team! Lauren is a Florida Registered Paralegal, and both Lauren and Nathan come to us with a background in personal injury. Welcome, aboard, Lauren and Nathan!