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# THE HERRMAN HERALD

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## JETTING AWAY ON A ROMANTIC VACATION?

### DO THESE 5 THINGS TO PROTECT YOUR HOME

Working in the home services industry, I hear a *lot* of horror stories. They range from floods, fires, and break-ins to squirrel infestations and DIY plumbing mixups. But of all those nightmare scenarios, the saddest are the ones that happen while the homeowner is on vacation.

You know what I'm talking about. I bet you've had a neighbor come back to a burst pipe, pests, or a fridge full of rotting food after a power outage. The tragic thing about these stories is that they're preventable. Nine times out of 10, if I'd been there before the homeowner left, I could have given them a simple tip that would save them thousands of dollars.

I can't reach everybody with this insight, but I *can* help you before you jet off on your Valentine's vacation or spring break trip. To save yourself from house-induced heartache, do these five things before leaving home.



- 1. Turn off your main water supply.** Turning off your main water supply line (or at least the valves in your kitchen, bathrooms, and laundry room) is the fastest way to winterize your home. It will save you from a flood if a pipe bursts. If you have a sump pump, make sure it's functioning by pouring a cup of water into it and watching to see if it's pumped out successfully.
- 2. Double-check for leaks and cracks.** Don't leave home without fixing that leaky sink, clogged drain, or crack in your siding. These are invitations to pests! Look over the areas near your window and doors and seal them with tape or weather strips.
- 3. Put your lights on timers.** Most people know to double-check their locks and avoid posting on social media to keep from alerting burglars but don't go the extra mile of putting their lights on timers. If lights are turning on and off throughout your house, it will look like you're home! You can buy a light timer from Home Depot for as little as \$13, and installation is often as easy as plugging it in and hitting a few buttons.
- 4. Invest in appliance thermometers.** Installing appliance thermometers in your fridge and/or freezer won't prevent a power outage, but it will help you determine whether your food is safe to eat if you come home to one. Food from the freezer is safe at 40 degrees F or below, and food from the fridge is safe at 45 degrees F or lower. To boost your chances of things staying cold, freeze gallon bottles of water and stock your freezer with them. They'll hold in the chill!
- 5. Make friends with your neighbors.** Sometimes disasters *aren't* preventable, and when something truly crazy happens, you need a neighbor to call and tell you about it. Before your trip, make sure someone who lives nearby has your number and can check on your house. The heads-up call to us before you leave town could save you thousands.

Happy trails!

*-Greg Herrman*

# AUTO SAFETY

## EXPLORING HOUSTON'S MOST DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS

Life is busy and here in Texas, we are constantly on the go. Even though we are winding down from the holiday season, our roads are still busy and intersections are the most dangerous areas most prone for accidents. No matter how conscientious you are as a driver, certain intersections within Houston are always dangerous no matter what. But, this doesn't mean that you must avoid them, especially if they are necessary for your route to work, school, and your favorite activities. It's important to use extra caution.

Below are some intersections in Houston where some of the worst accidents, both fatal and non-fatal, occur:

- \* **Westheimer & Dairy Ashford**
- \* **Bellaire & Ranchester**
- \* **Fannin & Pierce**
- \* **Long Point & Gessner**
- \* **Fondren & West Bellfort**
- \* **Bissonnet & Wilcrest**
- \* **Shepherd & Allen Pkwy & Kirby**
- \* **Taylor & Spring & MKT Trail**
- \* **Hawthorne & Spur 527 & Holman**

- \* **West & Airline**
- \* **Bellaire & S Gessner**
- \* **11th & Nicholson**
- \* **Patterson & Washington**

Whether you've never heard of these intersections or if you use them every day of the week, keep these intersections in mind as you navigate the roads of Houston.

### Why are intersections more dangerous?

Because intersections involve several vehicles moving in different directions, with different rules about who gets the right of way if there are no traffic lights, it may be easier to collide with another vehicle or to even strike a pedestrian or motorcyclist.

If you've been in an accident, we advise you to always contact a Houston auto accident attorney, whether the accident took place in one of these dangerous intersections or anywhere else in the Houston area. If you were injured or your car was damaged, you may be entitled to compensation. A Houston personal injury attorney is the first step in ensuring justice is served.

We have your back! Give us a call today at **(361)245-1263** to speak to one of our knowledgeable car accident injury attorneys today!



"When my son was sideswiped on I-37, we called our lifelong friend Norma Hernandez at Herrman & Herrman. The insurance company did not want to negotiate with him. Norma put us in touch with the right people and he received a lot more than the insurance company would have ever agreed to. I can honestly say he is the best personal injury lawyer in Corpus Christi and surrounding areas."

*-Gloria W.*

"I've known Jason Adams for years. I trust him and recommend his services to anyone. He is a great car accident attorney. His work ethic and professionalism separate him from other attorneys."

*-Jacob B.*

"Thank you for your support. Jeff Johnson and his team were very prompt, nice, and punctual and called me back when I needed them. Very pleased for the outcome of my motor vehicle accident. My attorney and his team did great. Thank you much. Always kept me first."

*-Kim G.*

# BROCK VS. BROCK

## THE MAN WHO SUED HIMSELF

On July 1, 1993, Robert Lee Brock made a mistake. By his own account, he had a few too many alcoholic beverages that evening, and in his drunken state, he committed breaking and entering, as well as grand larceny. Brock was arrested, and the court sentenced him to 23 years behind bars at the Indian Creek Correctional Center in Chesapeake, Virginia.

In 1995, Brock decided he deserved restitution. Reasoning that he had violated his own civil rights, he sued himself for \$5 million. For his family's pain and suffering, as well as his children's college tuition, he requested \$3 million. He also asked for \$2 million to support his needs during his 23-year prison sentence.

Central to Brock's claim was that, due to his drinking, "I caused myself to violate my religious beliefs. This was done by my going out and getting arrested, which caused me to be in prison." And since he was a ward of the state, he explained that Virginia should pay the \$5 million on his behalf. After all, he was incarcerated and unable to work, and the state was responsible for his care. Plus, he promised to pay the money back after his release.

In a move that shocked no one (except, perhaps, Brock), Judge Rebecca Beach Smith dismissed his case. While she did call his claim "ludicrous," she also praised his creativity, stating that he "presented an innovative approach to civil rights litigation."

Perhaps the lawsuit against himself wasn't his first or last attempt at legal restitution. He once filed 29 complaints in a single year. Due to the repeated suits, the court removed his ability to file further litigation. "None of Brock's allegations have ever been found by any court to have any merit," the decision read. "Because Brock's repeated, frivolous claims have placed a significant burden on this court, as well as on the district court ... we hereby impose sanctions upon Brock."

Brock's case ranked No. 3 on Time Magazine's list of Top 10 Outrageous Legal Battles. So, while he didn't achieve wealth, he did gain fame. It was an impressive feat for a man who found a novel way to take personal responsibility for his actions.



## MEDITERRANEAN STUFFED CHICKEN BREAST

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 chicken breasts
- 2 oz mozzarella cheese, cubed
- 2 canned artichoke hearts, chopped
- 4 tsp sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 10 large basil leaves, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 365 F.
2. Cut a slit lengthwise to create a pocket in the middle of each chicken breast. Place the breasts on a baking sheet.
3. In a medium bowl, combine the mozzarella cheese, artichoke hearts, tomatoes, basil, and garlic.
4. Divide the mixture in half and stuff each chicken breast pocket. Using toothpicks, seal the edges of the pockets.
5. Season the chicken with curry, paprika, salt, and pepper, then bake for 20 minutes or until the chicken reaches 165 F.
6. Remove the toothpicks and serve with rice, potatoes, salad, or roasted vegetables!

*Inspired by DiabetesStrong.com*

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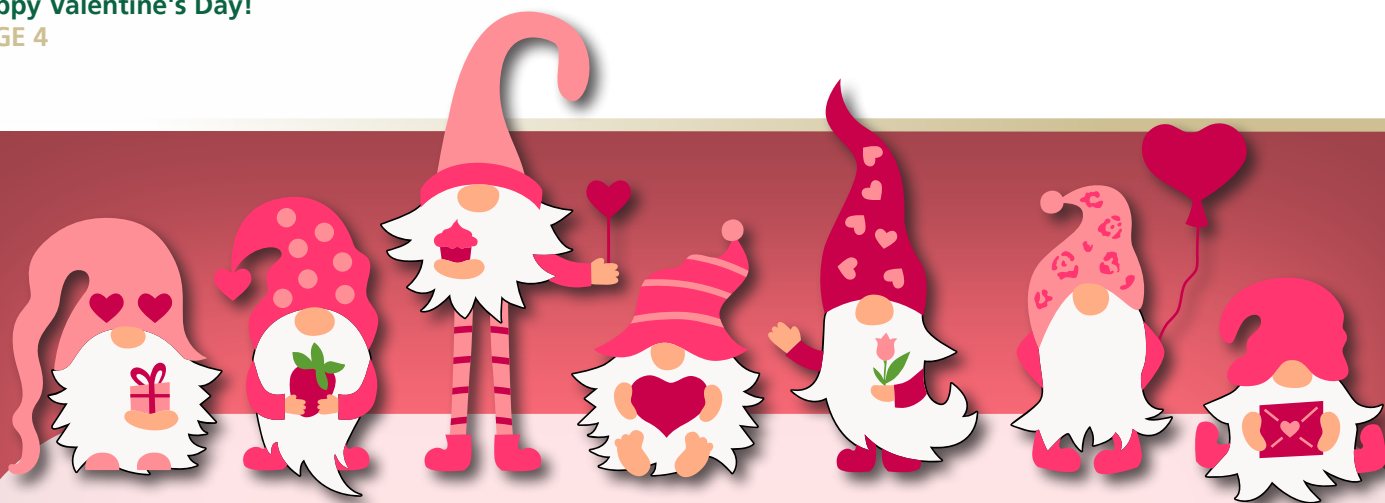
Mediterranean Stuffed Chicken Breast

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Happy Valentine's Day!

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H A P P Y

Valentine's Day

FROM HERRMAN & HERRMAN, PLLC