

Let Us Fight For Your Rights

Volume 7, Issue 1



**MICHAEL J.
O'CONNOR**
& ASSOCIATES, LLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Social Security Disability Department at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates Looks to Keep the Ball Rolling Through 2013

Frackville, Penn. - March 2013 After finishing 2012 with a record breaking year, members of the Social Security Disability Department at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates are excitedly transferring their momentum in to 2013. The SSD department at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates knows what Social Security is looking for and how to deliver that information in a manner which is accurate and effective. Many law firms shy away from assisting clients in the initial application stage and prefer to wait for the client to receive a denial letter and appeal. They do this because it is difficult to win at the initial application stage. Michael J. O'Connor & Associates accepts and helps clients at the initial application stage and have had many favorable decisions at this level. Attorney Valeen D. Hykes is head of the Social Security Disability Department, leading paralegals Traci Brown, Ana Teresa López Vives and Raymond Kostick. As a Rising Star, Attorney Hykes has been a respected and supportive leader.

Hykes was named Rising Star by Superlawyers in 2012, which is a title given to attorneys who are under 40 years of age or have been practicing for less than 10 years and are nominated by other attorneys who have personally monitored their nominee in legal action. She earned her undergraduate degree from King's College, Wilkes Barre, PA in 2004. Hykes then continued her education at Thomas M. Cooley Law School, Lansing, MI, to receive her Juris Doctorate Degree in 2007. Hykes is married to her husband Jonathon, and they have a beautiful daughter, Kiersten.

Hykes has a very dedicated team behind her. Traci Brown is the Supervising Paralegal to the Social Security Disability Department and has been working for Michael J. O'Connor & Associates for a little over two years. Brown earned her associates degree in Paralegal Studies from the Schuylkill Institute of Business and Technology in 2004. Over the past two years, Brown has received many thank you cards and notes from very happy clients that she has helped through what can be a very complicated process. In Brown's spare time, she enjoys painting and reading.

Ana Teresa López Vives holds various responsibilities at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates. Not only does López Vives work as a paralegal with the SSD department, but she manages the Reading office and is an in-house, Spanish-speaking translator. López Vives graduated from the University of Puerto Rico with a bachelor's degree in Communications. Outside of her work responsibilities, López Vives enjoys photography, arts and crafts, playing the ukulele and gardening.

The latest member to join the SSD department is Raymond Kostick. Kostick joined the team in the summer of 2012, after completing his Paralegal Studies at Lehigh County Community College. Kostick also earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from Shippensburg University in 2009. In Kostick's spare time he enjoys outdoor sports, such as baseball and bicycling. He also enjoys running and boxing.

If you have any questions regarding Social Security Disability, do not hesitate to call Michael J. O'Connor & Associates.



Pictured above are Supervising Paralegal, Traci Brown; Attorney Valeen D. Hykes; Paralegal, Raymond Kostick; Paralegal and Reading Office Manager, Ana Teresa López Vives.

Our Practice Areas

- Workers' Compensation
- Social Security Disability
- Personal Injury
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Motorcycle Accidents
- Tractor Trailer Accidents
- Slip and Fall Accidents
- Premises Liability
- Nursing Home Negligence
- Mesothelioma
- Wage & Hour Violations
- Wills, Estates & Elder Law
- Product Liability
- Dangerous Drugs
- Birth Injuries

Inside this issue:

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month	2
Three Kings Day 2013	2
iPod Shuffle Giveaway	3
Recipe Corner	3
Motorcycle Laws	3
Satellite Office Locations	4

Attorneys and Staff at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates Celebrates Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month



It doesn't often receive the attention that breast cancer or prostate cancer receives, but what many people don't know is that pancreatic cancer is the 4th leading cause of cancer related deaths. Health professionals and researchers are trying to change that by increasing the public's awareness of this disease.

The attorneys and staff at Michael J. O'Connor & Associates wore purple on Fri., Nov. 16, in honor of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day. Pancreatic cancer affects thousands of people in the United States each year. It is difficult to detect early and even more difficult to treat.

For more information on pancreatic cancer, visit the Sol Goldman Pancreatic Cancer Research Center at Johns Hopkins (<http://www.path.jhu.edu/pancreas/>) or the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research (www.lustgarten.org).



Michael J. O'Connor & Associates Celebrates Three Kings Day at the Casa de La Amistad Senior Center in Reading, PA

It's become a tradition for the staff and attorneys of Michael J. O'Connor & Associates to celebrate Día de los Reyes Magos, or Three Kings Day, with the Hispanic community in Reading, and this year was no exception.

Three Kings Day is one of the most celebrated Hispanic holidays, especially in Puerto Rico and Mexico. It takes place on Jan. 6, also known as the Epiphany. It commemorates the day when the Three Wise Men followed the star to Bethlehem, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus in the manger.

This year's Three Kings Day was held on Monday, January 7th at the Casa de la Amistad Senior Center in the Centro Hispano Daniel Torres in Reading. The celebration brought together children from the YMCA of Reading as well as seniors from the center.



Attorney David A. Miller dressed as a King along with staff members Ana Teresa López Vives and Grisel Pedraza. They gave out goody bags to the children that included hand puppets, a manger scene sticker set, crayons, pens, as well as other gifts. Candy was also given out as well as gifts for the seniors.

Music was provided by Juan Ortiz and Carmelo Vazquez from the Reading area who played traditional Hispanic songs on acoustic guitar, such as Feliz Navidad, while the children and seniors clapped and sang along. It was a wonderful day and we were glad to share it with the community!

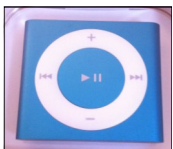


Pictured above are Personal Injury Attorney David A. Miller; Reading Office Manager, Ana Teresa López Vives; and Reading Office Receptionist, Grisel Pedraza.

MJOC iPod Shuffle Giveaway

Michael J. O'Connor & Associates would like to give you a chance to win a brand new iPod Shuffle 2GB. You can conveniently take an iPod Shuffle with you almost anywhere. It is easy to use and can store all of your favorite music.

How to enter: Send a picture of your pet to samanthac@oconnorlaw.com, to be entered in to the "MJOC Cutest Pet Contest." You can also mail your picture to 608 W. Oak St., Frackville, PA 17931 or fax it to 570-874-4822. All pictures received will be uploaded to our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/mjoclaw,



where you will have to "Share" and "Like" our page in order to cast and receive votes. The pictures will be in an album entitled "Cutest Pet Contest." Have your friends vote for your pet too! The person who submitted the photo that receives the most likes, will win the iPod Shuffle. The last day to submit photos will be **May 1, 2013**, but don't wait! The sooner you submit your photo, the more time you will have to get more votes!

Motorcycle Season Is Upon Us

With temperatures dropping as low as 2 degrees F. this winter, it may not seem like motorcycle season is right around the corner, but it is. Cyclists can't wait to gear up and hit the highway for their first run of the season. Each year, more people have been gaining interest in riding motorcycles. There are two types of motorcycles; those that can be driven on the road, and those that are driven off road. Listed below are a few laws regarding both on and off road motorcycles, according to the American Motorcycle Association and PennDOT.

Road

- **Eye protection:** Required by law
- **Muffler:** Required, modifications to increase sound prohibited
- **Safety Helmet:** Required by law, unless operator is older than 21 years of age
- **Headlight:** Required for motorcycles during the day built after 1986

Off Road

- **Eye protection:** Not required
- **Muffler:** Required by law
- **Safety Helmet:** Required by law unless operator is older than 21 years of age
- **Headlight:** Required after sunset

Above are just a few of the many laws that are put in place to keep riders safe. If you have any questions or concerns regarding a motorcycle accident that you may have been in, or someone you love, please call us at 1-800-518-4LAW (4529) or visit us at www.OConnorLaw.com to find out more information. We hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable 2013 motorcycle season.



TUNE IN

Don't miss Attorney Debra A. Matherne's interview on En Portada. The show will be aired on WWSI Telemundo Philadelphia on March 26, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. Attorney Matherne will be discussing important information regarding workers' compensation.



Recipe Corner

Our resident chef and accountant, Patti Dmytrow, has recommended a treat just in time for St. Patrick's Day!

Piece O'Luck (Mini Pizza)

Ingredients:

- 1 large box round crackers
- 1 package (1 lb.) frozen peas (thawed, not cooked)
- 2 pints low-fat cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- Choose any two seasonings:
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon catsup
- 1 tablespoon chili sauce
- 1/2 package dry soup mix
- Fresh chopped herbs alike parsley, chives or green onions

Instructions:

Mix together cottage cheese, milk, and any two seasonings in a blender or beat until smooth in a bowl.

Give each person:

- 4 crackers
- 1/4 cup spread
- 2 tablespoons peas

Have each person place cottage cheese spread on crackers with a spoon and to add some fun, make faces with the peas!

Serving size: 4 crackers

- 1/8 cup vegetable
- 1/4 cup dairy



Don't miss the next edition of our newsletter. We will reveal how the Michael J. O'Connor & Associates team does at the Yuengling Light Lager Jogger 5K event in April 2013.

If you no longer wish to receive correspondence from Michael J. O'Connor & Associates and would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call us at: (570) 874-3300 or email us at samanthac@oconnorlaw.com

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Page 4 **SATELLITE OFFICE LOCATIONS** For your convenience, Michael J. O'Connor & Associates, LLC has 14 satellite office locations across Pennsylvania, in addition to our principal office located in Schuylkill County.



Allentown
Bala Cynwyd
Danville

Hazleton
Lancaster
Lock Haven
Wilkes-Barre

Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Reading
Williamsport

Scranton
Stroudsburg
Sunbury

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4LAW
Español: 1-888-882-4444
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