Meet Shadow: The Amazing Hang-Gliding Service Dog

For his entire life, Utah resident Dan McManus has suffered from several mental health issues, including generalized anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, night terrors, and severe panic attacks. Over the years, he’s utilized numerous coping mechanisms to stave off the symptoms, but there are two things that calm him more than anything else: hang gliding across the Utah skies and the companionship of his service animal, an Australian cattle dog named Shadow.

Over the course of 37 years, McManus went from being a hang-gliding hobbyist to an expert instructor in Salt Lake City, going out gliding as often as possible. But it seemed that his passion gave his pup a bit of anxiety of his own. Whenever McManus would take off, Shadow always wanted to chase him. “So I would be out here flying, and he would chase me and jump up at me and sometimes get my foot and hang on a little bit … It felt like he wanted to keep me safe,” he says. And when he left the dog at home, he’d often come home to a scratched-up floor and doors. It seemed that Shadow couldn’t bear to be away from his owner. So, about 12 years ago, McManus had a special harness made for Shadow, enabling the pup to join him while he took to the skies. They’ve been side-by-side on nearly every flight since. Shadow definitely wants ball at the idea of taking a dog on a hang glider, but it’s clear that, in this case, Shadow definitely wants to fly. Whenever they go out, Shadow wraps his paws around McManus’ arm, remaining stoic as they survey the landscape together from high above.

While we all struggle with our own obstacles in life, it’s nice to know that our canine pals will always be there to offer their furry support. As McManus and Shadow demonstrate, it’s a bond that remains strong even hundreds of feet above the ground.

I have been a busy summer for everyone here at our offices in both McAllen and Corpus Christi — and now, in San Antonio. That’s right, we have officially expanded into San Antonio. The firm keeps growing, and we can help more people than ever before. In fact, we’re even handling cases in California, Georgia, and Florida. Back in McAllen, Texas, we purchased a building to accommodate our offices down there. We had been leasing a couple of buildings, but we decided it was time to settle into a permanent location. We’ve got everyone moved in, and it’s been a great transition.

As part of our overall growth, we’ve also become a member of Law Tigers. Law Tigers is national network of attorneys who specialize in motorcycle accidents. Not all law firms can become members. The Law Tigers require a number of qualifications in order to become part of their elite network.

The Law Tigers also expect that firms have certain resources and expertise among their staff — all of which we have. We’re thrilled to be a part of this amazing group. It’s yet another great resource for anyone involved in a motorcycle accident.

Another big initiative we recently rolled out is taking gadolinium cases. You’ve ever had an MRI or similar scan, you’ve probably heard of gadolinium. Over the past few years, there have been a number of controversies over gadolinium — specifically, gadolinium contrast agents used in MRIs.

Gadolinium is a rare earth metal and is most commonly used in the medical field. The metal is an ingredient in MRI contrast agents. These agents are a type of liquid injected into the body before an MRI. The agent accumulates in fractures, lesions, and tumors, making them easier to see on scans.

While the contrast agent is helpful for doctors, it turns out not all of these gadolinium contrast agents are created equal. Some are safe, but some might not be, as both doctors and patients are learning. In the past, people were told that the agent would leave the body in a few days to a week. It was nothing to worry about.

Unfortunately, a version of this agent was accumulating in some people. It wasn’t leaving the body as expected and was causing problems. In some cases, people weren’t warned or they were misled about the side effects of gadolinium-based agents.

There was even a study in 2014 that showed gadolinium had accumulated in a patient’s brain. In 2017, there was high profile case involving actor Chuck Norris. He filed a lawsuit against firms involved in the sale and distribution of the MRI contrast agent. He alleged that they had poisoned his wife, who had several MRIs the year before.

Common side effects include headaches and nausea, but symptoms can vary from person to person. In the Norris lawsuit, symptoms were listed as “burning pain, violent shaking, numbness, tingling, weakness, cognitive deficits, kidney damage, and trouble breathing.”

That said, if you or a loved one has had an MRI and suspects gadolinium toxicity, you now have representation. You can do something about it and put a lot of that worry behind. If you have questions about this, don’t hesitate to get in touch.

We have a great group of lawyers at our offices who handle all kinds of injury cases, from small car accidents all the way up to those involving 18-wheelers. They’re a talented and sharp group of people, with an incredible amount of experience. They’ve been doing a great job and have been working pretty darn hard for our clients — and they’ll continue to do so!
A good night’s sleep is one of the most important things you can do for your mind and body. Learning to listen to your body is key. One study published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Research found that the quality of your sleep is much more important than the quantity — that is, if you want to feel rested. And we all want to feel rested. So, what can you do to improve the quality of your sleep and get the rest you need?

Listen to your body. This, above all else, is crucial to a good night’s sleep. Your body knows when it’s time for bed. Generally, you want to go to bed when you feel tired, whether that’s at 8 p.m. or 1 a.m. Whenever your body tells you it needs rest, you should make a habit of going to bed then. The more consistent you are, the better your sleep will be.

Wake up naturally. Joinging yourself awake with an alarm or radio isn’t doing your body and body any favors (it can be stressful on the body and even elevate blood pressure, which is not good for your heart in the morning). If you do need an alarm, consider a wake-up light. Wake-up lights mimic the sunrise, slowly brightening the room and waking your body in a natural, gentle way.

Kick the screen habit. You’ve heard it before, and you’ll hear it again. Looking at an electronic screen — a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone — before bed is detrimental to sleep quality. Light from these devices is disruptive to your brain’s suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN), which helps regulate your circadian rhythm, and screen time before bed can throw off normal SCN function.

Put your excuses for staying up too late to bed. Say no to “one more episode!” And all those emails? They can wait until tomorrow. Not getting enough quality sleep is harmful to your mental and physical health. When you get into the habit of following these three tips, you’ll find yourself feeling rested and refreshed in no time.

How to Achieve a More Restful Night’s Sleep

Facebook is being used more often as evidence in both civil and criminal trials nationwide. If a Facebook post is public, it can usually be admitted as evidence. There are several steps that generally must be followed, however. Metadata such as IP addresses, timestamps, and URLs must be collected to verify the authenticity of a post.

In other words, it must be confirmed that the posts or pictures truly belong to the individual with whom they are being associated. It must also be confirmed that the captured data provides an accurate representation of the content being admitted. Once these have been verified, there are several ways to use Facebook as evidence in court.

How to Use Facebook in Court

Some people are not as careful as others when posting to social media. They allow the world to see where they are or what they have to say. Revealing this information can prove harmful to an individual in a court of law — but it can also be beneficial.

In some cases, people make threatening posts expressing an intention to harm or kill another person. When they are arrested on these charges, these posts may be used as evidence. If it can be verified that they made the posts, it is reasonable to believe they carried out the crimes.

Facebook Live Shooting Case

In April 2018, a Houston woman posted a Facebook Live video of herself threatening a man with a gun. The gun was eventually fed, and the man was hit and taken to the hospital in critical condition.

Cassandra Damper, the alleged shooter, was taken into police custody and the video was admitted as evidence. Although it was posted on Facebook Live, a streaming service, authorities were able to obtain a recording of the video. These are still details to be worked out, but this type of situation is becoming more common, and we may see more Facebook videos used as evidence in a variety of court cases.

Testimonials

I am a personal injury lawyer in Seattle, Washington, and I have worked on several professional projects with Greg Herman. Greg and his team know personal injury law and are passionate about getting great results for their clients. I would not hesitate to refer a Texas personal injury claim to Herman & Hermann.”

—Matthew D.

“I can’t tell you how relieved I am that Lane took my case and was able to provide me with the results I needed. I would recommend Herman & Hermann to any friends and family for their legal needs.”

—Jessica S.

“A friend referred me to Neely and his team over at Hermann & Hermann right after I got in my accident. They did an amazing job and were very courteous and efficient with my case. I highly recommend this company and Neely if you find yourself needing an attorney.”

—Carly L.

“It was the best experience I have had with a personal injury attorney. I highly recommend him and any attorney at Herman & Hermann.”

—Shannon E.

“I was injured in an accident and Herman & Hermann handled my case. At first, I had no idea what to expect or what to do, but I had my first accident. I was in so much pain and didn’t have a car with me being totaled in the accident. The law office was able to help me get a rental and see a doctor. I felt very much taken care of and appreciated. During the duration of my case, I was kept up to date and aware of any changes. I would highly recommend the law office of Herman & Hermann to anyone in need of an attorney. Great staff, great office. Will definitely return if I ever need an attorney again.”

—Susan A.

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