

Jessica Woodruff**From:** O'Neil Attorneys [jessica@oneilattorneys.com]**Sent:** Monday, February 14, 2011 3:20 PM**To:** Jessica Woodruff**Subject:** O'Neil Attorneys NewsletterHaving trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)

Firm News...

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Valentines Day After Divorce

Posted on February 7, 2011 by [Michelle O'Neil](#)

What's just around the corner, sticky sweet and has Hallmark written all over it? If you guessed Valentine's Day, you are correct. Even for those of us who don't buy into the massive consumerism of this holiday can be guilty of getting caught up in the hype. After all, what girl doesn't love hearts and flowers? Can we get a shout out for milk chocolates in a red satin box? We wouldn't be human if these symbols of 'amore' didn't pull at our heartstrings even a little bit.

But what do you do if you're not exactly in a celebratory mood? What else is there besides hiding under your sheets and

Testimonials

"I would like to take this moment to let you and your team know how great you were to me. This was the biggest and scariest thing I have ever done, and you helped me get through it. You did a tremendous job keeping my wishes first and your team communicated with me so well that I felt that you were more than just my attorney... you were my friend. Thanks so much for everything you did!"
~Z.M.

hibernating until the 15th? The goal is to not get bitter and turn into a Valentine's Day scrooge. This is easier said than done, for sure. Sometimes ignorance breeds contempt so let's get to know this little winter holiday a bit better.

THE HISTORY OF LOVE

Valentine's Day originated as a pagan celebration 800 years before 'St. Valentine' even came into the picture. The Romans would hold a ceremony in mid-February commemorating young men's rites of passage to the God Lupercus. This celebration featured a lottery in which young men would draw the names of women from a box. The woman whose name was picked became their sexual companion for the year.

Talk about 'luck of the draw"! Yikes. During the 5th century, the Romans transformed this ceremony into a celebration honoring St. Valentine who was actually a bishop. Emperor Claudius had outlawed marriage because he thought married men made poor soldiers. St. Valentine, being a romantic and a good Christian would secretly marry lovers despite Claudius' edict. This resulted in the imprisonment, stoning, beheading and ultimate demise of St. Valentine. It seems that unlike Cher, Claudius didn't believe in life after love.

ISN'T IT ROMANTIC? NOT!

Lara Cox's seven-year marriage had been over for only three months and it was her first V-day flying solo. On the big red holiday she found herself in the living room eating ice cream with her two old boyfriends, Ben and Jerry. Half way through watching 'The Way We Were', the tenant she took in to help out with the mortgage payments breathlessly bursts

"I cannot thank you enough for the outstanding way in which you represented me throughout litigation. You are, without a doubt, one of the finest attorneys I know. I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to hire you. Thanks again for all that you did for me."
~G.D.

New Client Coordinator



Questions about our firm? Would you like to have a consultation with an attorney? Contact our [New Client Coordinator](#), Jessica Woodruff to schedule a consultation and/or to get information about the firm and our attorneys.

out of her room in sexy lingerie and asks Lara if she could "...please attach her garters in the back? Thanks."

Lara says, "I thought I was going to wither away with shame, which is crazy because I never made a big deal about Valentine's Day when I was married! All of a sudden it was like the world was shouting at me 'you're all alone Lara!' Maybe that was really my mother's voice, but either way I was so surprised at how strongly it affected me." Where's Hubble when you need him?

Raquel Carrington had been divorced for a year and on her first single Valentine's Day in five years she decided to take a hot bath, order in and watch a movie. Sounds great, except... "It didn't exactly go the way I'd planned," she says. "I got home from work and for some reason there was no hot water, so my bath was out. Then the Chinese take-out I ordered was contaminated and I ended up in the emergency room at three in the morning with food poisoning."

These V-Day gone south scenarios are enough to make even the most secure of us jump off the deep end. So what happens when it's Valentine's Day and you're putting the key in the door to 'crazy' and about to turn the lock? Believe it or not, there are choices other than cursing happy couples, wallowing in self-pity or ripping up your kid's Hannah Montana Valentines and using them to stoke the fire.

Deborah Kelly-Dubois, a clinical psychologist in New York City says that, "Love is about feeling good and living in the moment. Having expectations, especially for the holidays and celebrations are hard to avoid. Try your best to put aside what you think this day should be about, or what it was about for

you in the past and recreate it for who you are today."

YA GOTTA HAVE HEART

Volunteering makes us feel good and more often than not, we get back so much more than we give, especially when it's done from a genuine place. With the major holiday season over it's a lot more challenging for soup kitchens, shelters and all kinds of charitable organizations to acquire volunteers.

"It's like there's a major slow down after Christmas," says Craig Austin a volunteer for Project Angel Food, Los Angeles.

"People are in the spirit of the holiday and then they get back to their lives in mid January. We are inundated with volunteers right before Christmas and then 'poof' a lot of people disappear in the New Year."

Volunteering is a great way to get out of your head and into your heart. When you give your time to others who are less fortunate than you it's a wonderful reminder to be grateful for all the abundance you have in your life.

PARTY ON

Get that pink-feathered boa out of the back of your closet and celebrate your life by throwing a shindig with a theme. The party shouldn't be an "Anti-Valentine's Day Celebration" since you want to concentrate on abundance and positive attitudes not lack and negativity. Invite all single people and tell each person to bring a platonic member of the opposite sex. This way there's no concern while straining across the room to see if the hottie in the green sweater is wearing a wedding ring.

It's a fantastic excuse to make red Jell-o

shots, put out some decadent chocolates and fun candy hearts. Be cheeky and serve only red drinks or have a kissing booth! You can go as over the top or as mellow as your mood. Make it a time to get to know new people, make friends and turn the whole 'Valentine's Day = Romance' formula upside down.

Linda Dearborne of Encino, Calif., said, "I went to a party like this about three years ago right after a break up. I didn't meet any guys, but I did meet a woman who became one of my closest friends and confidantes. She was also going through a separation and we bonded and had so much fun checking out the single guys! It was the first truly great time I had after my husband and I split up. Today (my friend and) I throw this kind of party annually and it's become a kind of tradition. As long as we're both unattached we figure we might as well celebrate it!"

MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?

Have you always wanted to learn to Tango? How about trying out the Samba or Belly Dancing? Take yourself and a girlfriend to a dance class of the seductive variety. Dance is a great way to revive your body and get reconnected to your sensuality. Maybe you'll uncover a passion you never knew you had?

Maria Torres of Broadway Dance Center in New York City says, "The Latin dances and especially the Tango are filled with seduction and romance. It's all about connecting to your partner and having a great time! It's fun to see all these people who in the beginning of class are so nervous about how they look, and are all concerned about whether or not they are doing it right. Even the most nervous students by the end of the two hours are smiling and laughing. A few of the beginners even stick with it and become

really good! It's a fun hobby and a fantastic way to meet and relate with people. The best part is you don't even have to say a word!"

Other Valentine's Day Alternative Ideas:

1. Treat yourself to a massage.
2. See a fun movie with the kids.
3. Write a gratitude letter on pretty stationary to a special girlfriend and actually send it in the mail! '
4. Go hear some live music.
5. Buy yourself some flowers - you deserve them!

From our Blog....

Save Attorneys Fees Through Email

Posted on January 21, 2011 by [Michelle O'Neil](#)

Most of our clients are very comfortable using email for their informal correspondence to friends and family. Not every client is accustomed to using email as a form of business communication, however. In some instances misuse of email in client correspondence can misdirect and even hinder an attorney's effectiveness in the case.

If you've hired an attorney to represent you in your divorce, child custody, or other family law matter, or plan to do so in the future, then you will be communicating with your attorney's team on a regular basis. You'll meet with your attorney and legal team face-to-face. You'll talk on the telephone. You'll send and receive letters by U.S. Mail, FedEx, and UPS. And you'll send and receive emails, probably a lot of them. Today's article is about getting in the habit of sending emails to your attorney in a productive time-is-money manner.

Tip #1. This is business. Stick to the legal matter at hand.

Avoid using emoticons like smileys, and abbreviations like ROFL and OMG, in your email messages to your lawyer. Those are certainly fun and useful in personal email messages and maybe on your facebook page, but they detract from your message in an email to your attorney. Also, make sure to check your spelling, and use proper punctuation and standard capitalization. TYPING YOUR EMAIL IN ALL CAPS SHOUTS AT THE READER, DOESN'T MAKE WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY MORE IMPORTANT, AND CAN MAKE YOUR MESSAGE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO READ.

Tip #2. Think. Pause. Think Again. Then Send.

This is great email advice for everyone from the American Society of Legal Writers. Always proofread your email carefully before you hit send. If your email is replete with errors, or doesn't flow logically, then the attorney receiving it will spend that much more billable time trying to figure out what you really meant to say. Take the time to write carefully, to proofread your message, to make sure it reads logically and says specifically what you intended. Then send. If you can get your message across to your attorney on his or her first reading, then you've saved time and money in legal fees.

Tip #3. A timely "reply" is good. A "forward" to your attorney is good. A "forward" of your attorney's email is too late.

Don't be in such a hurry to send a message to your attorney that you accidentally "forward" instead of a direct "reply" to your attorney's original message. If you receive an important message from your sister, for example, with a link to your estranged spouse's MySpace page, then forwarding her message to your attorney may help your case. But don't forward your attorney's emails to anyone, ever. Here's an example: Let's say you feel an overwhelming need to share what's happening in your case and so you forward your attorney's email to your sister, who forwards it to your mother, who then shares it with your 16-year-old son, who promptly forwards it to your soon to be ex-spouse, who now knows way more than he or she should about your attorney's strategy in the case.

Tip #4. Always protect your privacy online.

Because of emails' simplicity and universal application, it is far too easy to send personal information without reflecting on what is being sent and where it could end up. Never provide your Personally Identifiable Information (PII)-such as your social security number, birth date, mother's maiden name, or banking information-in an email message. Don't give away anyone else's PII either. Criminals use PII to exploit and steal identities. So think before you send and always remember that unencrypted email is the postcard any carrier can read and forward.

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Our Law Firm

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Originally founded by Ms. O'Neil as The May Firm in 2003, our firm was renamed O'Neil Attorneys in 2009. Whether taking on opponents in the courtroom, negotiating settlements or creating new laws at the appellate level, we always focus on providing superior service and having satisfied clients.

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