

Legal *update*

A publication provided for the friends and clients of QR

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QR ATTORNEYS EARN WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAW SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION

Vince Quatrini



Ronald Fonner



Pete Gough



We are pleased to announce that QR attorneys Vince Quatrini, Ronald Fonner and Pete Gough have been officially certified as specialists in the practice of workers' compensation law by the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Workers' Compensation Law Section.

This new certification was established in 2012 to identify attorneys who devote a large portion of their practice to workers' compensation cases and recognize their extensive experience in this area.

Vince, Ron and Pete successfully passed the comprehensive exam that focuses on workers' compensation law and rules and leading case law. To even qualify to take the exam, attorneys must submit documentation verifying that:

- 1) 50 percent or more of their legal practice is in the specialty field of workers' compensation;
- 2) they have practiced in the workers' compensation field for more than five years; and
- 3) they actively participate in mandatory continuing legal education in workers' compensation law and related fields.

Only 149 attorneys in the entire state of Pennsylvania have been certified as specialists in workers' compensation. Vince, Ron and Pete are the only PBA-certified workers' compensation specialists with a home office in the seven-county area of Westmoreland, Washington, Indiana, Cambria, Bedford, Armstrong, and Somerset Counties.



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The LEGAL UPDATE is prepared by the staff of QR for its friends and clients. It sets forth general principles and should not be acted upon without specific advice.

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\$3,000.00 for this charity. A fun time was had by all as the team walked for a great cause.

In April, Quatrini Rafferty participated in the Greensburg Western PA Chapter MS Walk under the team name "Kellie's Krew". The team, made up of QR employees and their family members and friends, raised over

Attorneys **Dennis Rafferty** and **Jessica Rafferty** participated in the CASA of Westmoreland Tennis Tournament. The tournament was part of a fundraiser for CASA of Westmoreland, a volunteer-based organization providing a voice in the courts on behalf of abused and neglected children of Westmoreland County.



QUATRINI RAFFERTY GOES BANANAS!

In conjunction with the City of Latrobe's recent Banana Split Festival, Quatrini Rafferty sponsored the "Jelly Belly Bean Mural" of a banana split. Thirty pounds of jelly beans were used to make the mural. The festival celebrated Latrobe's unique history as the birthplace of the banana split in 1904 and the placement of a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Historical Marker. Our Latrobe office also hosted several festival events.



David DeRose served as one of four judges for the Latrobe "Miss 4th of July Pageant" held at the Greater Latrobe Senior High School. Twenty-two young ladies, ages 16-19, competed for the title and a \$500 scholarship award. David was impressed with the talent, poise and sophistication of the contestants. He said, "This is a slice of 'Americana' that you probably only find in smaller towns these days, but it is an important tradition to continue."



QR Attorneys **David DeRose**, **Tereasa Rerko** and **Joyce Novotny-Prettiman** participated in Law Day activities which are locally coordinated by the Westmoreland County Bar Association.



Law Day is celebrated nationally on May 1st and is designed to educate the public about the legal system and to celebrate the concepts of liberty, justice and equality in America.



GETTING TO A NEW NORMAL

Many people come to our office because they need help dealing with an accident, work injury or illness, or a combination of several issues. These unfortunate events have altered their lives. Many times, clients realize that things may never be the same . . . but they also realize they must move forward and do the best they can for themselves and their loved ones. The road to a new normal is usually very long and very challenging. At QR, while we are advocates for our clients, we recognize that they face more than legal challenges. Here are stories from three of our clients who have been down this road. We hope their stories will inspire those who are trying to find their way to their new normal.

Stories continue on pages 4 and 5

RECOVERING MINIMIZER

By Bill Morgano

We have all heard the phrase "It'll go away", and most of us have said it to our detriment. My story is not unique, but I hope my experiences will help others to avoid a problem I now recognize and call "minimizing".

My story starts years ago, when I was injured at work. I considered myself an honest, hardworking employee who, day in and day out, tried to perform my duties to the fullest and thought "It'll go away". There are a lot of "It'll go away" injuries that come up in our lives; most do go away, but some don't. When they don't, "minimizing" is to your detriment. Before I knew it, "It'll go away" didn't go away.

My pain grew and neuropathy set in over time. As my pain increased, so did my weight, and the company doctor classified me as "morbidly obese". I had advice from others, but didn't take it. "It'll go away", I said. All the while, I was thinking that the company would surely stand by me if I became seriously injured. But that didn't happen, and my life went into a tailspin.

After years of "minimizing" and numerous doctors' appointments, I realized I needed legal advice. I contacted Quatrini Rafferty, because of their reputation in the workers' compensation field. I found out that my "minimizing" had hurt my case. If I had taken the advice that I am giving now, I would have filed a workers' compensation claim sooner. That would have given me protection from further injuring myself before the damage was irreversible.

Are you asking yourself what is left for you after leaving your job due to a work injury? I can tell you that there are many options out there. I am happy to say I have lost 50 pounds and have achieved a more manageable level of pain. God has also moved me into a fulfilling ministry. At my lowest point, Urban Impact came into my life. This inner city youth organization is all about hope, which I desperately needed. The mission of Urban Impact is to mentor and support young people and give them hope for a better future. It's easy to forget your troubles when you get involved with other people's problems! As I continued to heal, I was physically able to coach an Urban Impact baseball team and volunteer in food service. It's my sincerest hope that this inspires others not to languish in their pain but to get help and not give up hope.

In conclusion, I am still recovering, and yes, I am still recovering from "minimizing". A workers' compensation case is very complicated and a "go it on your own approach" is ill-advised. My advice to you is: If you are injured at work, no matter how "minimal" it may seem, contact Quatrini Rafferty, your advocates. GOD BLESS YOU.



Our Social Security department was able to get Bill Social Security Disability benefits and our workers' compensation department was able to resolve Bill's claim with a lump sum settlement. As part of his post-injury rehabilitation, Bill volunteers with Urban Impact, a community help program on the north side of Pittsburgh, and looks forward to his future.

HELP WITH

By Terry Harl and Joyce

Before a motorcycle collision, Terry Harl was a strong, self-sufficient individual who was busy raising a teenage daughter. But everything changed one morning when she was in a motorcycle accident. Terry was flown by helicopter to a trauma center for treatment. After discharge, she required in-patient rehabilitation, and over a month passed before she could return home. Unfortunately, Terry had a particularly grueling recovery which was plagued by an infection and numerous surgeries. She worried for months that she would end up with an amputation of her right leg. Terry lost her job and her independence -- but she never lost her will to fight. There was an emotional component to her recovery that had not been addressed. Terry hopes that her experience will help others out there who are facing the daunting task of trying to get their life back after trauma. Terry is coming back strong!

After my body had healed from the trauma of my motorcycle accident and rehabilitation I went through, I started having some trouble figuring out what was wrong. I was feeling very agitated and anxious. My friends frequently describe me as "snippy." I could not sleep and I was itchy all over out of my skin. My filter was gone and I began to say more than I meant considering the impact of my words. I was even having thoughts of self-harm. The bottom line is that my anxiety was through the roof! I realized that these issues could be related to the trauma of my accident. I decided to see a therapist for post-traumatic stress. This is the last time I have since I have a very supportive family and network of friends. Fran, who is now my therapist, for a few months, I discovered that I had trauma from the accident, but the majority of my feelings had been there. I was stuck in my nightmare of a recovery. Fran is teaching me how to cope and has helped a great deal. Perhaps if I had connected the dots earlier, my traumatic stress would have been less severe. I am so thankful for Fran to me, and more importantly, about how I can help myself and others by helping even one other person to realize that there is help.

At QR, we advocated for Terry to obtain a lump sum settlement in her personal injury claim and underinsured motorist claim and obtain a subrogation or reimbursement claim by her health insurance carrier in connection with the personal injury claim. We represented her in the settlement process and she was being awarded benefits. Finally, we assisted her with battle with her private disability carrier. Her recovery is more complete since then.



Fran Meenan

I have been a psychotherapist for over 20 years and I have been licensed in PA since 2003. I have extensive experience working with individuals, couples and groups. My practice focuses on helping people alleviate depression, anxiety and panic, marital stress, self esteem issues, health crises, chronic illness and trauma. Much of my experience is with adults abused as children. Additionally, I work with the panic and anxiety following more recent experiences of ongoing, long term stress.

Trauma can result in difficulty establishing and maintaining healthy relationships, losing our sense of personal power, and draining our lives of energy and joy. Trauma therapy can significantly change the way we process feelings, thoughts and experiences previously resistant to resolution improving relationships, at home and at work.

My experience is that neither trauma nor depression, panic, grief, workplace stress, or even chronic illness and pain can stop us from feeling restored, reconnected and open to life and relationships. Sometimes we need a bit of help tapping into our power.

A FEW WORDS

If you have experienced or been present with someone who has experienced a traumatic event or another person, you may have post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A traumatic situation of trauma leads to PTSD for ever. What is a traumatic situation? Is it a traumatic? Some experiences that can lead to PTSD are: violence, emotional abuse, traumatic loss, chronic illness, traumatic loss of a home or being witness to a traumatic event.

It is common for everyone who has experienced a traumatic event to have PTSD. The difference with PTSD is that the symptoms continue to linger 3-6 months and sometimes longer.

Fortunately, there are many effective therapies for PTSD. Cognitive therapy, Exposure therapy, and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). All these therapies have been successful in helping people overcome the symptoms of PTSD. One does not forget a traumatic event, but one is not haunted by the fear associated with the event.

It is strongly advised that therapy be sought for PTSD. PTSD can lead to a long term decline in ability to function in relationships and difficulties with such illnesses as depression and anxiety.

H HEALING

By Karen Thompson Highlands and Jessica Rafferty, Esq.

le accident and the surgeries
issues and could not figure
ious and my daughter would
felt as though I was coming
many things to others without
left arm pain and chest pain.
was surprised my doctor said
ident and recommended that
thing I thought I would need
ds. After meeting with Fran,
that I am dealing with some
ad come from the aftermath.

g me coping skills and relaxation techniques. The therapy
e dots earlier and sought help from a therapist, my post-
nkful that I have learned more about what was happening
self heal completely. I share my experience in hopes of
out there. You don't have to allow trauma to control you.

*ned all available insurance coverage. We also defended her
d her in a Social Security Disability claim which resulted in her
apist Fran Meenan has become involved with her treatment.*



RDS FROM FRAN...

When a life threatening event occurred to yourself
omatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, not every
yone. What types of experiences are considered
to PTSD symptoms are: physical abuse, domestic
of a primary relationship, traumatic accident or
tness to a trauma.

ed a traumatic event to experience these symptoms.
oms do not decrease over time. These symptoms
s years after the event.

s for trauma. The therapies typically used are called:
e Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing or
ssful in reducing and often completely eliminating
that the event occurred, however, one is no longer
t.

or PTSD. Attempting to manage this alone can lead
relationships at work or school and create long term
and anxiety.

LAUREN'S WING

By Karen Thompson Highlands and Jessica Rafferty, Esq.



Lauren Thompson was born on September 11, 1980. She was a loving daughter, devoted sister and compassionate friend.

At the age of 30, Lauren's life was tragically cut short by a drunk driver.

To honor Lauren's memory at the time of her passing, her family requested memorial contributions be donated to a local animal shelter. Although they were in a state of shock, it was clear that this would have been Lauren's wish. From her earliest age, Lauren displayed a love of animals that began with her first pet bunny and quickly grew. She became an avid equestrian, spending countless hours in the saddle of a horse named Precious Memories. She also helped care for the family's pet therapy dog, Amos, and through various experiences, Lauren witnessed firsthand the healing impact animals have and how they enrich our lives.

Lauren's closest friend, Maggie Lawrence, soon had another idea to honor her. As a volunteer at the Action for Animals Humane Society in Derry, Maggie was aware of animals brought to the shelter in need of life-saving medical attention. Although routine procedures like spaying and neutering are covered by general funds at Action for Animals Humane Society, these funds cannot provide for more expensive specialized procedures. This dilemma became the impetus for "Lauren's Wing: The Fund for Animal Care". This specialty care medical fund provides needed finances for gravely ill or injured animals to receive extraordinary lifesaving care.

Karen Thompson Highlands, Lauren's mom, and Maggie Lawrence serve as chairpersons of Lauren's Wing, and they are aided by Kathy Newill, president of Action for Animals. A website, www.LaurensWing.org, has been created to share general information and news, and post donations made in honor or in memory of someone. In addition, stories and photos of the animals saved from the Lauren's Wing Fund will be available to view by visiting the site.

Donations are accepted through www.LaurensWing.org via PayPal or by mail at Action for Animals, P.O. Box 814, Latrobe, PA, 15650, with "Lauren's Fund" in the memo line. Include a note if you wish to make a memorial contribution or honor a special occasion/person.

You can also help spread the word by liking "Lauren's Wing:The Fund for Animal Care" on Facebook!

QR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



*In this edition of the Legal Update, we welcome an article from Jackie Johns, campaign and marketing coordinator of United Way of Westmoreland County. The Women's Leadership Council of United Way is in the spotlight with the emphasis being on their outstanding efforts to make a difference in our communities. Attorney **Tereasa Rerko** is co-chair of the Council. If you need more information about this group, you are welcome to contact the United Way of Westmoreland County at 724-834-7170.*

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF UNITED WAY PROMOTES PHILANTHROPY

For nearly a decade, the Women's Leadership Council (WLC) of the United Way of Westmoreland County (UWWC) has committed itself to developing women's leadership through philanthropy and engagement.

Founded in 2006 by eleven female leaders, WLC is an affinity group of UWWC and is one of 120 WLCs across the nation. Today, the Council is comprised of over 80 local female professionals. Members hail from various professions and communities, but are united by their passion for improving the lives of their neighbors in need and advancing the common good.

"Together, our members create a powerful network of caring women," said Bobbi Watt Geer, UWWC president and CEO. "They're not afraid to stand up and take action to address our community's most critical issues."

Shortly after its founding, WLC channeled its focus on women's leadership and community improvement into a specific investment: the WLC has committed its contributions to the Faith in Action program since 2007.

Faith in Action extends the length of time older adults can live safely in their homes by matching participants with trained and compassionate volunteers. Volunteers provide a variety of free, non-medical services to participants, including telephone reassurance, appointment escorts, supportive errands, home visits, home safety checks and caregiver relief.

"Our group's support of the Faith in Action program directly impacts individuals who we value greatly and hopefully makes each of their lives a little better," said Tereasa Rerko, Esq., WLC executive committee co-chair and Quatrini Rafferty partner. "The Council is a wonderful way for women leaders to give back to our community and I am proud to be a member."

Through the Council's support, Faith in Action has grown to include five local sites in Lower Burrell, Mount Pleasant, Murrysburg, Harrison City and Greensburg. To date, these sites have mobilized over 500 volunteers to help approximately 1,300 local seniors and saved participants, families and government entities an estimated \$22 million.

Today, WLC remains the primary financial supporter of Faith in Action. WLC membership is defined by an annual gift of \$1,000 or more, and since 2006, WLC members have contributed more than \$750,000 to the community.

Additionally, the Women's Leadership Council sponsors and mentors the local recipients of the YWCA Rising Star Award. Members also actively engage in volunteer and advocacy activities and attend local meetings and social events as their schedules permit.



On October 8, WLC hosted its 8th Annual Women of Influence Breakfast at the Fred Rogers Center of Saint Vincent College. Over 130 WLC members and guests attended the

event which featured a keynote address from Joanne M. Hanley, current president of the Gettysburg Foundation and former general superintendent of the National Parks of Western Pennsylvania.

Since the breakfast, WLC has welcomed 20 new members and plans to continue growing membership. To learn more about WLC or the Faith in Action program, call 724-834-7170 or visit www.unitedway4u.org.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Workers' Compensation Section presented its Irvin Stander Memorial Award to Attorney **Vince Quatrini** during its recent statewide meeting in Hershey, PA. The award is named in honor of the late Judge Irvin Stander and is presented to an attorney whose dedication to the administration of workers' compensation law and whose professionalism and regard for clients and colleagues serves as an example to others.



QR Attorney **Joyce Novotny-Prettiman** was recently admitted to the Westmoreland County Academy of Trial Lawyers. Membership in the Academy is by invitation only and members are required to demonstrate experience in civil trial practice in the Courts of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County.

The Academy seeks to improve and enhance the administration of justice, promote continuing legal education, preserve trial by jury and assist the courts in the prompt and just disposition of cases.

In August, Attorney **James Horchak** was a co-presenter of the Westmoreland Bar Association seminar "Death, Disbarment, Disappearance: What Happens?" Jim spoke about the duties of lawyers when appointed as a conservator of another attorney's practice.

QuatriniRafferty was the Premier Sponsor for "Saluting Service", a pre-Memorial Day event honoring veterans. The Master of Ceremonies for the event, which was held in May, was QR attorney **Michael V. Quatrini**. Seventeen veterans were honored for making a difference in their Western Pennsylvania communities. Featured speaker was decorated Vietnam veteran and four-time Super Bowl champion, Rocky Bleier. The event raised \$12,500 for the Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard (Pittsburgh). The First Class Patriot award was presented to James Bendel, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County.



At the Westmoreland Bar Association Bench/Bar Conference in June, the legal documentary "Hot Coffee" was shown followed by a balanced discussion from panelists representing both sides of the issues. "Hot Coffee" relates the true story behind lawsuits such as the infamous McDonald's coffee case. Attorney **Joyce Novotny-Prettiman** served as the moderator.

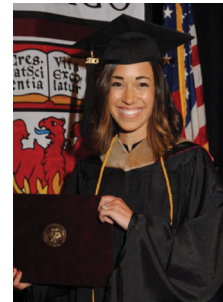
QR attorney **Michael V. Quatrini** served as a faculty member of the Pennsylvania Bar Institute course entitled "Advanced Issues in Social Security Disability". Michael presented the program in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh to update other SSD attorneys on new developments in Social Security Disability law.

Recently, Attorney **David DeRose** participated in a seminar on Living Trusts with fellow attorneys, Chris DeDiana and Barbara Christner, and Deputy Attorney General Jesse F. Harvey. The focus of the seminar was to evaluate whether a "living trust" should become a part of every estate plan.

Since Attorney **Vince Quatrini** is one of the foremost advocates in Pennsylvania challenging the constitutionality of the Impairment Rating section of the Workers' Compensation Act, he was selected to be the injured worker counsel for the panel presentation at the PBA statewide meeting. Over 700 workers' compensation attorneys attend this annual fall meeting.

In July, Attorney **Tereasa Rerko** was a co-presenter for a Pennsylvania Bar Institute seminar entitled "Fee Agreements." The seminar covered the various kinds of fee agreements needed to represent clients in different areas of law. Tereasa's focus was on fee agreements for cases involving workers' compensation and SSD/SSI matters.

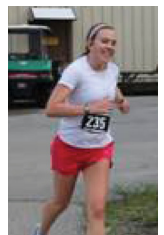
QR PERSONAL NOTES



Elaine Grace Tait, daughter of legal secretary, **Melaine Falbo**, graduated in June 2013 from Chicago Booth School of Business. Elaine received her MBA with Honors, concentrating in Marketing and Entrepreneurship.

She will begin her work at Prophet, which is a strategic brand and marketing consultancy company in Chicago.

In September, Attorney **Jessica Rafferty** ran in the Greensburg Half Marathon. The race started at Lynch Field and proceeded onto the 5 Star Trail. Jessica finished with a time of 1:37:52 and took 3rd place in her division.





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WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES



On April 12, 2014 QuatriniRafferty will participate in the Blackburn Center "Walk a Mile In Her Shoes" march at St. Clair Park. The Blackburn Center assists victims of domestic violence in Westmoreland County, and is holding the march as an awareness event to stop rape, sexual assault, and all forms of gender violence. We are inviting our friends and clients to join us in the walk, or donate items needed for the Blackburn emergency shelter. Below is the list of needed items, or you can go online to www.blackburncenter.org.

Kitchen

Baking pans (9" x 13", aluminum)
Can openers (hand-held)
Coffee (regular)
Coffee creamer
Cooking oil
Dish drainers
Dishes (service for 4)
Dishpans
Dishwasher detergent
Drink boxes
Flatware
Food items: any canned food,
other non-perishables, etc.
Clear storage bins with lids
Tall kitchen garbage bags
Packaged snacks for lunches
Paper products: paper towels

Paper towel holders
Skillets
Small appliances: coffee maker,
knife sharpener, toaster, mixer
Spices & condiments
Zip-lock bags (1 & 2 gallon sizes)

Bathroom

Bath mats
Paper products: toilet paper
Plungers
Shower curtains & rings
Soap dispensers
Toilet brushes
Bath Towels (durable)
Wastebaskets

Bedroom

Alarm clocks
Bed pillows
Bed-in-a-bag sets
Body wash (family size)
Women's Nightgowns
(women's one-size fits all)
Pajamas (women's one-size-fits-
most & extra-large sizes
children's sizes infant to 2T)
Shampoo & Conditioner
Sleep shirts (large & extra-large)
Wastebaskets

Miscellaneous

Baby monitors
Bottled water
Brooms

Buckets
Diapers (Sizes 3, 4, 5, & 6)
Extension cords
Flashlights
Gasoline cards (GetGo & Sheetz)
Gift cards (Walmart or Target)
Hair dryers
Laundry detergent
Mops
Nasal aspirators
Outdoor garbage bags
Pull-up diapers (larger sizes)
Sweat suits (all adult sizes)
Telephones
Tool kits
Umbrellas
Underpants (women's, teen boy
& under size 12 boy)