



Attorney
Jeffrey J. Sokolowski
 Joins Dennis Seaman & Associates Co., L.P.A.

Jeff is a graduate of the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, he received his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame, and his high school diploma from St. Ignatius High School. After law school, Jeff worked for a suburban law firm handling personal injury, collective bargaining, municipal, and general civil litigation cases. He has extensive experience representing personal injury and safety forces clientele.

Jeff is a member of the Ohio State Bar Association and the Ohio Academy of Trial Lawyers. Jeff resides in Brooklyn, Ohio. He is a former F.J. O'Neill Scholarship recipient and a past child care therapist at Parmadale Family Services.

He is a member of Saint Charles Boromeo Church, and enjoys participating in a variety of organized sports in his spare time.



Attorney
Nathan J. Wills
 Joins Dennis Seaman & Associates Co., L.P.A.

Nathan is a graduate of the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, and received his undergraduate degree from Denison University. At Cleveland-Marshall, he served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Law and Health, and was a member of a nationally-ranked Moot Court team. Before joining Dennis Seaman & Associates, Nathan handled a variety of litigation matters for a suburban law firm including professional liability defense, focusing upon matters of legal and medical malpractice.

Nathan is a native of Bay Village and resides in South Euclid with his wife, Kelly. He is a member of the Cleveland Bar Association, Ohio State Bar Association, Ohio Academy of Trial Lawyers, and Delta Theta Phi International Law Fraternity. He is fluent in French, and enjoys participating in triathlons and sailing on Lake Erie in his spare time.

**Referrals are always welcomed. The people that are important to you are important to us.
 Feel free to call us anytime with a referral.
 As always, the same courtesy will be extended to your family and friends as we offer you.**

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1600 Rockefeller Building
 614 Superior Avenue, N.W.
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LEGAL ACTION

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"Your legal needs define our practice."

Recent Legal Actions



Stuart Garson

Dennis Seaman

"When the insurance company says NO – call us for a free consultation"

• When a vicious Rottweiler, belonging to his aunt's neighbor, attacked 11-year old Dwight, his mother Kim, 29, sprang into action. She successfully separated the attacking dog from her frightened and injured son. As Kim attempted to keep the Rottweiler at bay, she turned to run away, severely twisting her right knee, resulting in torn knee cartilage.

We filed suit against the dog's owner on behalf of Kim. The defendant's insurance company, Allstate, refused to offer any compensation to Kim for her medical bills and pain and suffering. After a jury deliberation of just 75 minutes, the Cuyahoga County jury awarded our client \$100,000.

• Robert was a 67 year-old man who suffered a serious permanent knee injury in a disputed liability intersection accident. Robert asserted that the defendant failed to yield the right of way and made an illegal left hand turn in front of him. Robert suffered a broken kneecap requiring two surgeries and extensive rehabilitation. The defendant contended that he was already in the intersection, waiting for the traffic to clear when Robert struck him. Allstate, the defendant's insurance carrier, made no offer to settle with Robert.

Robert's medical bills were \$23,000. As a retired post office worker there were no lost wages. Robert spent his days caring for his wife who has severe Alzheimers

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Garson and Associates Co. LPA and Dennis Seaman and Associates Co. LPA have been representing individuals and their families for over 35 years.

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Dennis Seaman
Stuart Garson

Attorneys

James DeRoche
Angelique Hartzell
Jeffrey Johnson
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David Meyerson
Christian Patno
Michael Saltzer
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Grace Szubski
Nathan Wills

Legal Action is an association of the firms of Garson & Associates Co. L.P.A. and Dennis Seaman Co. L.P.A. who are dedicated to providing outstanding legal services to injured persons and their families.

1600 Rockefeller Building 614, Superior Avenue, N.W. • Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Garson & Associates Co. L.P.A. • Phone: 216-696-9330 Toll Free: 800-747-9330
Fax: 216-696-8558 • www.garson.com • e-mail: garson@garson.com

Dennis Seaman & Associates Co. L.P.A. • Phone: 216-696-1080 Toll Free: 800-593-1080
Fax: 216-696-3177 • www.dms@seamanatty.com • e-mail: seaman@seamanatty.com

Garson & Associates Co. L.P.A.
(216) 696-9330

**Dennis Seaman &
Associates Co. L.P.A.**
(216) 696-1080

You Can Lose While You Cruise

By Dennis Seaman

Over 5 million people take cruises each year. Cruise lines promise fun, adventure and romance. They also encourage drinking and partying. When this revelry becomes excessive, a dream vacation can quickly turn into a nightmare.

A cruise ship is like a small town. The same type of crime and accidents that occur on dry land can occur on cruise ships. A percentage of the crime is property related. However the U. S. Attorney General's office in Miami reports that three out of every four crimes on cruise ships are sexual offenses.

Why does this happen? Cruise ship lines make a great deal of profit from the alcoholic beverages served on board. Drinking is encouraged both by the cruise line and the bartenders who earn a 15% gratuity. It is not surprising that most cruise related injuries, attacks, and deaths are alcohol related.

There are laws regarding the monitoring of alcoholic beverages served to passengers aboard ship. The crew is required to avoid over serving passengers and to assist obviously intoxicated passengers who may present a danger to themselves or others.

A cruise line's liability may extend to onshore excursions. This source of cruise line revenue may extend the legal obligations

to passengers for injuries or death caused by the actions of the onshore tour operator's employees.

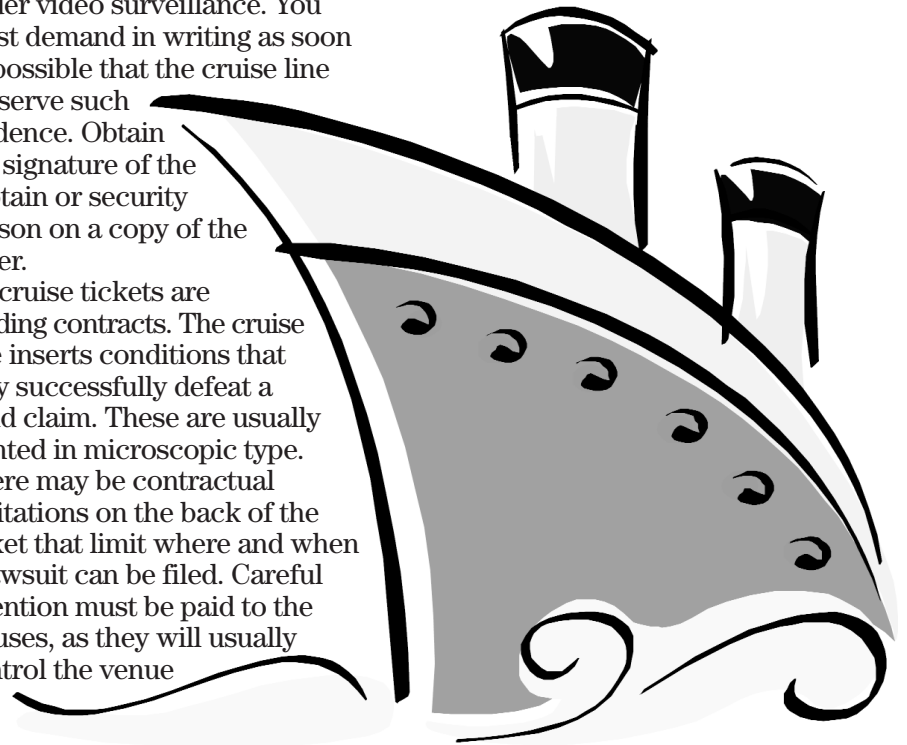
People who have been victims of crime or mishaps while on a cruise or on onshore excursions must be careful to protect their rights for future compensation.

Here are some tips:

- If you have been victimized in a foreign country, report the incident to the local U.S. Embassy immediately.
- Many areas on board a ship are under video surveillance. You must demand in writing as soon as possible that the cruise line preserve such evidence. Obtain the signature of the captain or security person on a copy of the letter.
- All cruise tickets are binding contracts. The cruise line inserts conditions that may successfully defeat a valid claim. These are usually printed in microscopic type. There may be contractual limitations on the back of the ticket that limit where and when a lawsuit can be filed. Careful attention must be paid to the clauses, as they will usually control the venue

in the case, and more importantly, the controlling law. The carrier, its adjusters, and lawyers seldom settle hoping that the victim will not follow the contractual provisions and lose their rights to pursue their claim.

A knowledgeable attorney can defeat such attempts to contract away liability for negligent acts both on and off the ship. If you feel you have been injured as a result of a cruise line's intentional recklessness or negligent action, call me at 216-696-1080. I can help.



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and volunteering at St. Henry's School as a lunchroom monitor. The jury deliberated for 90 minutes before returning a verdict against Allstate in the amount of \$152, 986.64. This was more than \$50,000 greater than the defendant's Allstate insurance policy limits.

• On April 21, 1999, 36 year-old Janice was driving a school bus full of children to an elementary school on East 30th Street in Cleveland. At a red light, a car pulled up next to her bus. When the light turned green and

both vehicles proceeded forward, the other vehicle's right rear struck the left front wheel of the bus. Janice swung the bus to the right and stopped on the curb. Janice injured her neck and had surgery about one year later. When she made a claim to Allstate, they sent her file to the fraud unit contending such a minimal impact could not cause such a large injury. They refused to make any offer.

After waiting almost 6 years for justice, the case finally went to trial. We argued that the defendant was negligent in driving the speed limit

in a school zone next to a bus when the road ahead narrowed. The jury returned a verdict for \$90,000. Although Allstate only had \$12,500 in coverage on the car, we forced them to pay the entire \$90,000 due to bad faith. We also forced them to pay another \$40,000 in interest on the verdict due to their bad faith in failing to negotiate.

This is yet one more example of our commitment and dedication to our clients when the insurance companies offer no money. Many other law firms would have dismissed the case.

What To Do After A Motor Vehicle Accident

1. If possible, stop in a safe place. If the accident occurs on a busy roadway, it is better to move the vehicle to the side of the road for everyone's safety.
2. Make sure no one is hurt. The safety and well being of the people involved is always the most important concern. If you are able and if it is necessary to render immediate aid, act calmly and appropriately.
3. Call 911 and request the police come to the scene along with an ambulance if necessary.
4. Get the other driver's basic information including name, address, phone number, insurance information, and vehicle registration number.
5. If you believe that the other driver is intoxicated, tell the police officer and request that the officer administer a sobriety test.
6. Get the names, addresses, and phone numbers of any witnesses who saw the accident or stopped to administer aid.
7. Ask the police officer for the police report number, and where and when a copy will be available.
8. Seek immediate medical treatment for any injuries regardless of how minor or trivial they may seem at the time. This might require a visit to a hospital emergency room or a visit to your family doctor within a day or two after the accident. Follow your physician's orders.
9. Take photos of the vehicles involved in the collision and any physical evidence including skid marks. It is best to take photos before the vehicles have been moved. A cell phone camera could do this. Photos may also be taken later that day or the following day.
10. Do not speak with or provide any information to anyone other than the police before you speak to an attorney. You must know your basic rights before talking to an insurance company even if it is your own company. Any statement or admission that you make could be used against you in court. Tell the insurance company representative to call your lawyer.
11. Contact us promptly after your motor vehicle accident. Many motor vehicle accidents involve technical issues including traffic violations, safety requirements, and insurance coverage. We are experienced trial lawyers familiar with these issues and will discuss your rights free of charge.

Leveling the Playing Field By Jeff Sokolowski

Over the past 15-20 years, the insurance industry has launched and perpetuated an assault upon innocent and injured victims of motor vehicle collisions. The industry, more times than not, adopts a "take it or leave it" approach in addressing injury claims, treating innocent and injured victims as second-class citizens. Further, the industry has, unfortunately, successfully tainted the jury pool by creating an aura of suspicion regarding injury claims. In response to the industry's foot on the collective neck of the injured, many law firms across the nation no

longer run the risk of going to trial on claims in which the industry makes little to no offer.

However, we are here to protect the injured and fight the "take it or leave it" approach of the insurance industry. Recently, we waged three successful battles at trial against Allstate when it refused to offer any money at all to our innocent and injured clients. These victories are set forth under Recent Legal Actions.

Outlined above, are steps you as an innocent and injured victim can take to assist in leveling the playing field against the insurance industry.

Nursing Home Rights and You

By Nathan J. Wills

As the "Greatest Generation" ages and the baby boomers hit 60, we see a growing number of people who will be entering nursing homes. Often the care they receive is fine, but when a resident of a long-term care facility is abused or neglected there is legal recourse.

A Resident's Rights

State and Federal governments have enacted policies protecting the elderly, who often are unable to protect themselves. In Ohio, R.C. 3712.13 articulates a resident's rights in long-term care facilities.

- The right to be free from abuse
- The right to make reasonably informed choices concerning medications
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to have your privacy respected
- The right to have unlimited access to your family
- The right to receive medical care of your choice
- The right to have your advanced directives honored
- The right to perform activities of daily living
- The right to choose your dining habits and diet
- The right to retain some of your personal possessions
- The right to have your immediate needs met

What should I do if my loved one's rights are violated?

- Act quickly - you may have one year to take action
- Report the abuse - contact the County Department of Job and Family Services or the Ohio Dept. of Health.
- Consult an attorney

If you believe you or your loved one's nursing home rights have been violated, it is important to consult with an attorney as soon as possible.

It is better to ask questions sooner, rather than later. Feel free to contact our office to discuss your loved one's legal rights. This consultation is free and without obligation.