



WEINER, ROHRSTAFF & SPIVEY, PLC



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WRS In the News

June, 2009

Although we are able to settle many of our cases before trial, we do try those cases we cannot resolve. Here is a case we recently tried for one of our clients.

VIRGINIA LAWYERS WEEKLY Woman wins \$3.2M for accident at IKEA

A Fairfax County jury has returned a \$3.2 million verdict for a shopper at the IKEA housewares store in Woodbridge who suffered a crushed pelvis in 2006 when a stack of countertops fell on her.

Edward L. Weiner, the lawyer for Xiaolei Zeng, said his client incurred \$75,000 in medical bills after two surgeries, \$50,000 in lost wages and permanent physical limitations. The 36-year-old accident victim lost her dream of hiking and biking around the world because of the injuries.

Weiner said Zeng now can walk only about three blocks before the pain stops her.

Zeng's doctors used internal fixation to secure her fractured bones, but later had to remove the hardware in a second surgery because it was restricting her improvement.

Weiner said he used an expert who testified it was unsafe to have eight-foot-

long countertops stacked vertically with only a bungee cord to secure them in place. "We argued their whole system of organizing and displaying the goods was faulty," Weiner said.



WEINER

April 9 after a four-day trial before Judge R. Terrence Ney.

Vienna lawyer Joseph F. Giordano, who represented IKEA in the case, did not return a phone call for comment.

— Peter Vieth

Weiner said IKEA's highest offer in the case was \$220,000. His last demand was \$1.2 million. An earlier mediation attempt was unsuccessful. "Now we're very glad we didn't settle the case," Weiner said.

The verdict came April 9 after a four-day trial before Judge R. Terrence Ney.

Vienna lawyer Joseph F. Giordano, who represented IKEA in the case, did not return a phone call for comment.

LAWYERS HAVE A HEART

Weiner, Rohrstaff & Spivey, PLC, will once again be sponsoring a team of Fairfax Bar Association Young Lawyers who are participating in *Lawyers Have a Heart*, an annual 10K



run that raises funds for the American Heart Association. During the last decade, *Lawyers Have a Heart* has raised more than \$5 million to benefit the American Heart Association, whose mission is building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

This year's event will take place on **Saturday, June 13th** at Washington Harbour at Georgetown (3000 K Street, NW in Washington, DC). The 10K Run begins at 8:00 AM and the Fun Walk begins at 8:05 AM.

You don't have to be a lawyer to join -- all you need is a big heart. Join more than 6,500 lawyers, Washington residents, parents and children for this fun-filled day which includes the race and walk, as well as food and festivities. By participating in this event, you will not only help to strengthen your own heart through exercise, you will also help raise funds vital to the education programs and research of the AHA.

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Weiner, Rohrstaff & Spivey PLC



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BS, University of Texas at Austin -
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Who were the important mentors you have had and how did they impact your career?

Bernie Cohen - I went to work in Bernie's firm before I went to law school. His commitment to justice was an inspiration to me and my decision to make the personal and family sacrifice to go to law school, even though I was way out to be doing such a thing.

Judge Gerald Bruce Lee - I practiced with Gerald before he was elevated to the Fairfax County Circuit Court bench. Gerald has been constant in his encouragement of me and is an example I have tried to follow.

What do you consider your biggest accomplishment and why?

My biggest personal accomplishment has been that I raised two great adults. My children continue to amaze and delight me, and I believe I accomplished my goal of launching two people into the world who would make their communities better places to live.

My biggest professional accomplishment is that I have had the privilege of practicing law. And my biggest professional joy is that, in spite of naysayers, I continue to enjoy it.

What advice would you give to a young person graduating from college this spring?

Don't be afraid. Be bold. Set your goals and then do something every day, every single day, that will take you one step closer to achieving what you want.

How do you achieve a balance between your professional life and your personal life?

When I went to law school, I had two small children and a full-time job, so I had to

earn to make promises to myself and keep them.

When you were growing up, what did you want to be?

First, I wanted to be a hairdresser. Then, I wanted to be a teacher. I taught young elementary school students when I first graduated from college and later preschool children when my children were very young. I think being a hairdresser and teacher of young children have a lot in common with being a lawyer: making people's lives better and having fun.

What is your favorite book or movie and why?

"The Shawshank Redemption." You can achieve your goals if you consistently take steps every day, no matter how small and, by doing so, you may actually be able to achieve a small bit of justice for yourself and others, despite enormous and powerful obstacles.

What are two things about you that most people, including your closest friends, may not know?

I used to cuss up a blue streak, and I taught sexuality education to junior high students for about 16 years. I did not necessarily do both of these at the same time, although the sexuality education included very graphic words, many of which were street slang and most of which I learned from the junior high kids.

...Making a difference for the injured...

We are so proud of Sandra who was recently honored as one of Virginia Lawyer Weekly's Most Influential Women of Virginia

BAN ON TEXTING WHILE DRIVING



You've seen them. Drivers traveling at highway speeds while reading or tapping on their handheld devices. Kind of scary.

Well, Virginia is now among the growing number of states that has responded to this dangerous behavior that has resulted in increasingly serious accidents related to drivers who find it necessary to read or send text messages while they are driving. At the General Assembly session that just ended, Virginia passed a law prohibiting operation of a motor vehicle while using any handheld personal communication device to

manually enter text or to read a text message.

Interestingly, there are certain activities that are NOT included in the prohibition: GPS, reading caller identification information, and using a device to report an emergency.

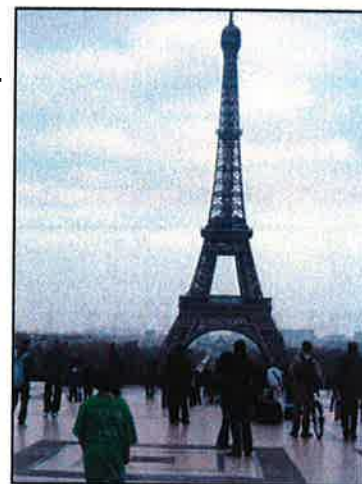
Under Virginia's ban, which goes into effect July 1, police can't pull a driver over just for text messaging but instead need a more serious primary offense to justify the stop.

THE TRAVELING WRS SHIRT

Last year, we helped sponsor a team of Fairfax Bar Association Young Lawyers who participated in *Lawyers Have a Heart*. The team finished third in its category. Since we were a sponsor, our firm's name was printed on the back of the T-shirts given to participants.

Our shirts are so popular that they keep finding their way to faraway places. We keep sharing pictures of them in our newsletters with you.

How can you get in on the fun? You can send us pictures of folks you spot wearing the 2009 WRS shirt to our website www.wrsattorneys.com HINT: You may spot a team of runners on June 13th in Washington, DC wearing these shirts or perhaps one of your favorite WRS staff members.



DISAPPEARING ONLINE LENDERS



The economy is bad. People are scared. Some are saying to themselves, "If I just had enough money to get me through this month, things would be better." If you're in that situation, take measures to work your way out of financial trouble. Cancel your credit cards. Talk to your mortgage lender. Do whatever you have to do, but please, please, don't go to an ONLINE LENDER for any kind of loan, especially a payday loan. A friend of ours, Dale Pittman is a lawyer from Petersburg, VA, who represents victims of debt collection harassment and abuse. He has had some experience trying to track down

online lenders to let them know that what they are doing is illegal. Read the Huffington Post article that quotes Dale: <http://tinyurl.com/online-loan-sharks>.

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9TH ANNUAL LAW DAY WEINER ROAST



Chance in 2008

a great cause.

On Law Day, Friday, May 1st 2009, Weiner, Rohrstaff & Spivey, PLC hosted the **9th Annual Law Day Weiner Roast** to benefit the Fairfax Law Foundation. It was a day filled with great music and food for a worthy cause. Approximately 700 people attended, including judges from Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria, the Court of Appeals and the Federal District Court; local and state legislators; other civic dignitaries; and folks who love to have fun, while supporting

If you missed it this year, mark your calendar now for **WRS' 10th Annual Law Day "Weiner Roast" on Saturday, May 1, 2010.**

Last year, because of the new addition to our staff, Chance, we began a tradition that we shared with you ... **Chance's Annual Ride in the Weiner-mobile.** As you can see, this year Chance had fans cheering him on!



Chance in 2009