

FLATTMANN FILES

March 2020

“Quality Is No Accident”

FROM THE DESK OF Grady Flattmann

In Louisiana, victims of car accidents have one year from the date of the wreck to resolve their claim or file a lawsuit in order to preserve their rights. This is the shortest statute of limitations in the nation. By comparison, in Mississippi, victims have three years to resolve claims before having to file a lawsuit.

In my practice, a majority of car accident claims can be resolved within a year, without the need for a lawsuit. However, here are examples of a few instances where filing a lawsuit is unavoidable.

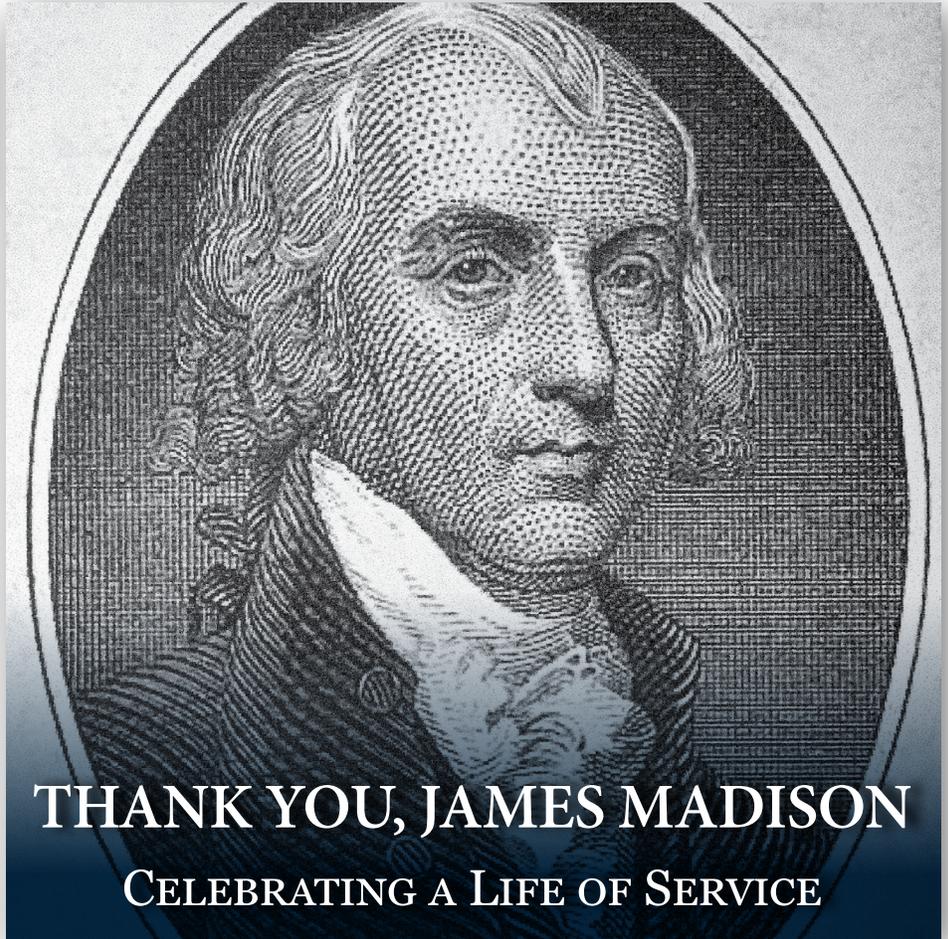
WAITING UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO CALL US: People get busy and a year passes quickly. The insurance company will not be calling to remind you of the one-year deadline. If a client comes to us with little time remaining, we have no choice but to file a lawsuit to protect their claims.

OUR CLIENT IS STILL SUFFERING: If a client's injuries are so severe that they continue to require medical treatment beyond the one-year anniversary of an accident, their claims are ongoing and the only option may be to file a lawsuit in order to protect their claims moving forward.

Call us today for a free and confidential consultation!



Grady



THANK YOU, JAMES MADISON CELEBRATING A LIFE OF SERVICE

As a full-grown man, James Madison stood just 5 feet, 4 inches tall. He had a health condition that, while never diagnosed, bore a resemblance to epilepsy, and he weighed only 100 pounds. He was so soft-spoken that his speeches were often difficult to hear, and he was frequently described as shy and quiet.

Despite those qualities, Madison, whose birthday we celebrate on March 16, went on to become the fourth president of the United States. He held office for two terms, and, during that time, he helped establish America as a force to be reckoned with. For example, he led us through the War of 1812, which was our first war as an independent nation.

Today, Madison is most well-known for co-writing the U.S. Constitution. In fact, so many of Madison's ideas made it into the document that he is widely credited with being the father of the Constitution. If it were not for Madison, the Constitution might have never been ratified.

To garner widespread support for the Constitution, Madison co-wrote 85 letters to the public with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay that explained the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution and defended its contents. Known as "The Federalist Papers," these letters are still celebrated as some of the most groundbreaking political

Continued on Page 2 ...

philosophy ever published, and it is broadly accepted that without them, the Constitution would not have been sworn into law.

Even with “The Federalist Papers” circulating, the Constitution was only ratified in Massachusetts, Maryland, and South Carolina under the assurance that amendments would soon be proposed that would provide additional protections. Tireless in his efforts, Madison went to work on the Bill of Rights, which he promptly wrote and passed into law.

Madison was an abolitionist, and although he did not free his own slaves or write the end of slavery into the Constitution, he helped lay the groundwork for ending slavery. In a historically groundbreaking move, Madison referred to slaves as people rather than belongings, which was remarkable since not many people were speaking, let alone thinking, in that way at the time.



On his birthday this year, Madison should be remembered not only as a man of great intellect and accomplishment but also as a man whose life was characterized by hard work and humility. With that in mind, he would not want his birthday to come and go without a nod to his wife, Dolley, born Dolley Payne Todd.

While Madison was described as shy and quiet, Dolley, who was 17 years his junior, was famous for being vivacious, loud, and well-loved by everyone. During Madison’s presidency, she hosted and entertained countless guests

at the White House, where politicians from many different backgrounds and viewpoints gathered and socialized. Many political alliances and bridges were built under Dolley’s watch, and, for this reason, she is often credited with defining the role of the first lady.

Many of the good aspects of America today can be traced back to the efforts of James Madison. On his birthday this year, let’s celebrate him by remembering the contributions he made to our government, our freedom, our justice, and the very fabric of our nation.

HEADS OR TAILS?

The Scientifically Smarter Way to Make Business Decisions

You have two options in front of you. They both sound great, are backed by research, and could transform your business for the better, but you can only choose one. Which do you commit to

When you’re faced with two equally worthwhile options, science says the best way to make a decision is to flip a coin. When you flip a coin, you’re not really leaving the decision up to chance; you’re actually calling on your intuition to guide you. The practice is often regarded as unscientific, but there’s a lot of research to support making intuitive decisions. Friederike Fabritius and Hans W. Hagemann, authors of “The Leading Brain: Neuroscience Hacks to Work Smarter, Better, Happier,” explain how we develop that “gut feeling.”

Intuitive decisions are driven by two structures in your brain: the basal ganglia and the insula. The basal ganglia are connected to movement and building habits. The insula, part of the cerebral cortex, becomes engaged when you experience pain, feel love, listen to music, or even enjoy a piece of chocolate. Neuroscientists believe the insula is responsible for self-awareness, particularly for recognizing changes in your body.

When you have to solve a problem, your basal ganglia start working on a solution, even if you aren’t consciously thinking about it. If you make a conscious decision that agrees with the subconscious solution of your

basal ganglia, your brain gives off a subtle reward. The decision doesn’t have to be logical to feel right — that’s your gut feeling. However, if the conscious and subconscious parts of your brain don’t agree, your insula detects the discrepancy and registers a threat. It’s the “I have a bad feeling about this” response.

Fabritius and Hagemann note that gut feelings “represent the most efficient use of your accumulated experience.” According to the authors, flipping a coin is the best way to really listen to your basal ganglia and insula. Your subconscious brain has already made a decision; flipping a coin helps you test your intuition about each option.

If the coin lands on heads and you feel relieved, then heads is the right choice. However, if the coin lands on tails and you’re uncertain or want to flip again, then that’s your intuition saying the other option is the better choice. So, the next time you’re caught in a pickle, grab the nearest quarter and put your intuition to the test.



GIVING BACK TO LOCAL COMPANIES

On National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day

March 29 is National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day, which is huge for small businesses everywhere. Mom-and-pop businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy; Small Business Trends reports that mom-and-pop businesses account for 64% of gross domestic product (GDP) and generate 78% of all new jobs. Furthermore, no matter what turns the economy takes, small-business owners are less likely to lay off their employees than big corporations. Mom-and-pop businesses support all communities, and you can support them by celebrating this unofficial holiday!

GIVE YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY A BOOST!

Shopping locally has a massive impact on your community. Local businesses return three times the amount of money to the local economy than larger corporations do. With that big of a returned investment, your community can support even more small businesses that generate a wealth of jobs and keep the cycle going.

In addition to the economic boost, products from small businesses are usually higher quality, which makes them a better value for your dollar. Take this day to shop for birthday and holiday gifts for your loved ones that will bring them great joy and last a lifetime.

GET SOCIAL AND SPREAD THE WORD!

While small businesses utilize every form of marketing available, social media is essential for their success and growth. After shopping at your favorite mom-and-pop business, share that experience on your social media! When you write a post on Facebook or take a picture for Instagram, be sure to tag the business and use relevant hashtags so your friends, family, and everyone else in your community can shop there too.

Writing reviews on Google Reviews and Yelp helps establish validity for the company. When another potential customer looks for reviews, they know they're getting quality products and services from a well-established pillar of the



community. The local businesses that are active on social media may post deals and sales for that day only, so keep your eyes peeled and be sure to follow all your favorite businesses!

Take a Break!

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

ARIES
 BLOOM
 BUD
 FLOWERS

GROWTH
 LUCKY
 MELT
 PUDDLE

RAIN
 REBIRTH
 SPRING
 SPROUT



Green Velvet Cheesecake Bars

Inspired by AboutAMom.com

This St. Paddy's Day, try taking a festive spin on a classic staple. If you have red velvet lovers in your family, they're sure to love this equally decadent treat.

Ingredients

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup chocolate graham cracker crumbs
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 oz green food coloring (gel works best)
- 8-oz packages cream cheese, softened
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Green sprinkles, optional

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350 F, and line a 9x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine crumbs, butter, and food coloring. Press into the baking pan.
3. In a separate bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar together.
4. Add eggs one at a time and stir in vanilla.
5. Pour mixture over the packed crumbs.
6. Bake for 40 minutes or until the center is set.
7. Let cool completely before adding sprinkles and slicing.



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Flattmann Law
(985) 590-6182
FlattmannLaw.com

213 W 21st Ave.
Covington, LA
70433

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Desk of Grady
PAGE 1

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuits of James Madison
PAGE 1

The Science Behind Gut Feelings
PAGE 2

Celebrating National Mom and Pop Business
Owners Day
PAGE 3

Take a Break
PAGE 3

Green Velvet Cheesecake Bars
PAGE 3

Influential Freedom of Information Act Lawsuits
PAGE 4

DIGGING FOR THE TRUTH FOIA Lawsuits That Changed How Americans Participate in Democracy

The Freedom of Information Act, commonly referred to as FOIA, has been a crucial part of the democratic system for decades. It was designed to improve public access to governmental records, but unfortunately, it doesn't always work as intended. In most cases, requests are only answered if a lawsuit is filed. Nevertheless, FOIA has had a crucial role in many high-profile legal cases. Here are a couple of the most significant ones in American history.

A JOURNALIST'S 16 YEARS IN COURT

California-based journalist Seth Rosenfeld has had some serious contention with the FBI. In 1985, he filed his first lawsuit against the FBI for ignoring his requests for information about the Berkeley protests of the 1960s. The case was eventually settled in 1996, and Rosenfeld was awarded \$560,000 in fees. In their settlement agreement, the FBI agreed to be more thorough with FOIA requests.

Rosenfeld filed a second lawsuit in 2007 accusing the FBI of withholding information during former President Ronald Reagan's presidency. Five years later, he was awarded \$479,459 in attorney fees. Rosenfeld is known for having some of the longest-pending FOIA requests and has received over 300,000 pages of FBI documents since the 1980s.

THE SCOMM SCANDAL

In a landmark FOIA settlement concluded in 2013, the federal government paid \$1.2 million to settle a suit brought by several civil rights groups over the Secure Communities (SCOMM) Immigration and Customs Enforcement program. The litigation exposed a plan to create a multi-agency database focused on collecting DNA, a person's gait, and iris scans. When evidence was uncovered during the litigation, governors of New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts tried to opt their states out of



the program, but the Department of Homeland Security determined SCOMM mandatory, according to the Center for Constitutional Rights. The case also changed how the government is required to identify, collect, and produce data for all FOIA requests.

Thanks to FOIA and these important cases, the people's right to government information (and honesty) will continue to progress in America's democracy.