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Uncover the Magic of Australia's Living Wonder

Swim With Turtles, Whales, and Wonder at the Great Barrier Reef

If you've ever dreamed of exploring a place so vast it dwarfs entire countries, **Australia's Great Barrier Reef** should be at the top of your bucket list. Stretching over 1,400 miles along the eastern coastline, this paradise is larger than the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands combined! The Great Barrier Reef is home to dazzling coral gardens, colorful fish, giant clams, and six of the seven known marine turtle species. From snorkelers to skydivers, the Reef offers something unforgettable for every kind of adventurer.

Underwater, the options are endless. **Lizard Island** is a snorkeler's paradise where you can float above giant clam beds and glide alongside green turtles. Divers flock to **Cod Hole** for an up-close look at the Reef's most famous marine residents, while those craving a more remote experience can hop aboard a dive ship to explore untouched corners teeming with biodiversity.

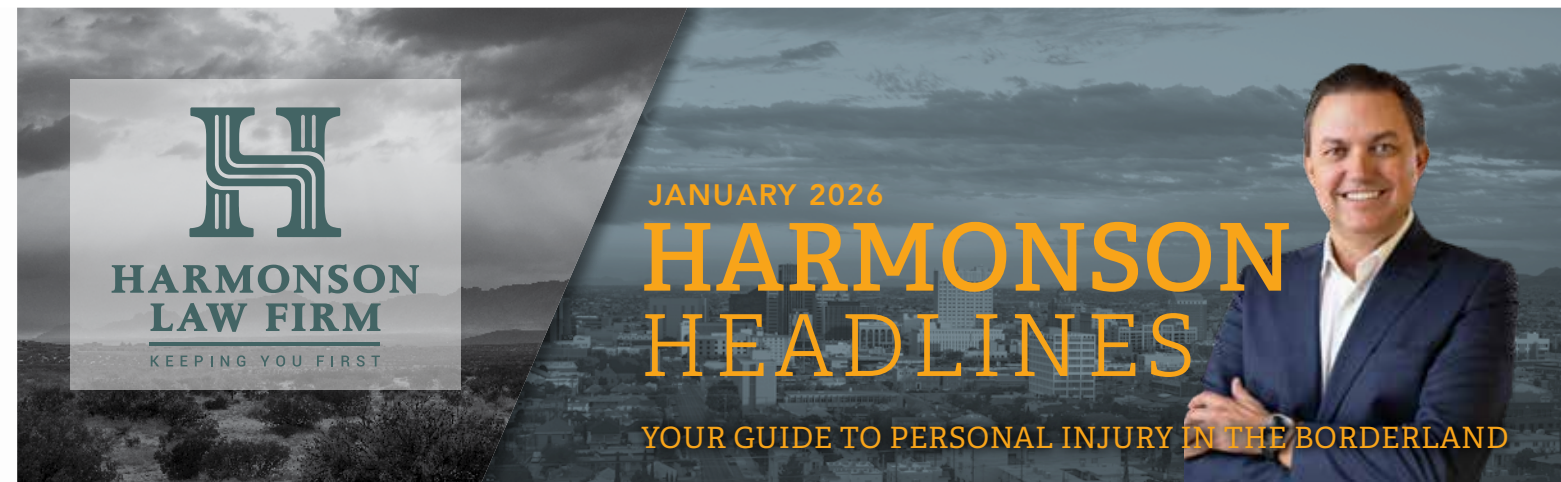
Prefer to keep your head dry? The 74 tropical **Whitsunday Islands** are perfect for cruising, whether on a bareboat charter or a luxury superyacht. For a show-stopping perspective, consider a scenic helicopter transfer to the **Outer Reef**. From the air, the patterns of coral, tiny secluded islands, and endless shades of blue make it clear just how massive this natural wonder truly is.

For a once-in-a-lifetime adventure, the Reefsleeper Experience takes you to **Hardy Reef** after day-trippers have left. Snorkel, dive, or relax on the

Reefworld platform, then enjoy a barbecue as the sun sets. When night falls, snuggle into your floating tent under the stars or take a night dive to see the reef glow in a completely different light.

Thrill-seekers, take note: **Mission Beach** offers a jaw-dropping skydiving experience over the reef and surrounding rainforest, plunging from 15,000 feet with expert guides to ensure an unforgettable ride.

No matter how you experience it (by snorkel, yacht, helicopter, or parachute), the Great Barrier Reef is an adventure that promises awe, excitement, and memories you'll treasure forever.



LIFE OUTSIDE OF WORK

Hobbies and Routines That Keep Life Balanced

January always feels like a reset for me. The holidays slow down, and I start paying more attention to my routines. It also happens to be National Hobby Month, which fits how I have been thinking lately. Work is a big part of my life, but it is not the whole picture, and the new year reminds me to think about what keeps me steady outside the office.

A few weeks ago, I was flipping through the El Paso Inc. lawyers section, and it caught my attention. One attorney featured is a talented artist, and his desert scenes are all over the airport. Another is a college football referee. Seeing that reminded me that there is more to people than their job title on the door. We all need something outside of work that gives us energy or helps us turn our minds off for a while.

Running has been one of those things for me. I have done about 20 half-marathons. It's been about two years since my last one, but I still try to make exercise a big part of my life. Most mornings, I drop Winton off at school and drive to the park near Scenic Drive and Rim Road. It is one of the most beautiful spots in El Paso, and I walk around that neighborhood to clear my head and get ready for the day. I also have a routine that helps me wind down at night. Most evenings, once the chores are done, I get an hour to myself. I love to read, and I also love to watch a TV series or just something to take my mind off the day. That hour keeps me sane.

When I was a kid, my main hobby was not really a hobby. It was more like an obsession. I was a basketball player, and in my mind, I was going to the NBA. We had a hoop in our driveway, and I spent countless hours out there perfecting my shot. I was not fast enough or good enough to make it past high school, but all the time on the court stuck with me. It showed me what it feels like to pour yourself into something you love.

As I have gotten older, I have realized how much those things matter. Work is work, and I enjoy what I do, but who I am off the clock defines



me just as much as who I am on the clock. When someone gets hurt in a wreck or another serious accident, their medical bills and lost wages are only part of the story. A lot of the time, the bigger loss is the simple stuff they cannot do anymore.

For some people, that is going to the gym or running like they used to. For others, it is yard work, house projects, or just being able to keep up their house chores. You can put a number on lost wages and hospital charges. It is much harder to put a number on not being able to play golf for a year or missing your morning walks because your back will not let you. Insurance companies often want to talk only about those hard numbers, but to me, those non-economic losses are just as real.

So, this month, with a new year and National Hobby Month on the calendar, I am protecting the things that keep me grounded. A walk on Scenic, a good book, a quiet hour in the evening. They may look small from the outside, but they help me show up better for my family and my clients. And when I meet someone whose injuries have taken those simple things away, I try to remember what that would feel like in my own life and fight to make sure that loss is not ignored.

—Clark Harmonson



SCAN TO SHARE
YOUR CASE — WE'RE
HERE TO HELP!



DITCH THE QUICK FIX

ENERGIZE NATURALLY WITH SIMPLE DAILY HABITS

It's 3 p.m., and you've hit the dreaded midday slump. For many Americans, coffee or an energy drink may fuel their second wind. When tired, we tend to turn to external sources for a boost, but it's a temporary fix; we'll encounter the same issue the next day. Instead, we need to look internally and make changes to improve overall well-being for the long term. A healthier, more consistent way to increase energy is possible!

Do you stay up late every night? Do you use your phone right before you fall asleep? Do you have trouble waking up in the morning? If you answered yes to any of these questions, it's time to give your sleep a facelift. Try to go to bed at the same time every night, ideally around 9 or 10 p.m. Put your phone away at least an hour before bed. If this is difficult, practice meditation whenever you feel tempted to grab your phone.

Your diet may also need adjustments. If you skip meals, eat junk food, or snack right before bed, you'll feel it later. During the day, eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and nutrient-rich foods instead. Make time for every meal, stepping away from your work while you eat. If you do not get enough nutrients, supplement your diet with vitamins.

Consider your daily movement as well. It might sound counterproductive, but exercise can substantially boost our energy. Exercise improves oxygen and nutrient circulation while allowing us to get better sleep.

You don't have to go through life lacking energy. Make adjustments today for a more energized tomorrow.

Dashcams and the Hidden Details

WHAT YOUR CAMERA MIGHT REVEAL

More and more people have dash cameras in their cars. On the surface, it makes sense. If something goes wrong, you have a record of what happened. From where I sit as a lawyer, though, that little camera can be your best friend or your biggest problem. It depends a lot on what the video shows and how you handle it.

Not long ago, I had a case where dashcam footage made all the difference. My client was driving when another car merged and cut him off. He swerved to the right, hit the curb, and his car rolled. There was no contact between the two vehicles. Without more to go on, it almost looked like a single-car wreck. A driver behind them happened to be in a Tesla with a dashcam. His video clearly showed the other driver making an unsafe lane change that caused the crash. He was kind enough to share the footage, and that video allowed us to prove who was really at fault. Without it, I am not sure we would have had a claim at all.

Of course, it doesn't always work that way. If the footage shows that you were speeding, following too closely, or weaving through traffic, that same dashcam can produce strong evidence used against you. Trying to delete or hide the video is not a solution. That can lead to accusations of destroying evidence, which can hurt you in court even more. Once you decide to record your driving, you have to assume that the footage may eventually be seen.

So, should you have a dashcam or not? In my view, if you are a reasonably careful driver, it is probably a good thing. It can protect you when someone cuts



you off or refuses to tell the truth about what happened. If you tend to drive aggressively or take chances behind the wheel, you should think hard before you record every mile.

Either way, remember that a dashcam is not just a gadget. It is evidence, and you need to be ready for whatever it shows.

PROTECTING YOURSELF AFTER A CRASH

THE RISK OF RECORDED STATEMENTS

After a wreck, it usually does not take long for the phone to ring. An adjustor from the other driver's insurance company calls, sounds polite, and tells you they just want to hear your side of the story. Then they ask if they can record the conversation. It can feel like a simple request, but there is a lot going on behind it.

A recorded statement is exactly what it sounds like. The adjustor asks questions over the phone, records your answers, and keeps that recording in the file. This often happens just a few days after the crash. People are still shaken up, they have not seen all the doctors they need to see, and they do not know how bad their injuries will be. The insurance company knows that. One of their main goals is to lock you in on what hurts, what treatment you plan to get, and your version of how the wreck happened. They may also steer you into saying things that sound like you accept some of the blame, even if you did nothing wrong.

In some cases, they skip the recorded statement and go straight to a quick settlement over the phone. I have seen people with significant injuries talked into taking \$1,500 for pain and suffering. Those agreements are usually enforceable. By the time they come to see me, there is very little I can do.

One thing you need to know is that you are not required to give a recorded statement to the other driver's insurance company. I have settled countless claims without one. When an adjustor pushes for it, I often say they can have my client's recorded statement if I can take a recorded statement of their insured driver. I have never had them say yes to that. They know it is not a fair trade.

If you are hurt in a wreck and an insurance company calls asking to record you, my advice is always to talk with a lawyer first. You should never go through that conversation alone. A short phone call on a recorded line can change the whole course of your case.

SUDOKU

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SOLUTION ON PG. 4

Rustic French Pistachio Cake

Looking for French countryside flavor in your life? Bake this fragrant, fluffy, and fuss-free French pistachio cake

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups heavy cream, cold
- 1 1/2 cups (minus 1 tbsp) all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp fine sea salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla paste
- 1/2 cup shelled pistachios, finely chopped, plus extra for topping
- Powdered sugar for dusting

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F, then butter and flour a 9-inch springform pan.
2. Whip cold cream until it forms firm peaks, then refrigerate.
3. Whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt, then set aside.
4. Beat eggs, sugar, and vanilla until light and fluffy.
5. Fold pistachios and flour mixture into egg mixture.
6. Gently fold cream into the batter until no streaks remain. Spread batter evenly in prepared pan.
7. Bake for 50–60 minutes, or until puffed and golden on top. Let the cake cool for 10 minutes, then remove from pan.
8. Dust with powdered sugar and top with pistachios. Serve warm or at room temperature!

Inspired by TheViewFromGreatIsland.com

