

# THE SLG ADVISOR

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## ‘Would You Like Your Buns Warmed?’

**I**t was September 1986, and it was my junior year in college at Bentley University. Although I was not in a fraternity, my best friends were, so I participated in all fraternity activities. On this beautiful fall afternoon on campus, we were having a cookout, and I had agreed to man the grill. As people came through the line for food, I would give them a burger on a bun and plop it on their outstretched plastic plate. I remember seeing this beautiful dark-haired girl coming up for food and thought of what I might say to her to spark up a conversation.

I was always pretty good at thinking on my feet, so I figured I'd be fine,

but when she got to me, I blurted out, "Would you like your buns warmed?" Yup! Dumbest thing I could've said, and any shot I might have had at piquing her interest in me was obviously gone! But instead of telling me how cheesy a line that was, she looked me right in the eyes and without any hesitation responded, "Yes, I **WOULD** like my buns warmed!" We laughed and have been laughing together for the last 35 years.

That young woman is Liz Spada, my wife. Our first official date (Sept. 30, 1986) came a few days later when we went for a walk on a beautiful night to a pond that was on campus. Liz never

lets me forget that my fashion choices that night left a lot to be desired: a white tank t-shirt complete with the gold chain, looking very much like the Italian kid from the city that I was.

By all accounts, Liz and I on the surface were not an obvious perfect match. She was from a bucolic upscale town in the Berkshires where both her parents had good careers and advanced degrees. Although not wealthy by today's idea of rich, she was much higher up on the socioeconomic ladder than I was for sure.

I remember after a few months taking Liz home to meet my parents. My parents were lovely people, kind, warm, and very welcoming, but I remember wondering just how Liz would react to the stark differences in our living situations. I grew up on the third floor of a triple-decker in East Boston in a very small apartment. I remember my mother

*“We had no idea on that day in 1986 at that fraternity cookout that we’d spend the rest of our lives together.”*

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# Can I Sue My Landlord

## For Injuries That Happened on Their Property?

Since the pandemic started, you've probably been spending a lot more time at home. Spending more waking hours in your residence means a much higher likelihood of injuring yourself on the property. If you're a renter, that might mean that your injuries are the result of your landlord's negligence. Let me give you a few scenarios.

### *Slip-and-Falls on Snow and Ice*

Under Massachusetts law, landlords are responsible for keeping any common areas (hallways, stairs, parking lots, etc.) clear of snow and ice. If they fail to keep these areas reasonably clear and you're less than 50% responsible for your injuries, then you may be able to pursue legal action.

### *Defective Stairs, Stairwells, and Handrails*

State building codes spell out in great detail when handrails are necessary as well as the specific dimensions. However, proving a violation of these codes on the landlord's part is nearly impossible without the help of an experienced lawyer who understands the nuances associated with those codes.

### *Defective Walkways*

Just as with keeping walkways clear of snow and ice, landlords are also responsible for repairing walkways on their property before they cause injuries. Whether because of cost restraints or mismanagement, if damaged walkways go without repairs until you get hurt, you might have a case against your landlord for your injuries. Just make sure you get pictures of the walkway so that you can show the extent of the damages before your landlord repairs it if necessary.

### *Defective Flooring or Carpeting*

People can sustain serious injuries as a result of misplaced or damaged carpets that become tripping hazards. If you notice any in your complex, notify the landlord. That way, if the problem persists to the point where you injure yourself, you can prove that you gave your landlord notice to make repairs, which will strengthen your case.

You might be afraid that your landlord might retaliate against you for bringing a case against them, but rest assured that it is illegal for them to do so within six months of exercising your legal right to try and recover injury damages. For any other questions about these kinds of cases, call or text us at 617.889.5000 and we'll assist you in whatever way we can.

# Safely Cross the S

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In the past 12 months, I've represented more than my fair share of clients who were pedestrians injured in an auto accident as well as the families of pedestrians who were sadly killed in auto accidents. While I could cite the statistics that detail what happens when careless pedestrians and inattentive drivers collide, suffice it to say that it happens all too often and that those scenarios could be prevented.

As a general rule — and I stress the word “general” — pedestrians have the right of way when they share the road with motor vehicles. That said, lack of knowledge about right of way law has led to many pedestrians thinking they were safe in situations where they should have been more aware.

In most cases, the pedestrians will have the right of way if they're crossing at a crosswalk, whether near a traffic signal or not. However, it's more difficult to determine who's at fault when a pedestrian crosses the street where there is no crosswalk.

## Review of the Month



*"Len and Robyn were great. They were always kind and responsive and always answered my questions promptly. Len met with me personally and checked up on me at the end of the case. Robyn was super organized and always kept me updated on the status of my case. I was happy to have their help in this matter."*

—Leslie Perlera



# Streets of Massachusetts

## RIGHTS AND FOLLOW THESE TIPS!

At the end of the day, what you need to understand is that if you were injured in an auto accident as a pedestrian, you might not be guaranteed compensation. Regardless, it should go without saying that you should do everything you can to avoid getting hit by a car when crossing the street. So, here are a few ways you can safely cross the streets of Massachusetts.

- Put your phone away!
- Don't just look left and right — look behind you and in front of you to make sure there aren't any cars turning.
- Use crosswalks when available.
- Make eye contact with a driver to make sure that they see you.
- If a driver stops to let you cross, make sure there isn't a driver in another lane that doesn't see you.
- Never EVER walk in front of a large truck stopped at a stoplight; they might not be able to see you beneath their large grills.

- If you're out for a run, always stop to make sure you can cross safely.
- Remain vigilant in parking lots too.

If you are injured in a pedestrian accident and want fair compensation, speak to an experienced legal team to understand your rights. Educate yourself with the free consumer guides available at the Spada Law website and contact us for a free consultation whenever necessary.



### *... continued from Cover*

making us a traditional Italian dinner consisting of pasta and meatballs (my mother's meatballs were amazing!), salad, Italian scali bread, and plenty of fruit for dessert, which my Dad took great pleasure in peeling and handing out to each of us. Oh, what great memories! Long story short, Liz and my parents grew close and ultimately came to love each other dearly. My parents treated her not as a daughter-in-law but as a daughter. In fact, I've only half joked over the years that they preferred her to me, and quite frankly, after getting to know Liz, I don't blame them one bit. My parents were so happy that I had found a woman as wonderful as Liz to share my life with.

Liz and I have been happily married for 26 years and have two fantastic kids, Jake, 23, and Jessie, 19. We had no idea on that day in 1986 at that fraternity cookout that we'd spend the rest of our lives together. So, if you have someone in your life this Valentines Day, I hope your journey together is long-lasting and filled with as much happiness and love as ours has been. Happy Valentine's Day!

*-Len Spada*

## Local Chef's Corner

### A Staple Winter Dish:

# Pasta e Fagioli



*Pasta e fagioli was a favorite of my family growing up during the harsh Boston winters. It'll warm you right up! Below are the abbreviated steps for the recipe. For the full ingredients list and a more detailed recipe, refer to [CookieAndKate.com/pasta-e-fagioli-recipe](https://CookieAndKate.com/pasta-e-fagioli-recipe).*

### STEPS

1. In a soup pot over medium heat, cook chopped onion, celery, and carrot in olive oil until tender.
2. Add garlic and stir constantly for about 30 seconds. Then, add tomatoes and cook until they start bubbling over. Add broth, water, bay leaves, oregano, and pepper flakes.
3. Raise heat to medium-high and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Blend 1 1/2 cups of soup with 3/4 cup drained beans in a blender, then add back to the soup.
5. Add beans, pasta, kale, and parsley. Stir often for 20 minutes or until ingredients are tender.
6. Take soup off heat, remove bay leaves, and add in lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Add more salt and pepper if desired after tasting, then serve.

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A Tiny Dog Is Crowned the Biggest Hero

## Heroes Come in All Sizes

### MacKenzie the Chihuahua is One Big Hero

The American Humane Hero Dog Awards competition is an annual celebration that honors some of the world's most extraordinary canines. The awards recognize dogs that have gone above and beyond the call of duty, whether it's saving lives on the battlefield, comforting the ill or elderly, or demonstrating just how powerful the bond between humans and animals can be. Winners are crowned in several categories, but the "American Hero Dog" is the top winner selected by expert panelists and a popular vote. It most often goes to dogs who show astute bravery in what they do, and in 2020, that bravery came in a 4-pound package.



MacKenzie the Chihuahua bested over 400 competitors to be selected as 2020's American Hero Dog. Born

seven years ago with a cleft palate and severe pneumonia that nearly took her life, MacKenzie fought hard to overcome her sickness and birth defects. Soon after she defied all odds, her owners noticed her affinity for other animals — despite being tiny compared to many of them. That's when they gave her a special job: caring for baby animals born with birth defects just like she was.

Many of the rescue animals MacKenzie helps care for have medical problems that prohibit them from staying with their mothers, but MacKenzie takes a genuine interest in each baby from the moment they're introduced, no matter its species or size. She plays nurse, cleans, and comforts them through their

recovery, becoming a pseudo-mother that teaches them how to socialize and play. She's nurtured countless puppies, kittens, birds, squirrels, mice, goats, and turkeys. Despite her tiny size, she's even mothered a Great Dane.

In addition to caring for rescued animals, MacKenzie also helps kids learn to be open-minded about both animals and people with physical differences or disabilities. The Chihuahua teaches the kids kindness and patience and shows them that no matter how small you might be, you can make a big difference.

MacKenzie lost her ability to bark very early in life, but she has one of the loudest voices when it comes to speaking for disadvantaged animals. Heroism truly comes in all shapes, sizes, and forms, but MacKenzie demonstrates that the most heroic act of all is exuding compassion for others, no matter their circumstances.