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THANK YOU FOR YOUR REFERRALS!



As the year comes to an end, we are very grateful for our friends, family, clients and colleagues. Without you we would not have a business. We are also grateful for the opportunity to spend our days helping people who need it. We look forward to being there for you in 2019, and our best wishes for the holiday season.

We're here to help.

Remember, as always, that we're here to help. Think of us as the lawyers in your family and call us if you have a legal need. If we can't help you, we almost certainly have someone in our network who can.

If you have questions, or would like to be removed from this list, just send an email to newsletter@doraziopeterson.com, or call the office.



*"Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!
What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store.
What if Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more?"*

—Dr. Seuss, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

OUR TAKE

By Scott

Facebook is not your "friend"

Poor Mark Zuckerberg. The guy started an app to "rate" members of the opposite (or same) sex in his college dorm room, and ended up helping to contribute to the downfall of civil society.

Of course, you can't blame him alone. Facebook certainly wasn't the first or the last social platform, it just happens to be the best and most current example of the unintended consequences that we've talked about in the past.

The dangers of social media have been discussed elsewhere ad nauseam: increased depression/suicide rates; decreased attention spans; the "bubble effect", where we are constantly surrounded only by people who think like us; the empowerment of anyone with internet access to spout dangerous and hateful speech. The downsides are, for the most part, right out there in the open.

Yet, people seem surprised to hear that (gasp) Facebook as a company is not holding up its end of the social bargain.

There have been several stories of late discussing the actions that Facebook has taken internally in response to increasing scrutiny about its role in allowing Russian interference in recent elections, among other things. These actions included hiring an opposition research firm to dig up dirt on the people who were most loudly criticizing the company. (If you're interested, the NY Times has a very good investigative piece online).

It seems that when the walls came closing in, Facebook did exactly what big companies always do in these situations - it closed itself off, shifted into defensive mode and, while telling us it was

sorry (remember that recent commercial with Zuckerberg's soothing voice, telling us that the company would do better?), went into attack mode to silence its critics both internally and externally.

We should not be surprised by this. Because despite what the initial intentions of the company may have been, its current status is that of one of the largest and most financially powerful publicly traded companies in the world. Experience tells us that this means two things: 1) the bottom line (and resulting stock share price) pretty much trump everything else from management's perspective; and 2) you should never underestimate the lengths to which large corporations will go to protect their financial interests.

We deal with large companies on a daily basis in our practice - many of our clients worked for or were hurt by them. And while some actually do have altruistic motives underlying their culture, we know from experience that this is a pretty difficult thing to hold on to as companies continue to grow.

And, technically speaking, that's understandable. We live in a capitalist society, where companies are allowed to put profits first. The trade-off is that we, as consumers, have legal rights that allow us to challenge these companies, and place blame on them when their decisions harm us.

Facebook and social media companies may present a new frontier in terms of the ways that their actions damage consumers, but the tale itself is nothing new. While it may sound cynical, a safe bet is to take most of what large companies say with a healthy dose of skepticism, as you would when hearing a political candidate speak. This way, when you ultimately learn that their motives were less than completely altruistic, you won't be let down...

DEC 2018
NEWSLETTER



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ATTORNEYS

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 1:
Our Take

Page 2:
A Bit of
Inspiration

Page 3:
5 Holiday Films



A BIT OF INSPIRATION

I had the opportunity in November to travel to Atlanta for a couple of days for a legal business conference. Along with some very good and very successful lawyers from around the country, the conference featured several non-lawyer speakers on topics including negotiation, crisis management, financial management and mindset.

One of the most well received speakers was David Goggins, a former Navy Seal who has become a bit of a celebrity of late. Goggins, who made his name on the podcast circuit (including appearances on the Joe Rogan and Tim Ferriss podcasts, two of the most popular out there), talked about his life, and all of the obstacles that he’s overcome. He was born into a family with an abusive father, and spent his formative years dealing with racism and violence that most of us will never know.

After spending years wallowing, letting himself go physically, and resigned to a meaningless life, Goggins one day decided that he’d had enough, and was going to become a Navy Seal. Needless to say the path was not a straight one, but in the end he achieved the goal, and much, much more. In subsequent years he has completed numerous

ultra distance races (100+ miles at a time) to raise money for various charities, and in his free time he volunteers as a firefighter, digging ditches to prevent fires from spreading in the Pacific Northwest.

Goggins’ point throughout was that the thing that held him back all those years (and that drives him now) was not other people, but himself. He talked about how much time he focuses on his own thoughts, rather than on others, and how doing this helps him overcome the limitations that he internally places on himself (like most of us).

I ran into Goggins at the airport after the conference, and we spoke briefly about his crazy schedule, his habit of getting up early and never hitting snooze, and his enjoyment of being alone.

It’s easy to hear someone like Goggins speak and think, “well good for him, he’s a crazy person.” It’s even better, I think, if you can hear something like that and think, “maybe I can do one thing a little bit better tomorrow.” Seems like a reasonable goal...

The kids are in the holiday spirit. It seems that every morning a new movie is on, some old and some new. There are, however, some classics that never get old. Among them...



1. *National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation.*

I’ve enjoyed this movie since I was a kid. Yes it’s silly, and dated, but it’s just as funny now as ever. I routinely quote the yuppie couple to Giovanna at home (featuring an appearance by Julia Louis-Dreyfus). And Uncle Eddie is a top film character of all time.



2. *Elf.*

Another classic that is really funny any time of year.



3. *A Charlie Brown Christmas.*

A children’s film that, decades later, still captures the consumerism culture of the holiday season perfectly.



4. *Love, Actually.*

Giovanna’s favorite - this one’s not suitable for children but an enjoyable watch.



5. *The Nightmare Before Christmas.*

Tim Burton at his best (well, almost his best, he did direct the original Michael Keaton/Jack Nicholson *Batman*...).