

# PERSONAL INJURY POST

820 S. Main St. McAllen, TX 78501  
(956) 587-5833  
www.go-lawfirm.com

FEBRUARY 2020



Lourdes G. Vela

Ricardo A. Garcia

Lino H. Ochoa

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

## FINDING MY PASSION

Romeo Rendon



*"My job and, more importantly, my passion is to be there for anyone who seeks our help and to reassure them that people who care for them are fighting for their rights."*

## *And Living My Dream From High School*

The first time I ever considered pursuing a career in law was back in high school after participating in a mock trial. While I became very interested in the subject, the idea of becoming an attorney was more of a dream than anything. I entered college with the plan of pursuing a career that required postgraduate studies. I enrolled in the dental program at The University of Texas–Pan American but realized rather quickly that it wasn't for me; I wasn't passionate about it.

During my sophomore year, I received a phone call that would change my life. Mr. Garcia, a family friend, asked if I'd like to spend the day at his office. Though I was not yet seriously considering law school, the interest had never left. I agreed and thanked Mr. Garcia for the opportunity. Seeing firsthand and in person what attorneys do hooked me instantly. I knew this was exactly what I wanted and where I wanted my life to go.

After spending the day at the firm, I asked if there was anything I could do to return and help around the office, which led to me spending the rest of my summers interning and helping in any way possible. Some days were spent moving things in the storage room, while others were spent taking notes and assisting the staff with their work. No job was too big or too small. I was just happy to be around what I knew was the profession of my dreams. I graduated from UTPA and moved to San Antonio to attend St. Mary's School of Law, returning to clerk for Mr. Garcia every summer and winter break.

In the years I've been at or around the firm, I've witnessed Mr. Garcia, Mr. Ochoa, and the rest of their incredible staff work diligently for their clients. Their passion, creativity, and "never give up" attitude inspired me throughout my studies. It moved me to want to help people just as they did. The team at

Garcia & Ochoa treat one another like family, and as a family, they encouraged and supported me through my entire journey.

After graduating from law school, I took the bar exam but came up short by less than 10 points — twice. I received nothing but support from everyone at the firm. They gave me advice, shoulders to lean on, ears to vent to, and more. Not many firms would have showed the patience or understanding that Garcia & Ochoa did. When the good news arrived in late October 2019, the firm celebrated just as hard as anyone else in my life. Now, I've been sworn in and take on responsibilities I was so used to watching others do — it's still surreal.

I get excited about every aspect of this field, even the most mundane tasks, much to the amusement of my fellow teammates. My enthusiasm stems from how happy I am to be here and that I can now do so much more for our clients

The most rewarding aspect of becoming a lawyer is the chance to help others. Unfortunately, in this field, we often meet people because they've suffered a tragedy. My job and, more importantly, my passion is to be there for anyone who seeks our help and to reassure them that people who care for them are fighting for their rights. They do not have to face these situations alone. We're here to hopefully provide some form of stability during a difficult time. I'm thrilled to have worked with everyone at Garcia & Ochoa for as long as I have, and I look forward to continuing my journey with them and fighting for and supporting our clients far into the future.

# MEET CONAN

## *The Dog Who Helped Take Down al-Baghdadi*

On Oct. 28 last year, President Donald Trump tweeted a photo that quickly went viral. It showed an adorable snapshot of a bright-eyed Belgian Malinois, tongue lolling, still wearing its camo military vest. In the caption, President Trump explained that the pup, Conan, was a national hero who was instrumental in taking down ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

With four years in special operations forces and roughly 50 missions under his collar, Conan was selected to be part of the team that pursued al-Baghdadi through a network of underground tunnels in northwest Syria, where the terrorist ultimately died. It's unclear whether Conan was there to track al-Baghdadi or to spot improvised explosive devices that may have been planted on the route, but either way, he performed well.

According to NBC News, Conan was injured by some live electrical cables during the mission, but he recovered quickly and was back on duty within the week. Meanwhile, President Trump invited the brave pup to the White House and tweeted out a doctored photo that showed him awarding Conan a Medal of Honor.

President Trump captioned the photo "AMERICAN HERO!" and he's not alone in his appreciation for the hardworking dogs that have been helping our military since World War II.

"To me, they're the first line of defense," United States War Dogs Association President Ron Aiello told Vox after the news about Conan came out. "They're such a great asset to our military today."

Military dogs are put up for adoption after 6–8 years in the service, which means a lucky civilian could take Conan in as early as 2022! Meanwhile, dozens of other smart canine heroes are looking for homes. To learn more about military and other working dog adoptions, visit [MissionK9Rescue.org](http://MissionK9Rescue.org).



# *Don't Drink & Drive*

## AVOID GETTING BEHIND THE WHEEL

Valentine's Day is a time for celebrating togetherness between you and the person you love with exciting dates, exquisite dinners, and a glass of Champagne or two. When you're planning for a fun-filled evening, make sure to include a sober ride home for the two of you.

### REPERCUSSIONS OF DRUNK DRIVING

Of the many holidays throughout the year, Valentine's Day is among the most popular days to drink, either with a glass of wine or a fancy cocktail. However, while having a drink with your partner is perfectly fine, getting behind the wheel afterward is not.

Drunk and buzzed driving has severe consequences. A person who decides to get behind the wheel while drunk risks a hefty fine. A DUI charge can cost around \$10,000. But a fine is the least worrisome outcome. Drunk driving also increases the chance of death significantly. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, an average of 10,000 people lose their lives every year due to traffic accidents with drunk drivers.

### ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

To avoid drinking and driving altogether, come up with a fun evening that doesn't involve any alcoholic beverages. However, if you've been looking forward to having a few drinks, then make

## CASE STUDY: THE TRUCK DRIVER

### *Giving Expert Care in a Time of Need*



As a truck driver, our client loved driving across the nation to visit different places and see the wondrous sights America offers. However, this meant he spent far less time at home than he or his wife would like. Although he promised to retire and make up for lost time, this dream came to an abrupt end after his wife, son, and granddaughter were involved in a fatal accident.

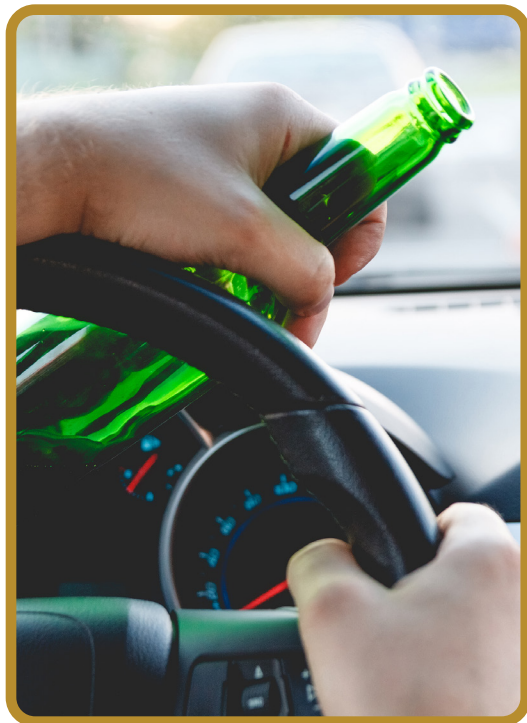


# and Drive

## THE WHEEL THIS VALENTINE'S DAY

sure you have several options available to grab a ride home. There are plenty of ways you can get to your favorite restaurant without touching the wheel. Get in touch with your local taxi companies or pull up your Uber or Lyft app to schedule a safe ride. On average, an Uber or Lyft can cost a little over \$10, but they save much, much more.

It can be hard to think about safety during the holidays, especially when your attention is so focused on your partner, but it doesn't mean it's any less important. Spend this Valentine's Day creating moments you will cherish for years to come by staying safe.



**CASE FACTS:** On the day of the incident, our client was out working and driving in another state, and his wife, son, and granddaughter were out buying groceries. As they were on their way home driving on the expressway, an oil-well drilling truck swerved in front of them. The back of the truck snagged the front of their vehicle and dragged them across the road before tipping sideways and falling on top of them.

Our client's son and wife were both killed, but his granddaughter survived. Paramedics on scene told our client that in the last moments of his son's life, he had shielded his niece with his body, leaving her unharmed.

**THE OUTCOME:** Through the devastation and grief the accident caused, the last thing our client wanted was to think about the legal issues that followed. Yet as a truck driver, he knew that trucking accidents did not follow the same process as a regular vehicle collision.

At Garcia & Ochoa, we are well versed in state and federal trucking laws and set out to ensure this oil company was held accountable for this horrific incident. Working fast, we preserved the evidence of the case and, within 4 1/2 months, negotiated a settlement for our client and his family. Thanks to the settlement, our client can fulfill the promise he made to his wife, spending the rest of his days with his daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter, and grandson.

Giving our clients some means to help overcome the pain and misery of the circumstances in their lives is what we hope to do here at Garcia & Ochoa. If you or a loved one has experienced an emotionally traumatic situation, call our office at (956) 587-5833. Our team can seek justice and lessen financial burdens.

*Hardworking Lawyers Helping Hardworking People.*

## Date Truffles

Inspired by The Minimalist Baker

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb medjool dates, pitted (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- Warm water
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup bittersweet or dark chocolate, chopped
- 1 tbsp coconut oil, melted

### DIRECTIONS

1. Using a food processor, blend dates and sea salt until dough can be formed into a ball. Slowly add enough warm water to mixture to thicken dough.
2. Roll dough into tablespoon-sized balls. Freeze for 20–30 minutes.
3. In microwave, warm 1/4 cup peanut butter for 30 seconds, then drizzle peanut butter on top of balls. Freeze balls for another 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in microwave, warm chocolate with coconut oil until melted. Stir well.
5. Coat balls in chocolate and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. Top with additional salt and freeze for 30 minutes. Serve at room temperature.



## BE INSPIRED

**“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a NEW DREAM.”**

**C.S. LEWIS**

Request a free case evaluation (956) 587-5833



## INSIDE This Issue

- 1 The Unwavering Support of Garcia & Ochoa
- 2 Meet the Dog Who Helped Take Down al-Baghdadi  
A Sober Ride Is the Best Ride
- 3 Serving Justice to Those Responsible  
Date Truffles
- 4 Give the Gift of Life

# GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE



## *Feb. 14 is National Donor Day*

With all the cards, chocolates, and expensive dinners, it's easy to get cynical about Valentine's Day. However, National Donor Day also falls on Feb. 14, and it can refocus our attention back on the real meaning of the day: love.

In the U.S., 20 people die each day while waiting for an organ transplant. Losing loved ones is one of the most painful aspects of the human experience, and while it is unavoidable, organ donation offers a pathway to help prevent that loss and keep more love in the world.

In the spirit of that love, here are a few ways you can get involved with National Donor Day this Feb. 14.

### REGISTER AS AN ORGAN DONOR.

Signing yourself up is easy and can be done either online or in person at your local Department of Motor Vehicles. You'll need official identification to register. Registration is not permanent and you will always have the option to change your mind. Once registered, you will not need to carry your donor card with you, as your status exists in the registry.

### JOIN A DONOR DASH.

Donor Dash fundraising events pop up all over the country on National Donor Day. These noncompetitive 5K running and walking events are designed to bring donors and recipients together and keep hope alive for those who are currently waiting for a donation. To learn more, or to register for an event, check out [DonorAlliance.org](http://DonorAlliance.org).

### PARTICIPATE IN #STARTTHECONVERSATION.

Donor Alliance, a nonprofit that works to promote organ donation, began the #StartTheConversation campaign as a way to help spread awareness about organ and tissue donation. Starting the conversation can be as simple as sharing that you registered with your friends and family or as personal as sharing a story about how organ donation has touched your life or the lives of your loved ones.

Don't let another Valentine's Day come and go in a tide of cellophane, candy hearts, and cheesy cards. This year, get involved in National Donor Day. After all, what better way is there to express the value of love than giving the gift of life?