

Losing mom

"It's been over two years so we don't cry when we leave the nursing home like we used to. But we don't have our mother anymore,"

Rosella Kes said. "She is alive, but our relationship is gone. She does not recognize us or know where she is."

"My mother was a passenger in a vehicle that was broadsided. The other driver was going at least 72 in a 50 mph zone. He took our mother away from us forever," said Carmen Flakus.

Rosella and Carmen's mother, Marie Schilz, suffered major trauma in that collision. She had a concussion, three broken ribs, a broken collar bone and pelvis, a punctured lung, and a broken hip. She spent 29 days in the hospital. Each day one of her daughters or granddaughters spent the day with her, waiting for doctors and hearing only bad news. Family members put their lives on hold and prayed for their mother's recovery.

"We did not think she would make it. She was almost 80 when it happened and older people do not recover like young people do," said Carmen. Against all the odds, Marie Schilz pulled through. But although her physical injuries healed somewhat, it took all her strength and mental energy. She was never the same.

Carmen asked at work if anyone had used an attorney for a car accident. A man recommended Fred Soucie. "We fell in love with him," Carmen said. "He is an excellent lawyer who cares not only about the person who gets injured, but about the whole family. I could not believe how far he and his team went to get us a fair settlement. If there has been one healing person in this whole thing, it was Fred Soucie."

"My sister and I really had to pull together. Our husbands and families supported us," said Rosella. "We had to make so many decisions and we made them together. Fred supported us every step of the way."

Rosella added, "Total dedication is how I describe Fred and his team. Our case lasted a long time and Fred worked with us constantly. One day he called me with a new idea and I told him that I thought he was on vacation for three days. He said, 'I am on vacation, but I was out on the boat and just thinking about you.' He became part of our family, not just for the case, but forever."

"Most of mom's physical injuries have healed," said Carmen. "But we never got our mother back. Before she was hit by the car, she had very mild dementia and memory issues. She lived in a senior housing facility and lived a good life. She was active with all of us; she made us beautiful crocheted work for our homes and had fun."

Marie remembers nothing of the accident. When her body was so seriously injured, it took all of her energy just to live through it. She can barely walk and sits with empty hands, having forgotten how to crochet. Her dementia has accelerated to the point she does not recognize family or friends. In effect, the car crash ended her ability to know people and participate in their lives.

"I'm glad we were able to get them to take Marie's case seriously," said Fred. "Sometimes insurance companies dismiss the elderly and think their lives are not worth much. This is a great family that really cares about their mother."

Accolades in the office

This has become an annual event. Both Fred Soucie and Dave Bolt were named SuperLawyers™ by Minnesota Law & Politics Magazine. Over 20,000 attorneys help in the selection process. SuperLawyers™ are chosen on the basis of their reputation and effectiveness by a Blue Ribbon Panel of experts.

David Bolt has joined ProArb, an organization designed to help resolve personal injury cases quickly and effectively. Trained as a mediator as well as an attorney, Dave and the other mediators have extensive professional knowledge and experience with personal injury cases. When both sides of the case agree to arbitration, ProArb arbitrators will decide all issues of law and fact, and deliver a response and award promptly. In some cases this works better than going to court. Call Dave Bolt if you would like to learn more.

Paul Kieffer, an associate attorney at Soucie & Bolt, has been asked to serve on two committees with the Minnesota State Bar Association. He will become a member of the Professionalism Committee and Rules of Professional Conduct Committee.

Congratulations to Paul!

... because bad things happen to *good* people

SOUCIE & BOLT

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Welcome our Newest Attorney David Cox!

He was instructed not to let the evidence out of his sight when asked by the insurance defense law firm where he worked to bring a faulty piece of gas line to Soucie & Bolt for inspection by an expert witness. David was not going to let the pipe "out of his sight." And Fred Soucie was not going to let David sit in on privileged talks with the expert. Fred solved that problem by showing David to a chair outside of the glass wall of the conference room. That way, the evidence would always be "in his sight" and everyone would be happy.

Fred couldn't help but notice David paying rapt attention and taking copious notes of everything being done with the pipe. When his team and out of town expert were finished with the inspection, Fred got the expert and everyone else in the room on board to "liven up" David's experience as custodian of

this critical piece of evidence. With everyone's involvement, Fred flipped off the conference room lights. Everyone in the room joined hands in a circle over the piece of pipe and began chanting. It only took David a second to realize the humor of the situation. David was drawn to working with a firm like Soucie & Bolt. He knew of their reputation and quality of work because his firm was on the opposite side of the current gas explosion case. Being drawn to the atmosphere of the firm, David approached the firm for a job with an equal amount of humor. Fred Soucie and David Bolt were so impressed with David Cox, they hired him in the first interview.

David Cox worked for several insurance companies before going to law school. Most of his work involved helping the clients of insurance companies, in customer service and later as an account manager. He thrived on helping everyday folks cut through the bureaucracy

and red tape to get the benefits they deserved. When he went to law school, David vowed he would never work on behalf of the insurance carriers. Despite this promise, he ended up working for an insurance defense firm. But because of that job, he found himself in the office of Soucie & Bolt, where he saw good lawyers doing good work for good people. He knew right away that this was the right firm for him. Luckily for David, Soucie and Bolt agreed. As a new attorney, he has much to learn and something to prove, and believes this is the place where he can do both. He enjoys working with everyone and looks forward to helping our clients when they need it most.

As always, if you know of someone who has been injured or killed in an accident, car collision, electrical or power line incident, or other circumstance that requires expert legal help, please call us at 763 427 8888.