



November is here and with it brings one of our favorite holidays. Thanksgiving is being celebrated on November 22nd this year and remember that the standing rule is “no dieting” on Thanksgiving. Also: don’t forget to vote on November 6th! And with that final word, we wish all of you a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday!

Former KBKG Courthouse Runner and, Ben Caddell, on Backpacking through Southeast Asia

Contributed by Lisa Godfrey, KBKG Attorney and Proud Mother



Former courthouse runner, Ben Caddell, took a semester off from UNC is traveling for five months through Southeast Asia and Nepal. He has already been through Thailand, Laos, and Nepal and will also go to Cambodia and Vietnam before heading back to Chapel Hill in the spring. Going from the hot islands in southern

Thailand to the snow covered Himalayas, he is experiencing a wide range of weathers, climates, and cultures.

He has been trekking in Northern Thailand, to the islands in the south, enjoying the French cafes in Luang Prabang, Laos, surviving a hospital visit in Chiang Mai, Thailand, avoiding traffic in Kathmandu, and experiencing the amazing Himalayas. Most recently he completed the Annapurna Trek in Nepal, a 127 mile hike that starts in the jungle valleys of central Nepal and climbs to a height of over 17,000 ft. He has met a lot of amazing people and seen some unbelievable sights - all on a budget of less than \$15 a day.

Read more about Ben's odyssey and see more of his photos at <http://haoleinseasia.blogspot.com/>.

New DWI Punishments: North Carolina's New DWI Laws Significantly Increase Punishment

Written by J. Brad Champion



On December 1, 2012, North Carolina's newest DWI will take effect. Also referred to as "Laura's Law", the revisions to our State's DWI laws impose new harsh punishments for repeat offenders and first time offenders. The punishments are unprecedented in their severity and should cause all citizens to become more aware of the seriousness of impaired driving as well as the devastating effects of a conviction. If you didn't know, now you will, and you should let others know as well: driving while impaired is a serious crime in

North Carolina.

The law previously imposed one of five punishment levels for a DWI conviction. Level one being the most severe and level five being the least severe. Typically, a first time offender will receive a level three, four or five punishment level and remain eligible to drive a motor vehicle on a limited basis. Additionally, a level three, four or five punishment requires community service, payment court costs/fines and a completion of a substance abuse assessment and any recommended treatment. In contrast, the more serious punishment levels one and two include mandatory jail time and result in

the loss of driving privileges for a period of years depending on the circumstances. Level one requires a minimum of 30 days in jail and level two requires a minimum of 7 days in jail. Each of these more serious punishment levels entail significant cost and fines, and also result in a period of supervised probation after incarceration.

Laura's Law imposes a new "aggravated level one" punishment for a defendant with three or more grossly aggravating factors. Such factors include, a prior conviction for impaired driving within the last 7 years; driving by the defendant at the time of the offense while his driver's license was revoked as a result of an impaired driving related matter; serious injury to another person caused by the defendant's impaired driving at the time of the offense; driving by the defendant while (i) a child under the age of 18 years, (ii) a person with the mental development of a child under the age of 18 years, or (iii) a person with a physical disability preventing unaided exit from the vehicle was in the vehicle at the time of the offense.

The new aggravated level one sentence requires a *minimum* 12 months incarceration, although a special probation rule allows a defendant to serve only 120 days of incarceration. Regardless, this new punishment level represents a significant departure from previous minimum jail sentences. An aggravated level one also requires abstinence from alcohol, use of a continuous monitoring system to verify abstinence and a permanent revocation of your drivers license.

Laura's law also includes a new punishment for those convicted of DWI who also had with him at the time of the offense a passenger or passengers under the age of 18, or has the mental development of a child less than 18 years, or has a physical disability preventing unassisted exit from the vehicle. In this case, even a defendant with no prior DWI convictions will be required to serve a minimum of 30 days in jail and lose his or her license for many years. Previously, the relevant punishment level two applied for having a child under the age of 16 resulted in a level two punishment. This is a significant expansion of the rule and is directed at the threat poses to younger passengers and those without the ability to choose not to ride with someone that may be impaired.

Laura's law is meant to get tough on DWI's. The new punishments are significant and should remind everyone that our State is concerned about the deadly effects of driving while impaired. A simple

mistake can last for years, if not a lifetime. Be aware of the changes in our DWI laws and remind others to do the same. If you must drink, do not drive.

Lincoln County Expo- October 3, 2012 at the James W. Warren Center in Lincoln –

Movie Theme: “My Cousin Vinny”

Participants in this year’s Lincoln County Business Expo were encouraged by the Lincoln County Chamber to choose a movie theme for their booth and for their participants to dress as characters out of the chosen movie. The Knox Law Center, whose satellite office is in Lincoln County, chose the movie “My Cousin Vinny” and the attorneys and office staff dressed accordingly. Each year our firm participates in the Lincoln County Business Expo to support local businesses and to make the community aware of legal issues. The expo is free and open to the public with the goal of educating those in the community about businesses in Lincoln County. We support small businesses and represent many of them in our practice, doing incorporations, contract reviews, lien issues, and much more.



KBKG as “My Cousin Vinny” Cast at the Lincoln County Chamber Annual Business Expo



KBKG Paralegals- (Left) Tamara Blankenship;
(Center) Sherry M Crump
KBKG Attorney - (Right) Heather Piercy



Sherry M Crump and Heather Piercy



KBKG Expo Booth

“Fall Food Drive” – Bring Us Your Non-Perishable Food Items

**NORTH CAROLINA ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE
FALL FOOD DRIVE
NOVEMBER 5-16, 2012**

DROP OFF SITE

Knox, Brotherton, Knox & Godfrey

**817 East Trade Street
Charlotte, NC 28202**

OR

**7476 Waterside Loop Road
Denver, NC 28037**

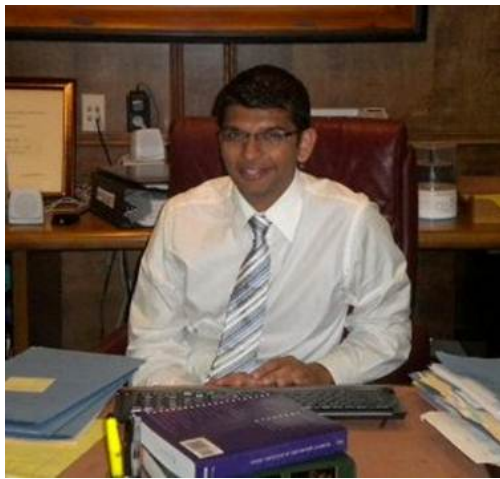
Food will benefit:

Food Bank of Eastern & Central North Carolina



Knox, Brotherton, Knox & Godfrey has volunteered to be an official drop off site for the NCAJ food collection drive, aka the "Dare to Care Food Drive." From 11/05 to 11/16, food donation boxes will be located in the lobbies of both our Charlotte and Denver offices. Please help us help those in need this holiday season by bringing us non-perishable food items. Please contact our office at 704.372.1360 with any questions and ask for Sherry.

Congratulations to Former KBKG Veteran Intern, Nikul Patel



The attorneys and staff at Knox, Brotherton, Knox & Godfrey would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Nikul “Nik” Patel on his job offer at Dykema Gossett, PLLC, a law firm in Chicago, IL. Nik interned at Dykema during the summer months of 2012 after which he was offered a job upon successful completion of his JD at UNC Chapel Hill.

Nik, 25, has been interning with the Knox Law Center since his sophomore year at Harding High School in 2004. Although he provided legal assistance to all of our attorneys and staff, he primarily interned for Attorney Allen Brotherton’s office both up to and throughout his high school and college career, returning for the summers from his undergrad studies at UNC Chapel Hill. Now Nik is in his final year of law school at UNC and, after having watched him over the past years excel and perform beyond the normal standards of a college and law student, we at the Knox Law Center could not be more proud of his outstanding achievements and his job offer in Chicago.

Congratulations Nik and we expect to hear from you often!

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