

# Makin' It Better Newsletter

Oregon Workers' Compensation | Personal Injury | Social Security Disability

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It is abundantly clear that wearing a helmet while riding a motorcycle saves lives and reduces the number and severity of head and neck injuries. According to estimates by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, for every 100 riders killed in motorcycle crashes who were not wearing helmets, 37 would have survived had they been wearing one—an eye-opening statistic.

It's for this reason that a vast majority of states have laws that require at least some riders to wear helmets, if not all. For those who don't wear a helmet, and possibly defy the law, there is a price to pay that goes beyond one's health – a diminished ability to recover monetarily for head and neck injuries.

If your state has a helmet law and you were not wearing one upon sustaining a head or neck

injury, it will be extremely difficult to recover damages for this type of injury. You would have to prove that you would have been injured even if you had been wearing a helmet—a daunting task for any attorney.

Even if there is no state helmet law and you were not wearing a helmet upon suffering a head or neck injury, it may still be a tough go as far as collecting damages. If your failure to wear a helmet contributed to the severity of your injuries, you may be found “comparatively negligent,” meaning you are partially responsible for your own injuries, which will reduce your recovery accordingly.

If you sustain injuries due to a motorcycle accident, contact a motorcycle accident attorney to safeguard your rights. ■



# enjoy the view

If you've ever gazed at the sky and seen a mesmerizing display of brilliant arcs, curtains, or spirals of color; cloud silhouettes; or a plasma effect projecting an eerie glow, chances are you've witnessed the northern lights, or aurora borealis. Shades of green and pink predominate, but strong displays can include most colors of the spectrum.

The northern lights are caused by collisions between gaseous particles in the earth's atmosphere and charged particles spewed out by the sun that arrive here via solar wind. Most of the sun's particles are deflected by the earth's magnetic field; however, the magnetic field is weakest at the magnetic poles, which is often where the sun's particles crash the party.

The collisions between the earth's and sun's particles cause electrons in the atoms to advance to a higher-energy state. When things die down a bit to a lower-energy state, photons are released—in other words, light. Collisions with different elements (e.g., oxygen, nitrogen, etc.) produce different colors.

The northern lights are most often seen in the far north latitudes (seems logical), but stronger displays can extend as far southward as the latitude of the southern United States. There is a counterpart to the aurora borealis in the southern hemisphere – the aurora australis.

The northern lights have been intertwined with religious and mythological accounts over the vast expanse of time. And no wonder...their mysteriousness, beauty, and awe-inspiring qualities can easily lead to a little introspection. Just make sure to enjoy the view. ■

# Scott Miethe

Father's Day is upon us, and we thought it a good idea to feature a great Dad this month. We all know that fatherhood today is a lot different than a generation ago, and was an easy choice for us to feature a father that exemplifies the modern day Dad.



*Scott Miethe with his kids.*

Scott Miethe is the proud father of three daughters and a son. When he is not working, Scott runs his girls to and from their sporting events, dances, and school plays. The Miethe kids enjoy the beach, and watching their mother Staci coach the Lady Warriors of Warrenton High School softball team, which had a bust out season, making it to the OSAA state tournament this year. This is all great, but we know this already.

The news to us is that Scott loves to dance with his kids, and to their music. "At home", Scott explains, "it's okay for this to happen, but not in the truck where every person passing by can see, but I do it anyway." It should not surprise anyone who knows Scott that he enjoys dancing with his children while sitting in traffic, without a care in the world because he is a kid at heart.

But Scott is clear about what he wants for his kids. "I love my kids and the only thing I really want for them is for them to be happy, healthy, and good, kind hearted people to everyone they meet. To see them smile is truly a thing of beauty."

Happy Father's Day to Scotty and all the other great Dads out there. ■

# the Scandinavian Festival

## TRADITION CONTINUES



If you are looking for a fun and educational activity for the family in June, keep the Astoria Scandinavian Festival in mind. The 46th Scandinavian Festival is scheduled for June 21st through June 23rd at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds. The celebration

began way back in 1967 as a fundraiser for a local Girl Scout Troop that has evolved into a weekend long celebration. The Festival's mission is to promote sharing Scandinavian culture and heritage through preserving traditional cultural, family and community values for the benefit of future generations. For a schedule of activities, go to [www.astoriascanfast.com](http://www.astoriascanfast.com). You can also check out the Facebook page.

The Festival provides a great mix of music, shopping opportunities, and children's activities with a strong emphasis on Scandinavian traditions, and even education. On Friday evening, there is a Torch-Light Parade after the Ms. Scandinavia is crowned, and a Hex Burning Bonfire. Scandinavians first celebrated the Mid-Summer to recognize the summer solstice, which included a bonfire to ward off evil spirits. Many Scandinavian countries continue the tradition today, burning the bonfires in the countryside.

The Mid-Summer Pole festivities occur on Saturday.

Before the Festival, the Scandinavian Court members decorate the Mid-Summer Pole with evergreens and seasonal flowers in bloom. On Saturday, the men raise the pole, and participants dance to traditional Scandinavian music around the pole. Any proud Scandinavian will tell you that this is not a May Pole, but a Mid-Summer Pole. However, the tradition of a May or Mid-Summer Pole exists throughout Europe, including Germany and Austria, Britain and Ireland, and even Italy.

Another great tradition at the Festival is the Queen Coronation. The Scandinavian Court is represented by a princess from each Scandinavian Lodge, including the Danish Society, the Finish Brotherhood, the Sons of Norway, and the Swedish Vasa. The princesses serve as ambassadors for the Festival throughout the year, wearing authentic native costumes while speaking at several engagements in the community. At the Festival, a panel of judges interview Court members, and evaluate speeches in deciding who will serve as the Scandinavian Court Queen for the coming year. It's a wonderful opportunity for these young women to learn about their heritage, and connect with the older generations in their families.

Come on out to the Festival this June. ■



## June 2013 Important Dates

June 16 – Father's Day

June 14 – Flag Day

June 1 – Atlantic hurricane season begins

June 21 – First day of summer

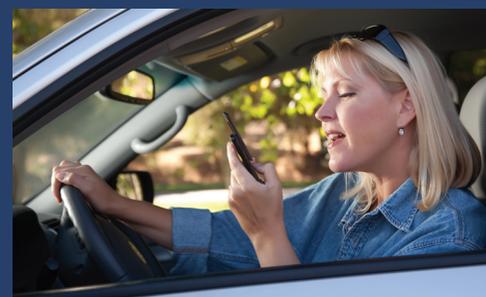
## did you know?

According to a new survey, nearly two-thirds of adults use their cell phones while driving with kids in the car; one-third of adults even admit to texting while driving with their kids.

There's no disputing the facts anymore – cell phones and driving just don't mix.

In 2011, across the U.S., there were over 3,300 deaths and 400,000 injuries from crashes that were caused by distracted driving. The number one reason for those crashes? Cell phone use while driving.

So, the next time you hop in the car to take your children to soccer practice, to school or the mall, please keep your cell phone parked in your purse or your pocket. Make sure you and your family arrive safely. ■



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## HOW MOTORCYCLE HELMET LAWS AFFECT injury claims



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This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, on the job injuries, Social Security, and other issues. It is for information purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice. Prior to acting on any information contained here, you should seek and retain competent counsel. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.

# mysterious drownings

When marina boats don't have a sufficient grounding/bonding system in place, an electrical fault can occur aboard a boat that energizes its hull. In turn, electric current is released into the surrounding water. Oblivious swimmers in those same waters sometimes become the victims of what is known as Electric Shock Drowning (ESD).

When a boat is plugged into a marina's electrical system via a shore power cord, any piece of equipment on board that has a fault can create this deadly condition. The marina environment is ripe for faults to develop due to ever-present moisture, intense exposure to sunlight, and constant movement.

Victims are oftentimes paralyzed by the electricity (even by a very small current), which induces drowning. Sometimes the electricity is strong enough to cause electrocution. In many

cases there is no physical evidence that electric shock has taken place, meaning that ESDs are likely vastly underreported. ■



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