



COOPER HURLEY
INJURY LAWYERS

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Portsmouth's Winter Wonderland Woos With Victorian Christmas Scenes

A garden center is not the most obvious must-visit holiday attraction for kids but from the mid-1960s until 2004, a generation of children who grew up in and around Portsmouth would make regular Christmas pilgrimages to Coleman Nursery.



[Click here to play the video](#)

An unusual and unique collection started life when the owners of the nursery bought a single Sleeping Santa. Each year, the scenes grew larger and became more elaborate and ambitious as more figures were added. Kids would compare their favorite attraction, be it the Snow Babies with their long, curly eyelashes or the seesaw-riding skunk whose partner was a raccoon with a clothes pin clipped to his nose.

The garden center is now a memory but the Coleman Collection lives on. After the Coleman Nursery closed in 2004, the Portsmouth Museums Foundation raised money to purchase the pieces.

This year Winter Wonderland is marking a decade at Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center (formerly the Courthouse Galleries) on High Street in Olde Towne Portsmouth.

Stephen Grunnet, assistant to the curator at Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center, said the Coleman Collection attracts people from across the country every year as thousands of children visit Winter Wonderland.

He said the nursery on the corner of Cedar Road and High Street, a location that now holds a library, was a landmark for more than five decades. The owners hired 'Junie' Lancaster, as the business mind behind the nursery. He was an avid collector and started getting together the animatronics that formed the basis of the Coleman Collection in the mid-1960s.

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Lancaster got the idea for the animatronics after visiting the World's Fair in New York City in 1964 when he saw Disney's *It's a Small World* exhibit before it opened at the amusement parks. It was said to be his wife Millie Lancaster who became fascinated with the moving figures after spending 95 cents getting into the Walt Disney attraction at the Pepsi-Cola Pavilion.

Grunnet said the Coleman Collection was a "huge business success" for the nursery and has since retained its appeal at the Art & Cultural Center.

The Portsmouth Museums are offering a range of holiday activities including crafts, performances and plays, face-painting and horse-drawn carriage rides. On Fridays and Saturdays over Christmas, snow wonders will fill the air with artificial snowflakes drifting onto Middle Street Mall outside the Children's Museum of Virginia.

Parts of the Coleman Collection can also be seen at the Children's Museum of Virginia on High Street in Portsmouth. For more details see www.portsmouthartcenter.com

Top Ten Tips to Winterize Your Car

When cold weather arrives it makes sense to prepare your home for winter by ensuring the heating works and covering up gaps. However, your car should also be winterized to help protect you from accidents in the bad weather.



Here's Cooper Hurley's 10 point action plan for a winterized car:

1. Light Up - Check to see that all exterior and interior lights and headlights are working properly. Winter storms can restrict visibility and it's important to be seen.
2. Charge up - Check out the battery and charging system to make sure it's working properly. Cold weather can cause a poorly performing battery to die
3. Pump up - Check all of your tires, paying particular regard to tire depth and tire pressure. If you live in an area that's prone to freezing or heavy snow you should consider fitting special tires that are designed to grip slick roads. You should check your tire pressure on a weekly basis in the winter.
4. Flush out - Clean, flush out and put new antifreeze in the cooling system. This should be done at least every two years.

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5. Warm up - Always make sure your heaters, defrosters and wipers work properly. Consider using winter wiper blades and use cold weather washer fluid. As a general rule, wiper blades should be replaced every six months.
6. Lube - Check your oil. Dirty oil can spell trouble in cold weather. Consider changing to "winter weight" oil if you live in a cold climate. At the very least your technician should check the fuel, air and transmission filters at the same time.
7. Check Brakes - Have the brakes checked out. The braking system is the vehicle's most important safety item. Problems with brakes can increase your stopping distance. It's crucial to have brakes that work properly in ice and snow.
8. Check the Exhaust - Have the exhaust system checked for carbon monoxide leaks, which can be especially dangerous during cold weather driving when your car's windows are closed.
9. Gas up - Drivers should keep the gas tank at least half full at all times to lessen the chances of moisture forming in the gas lines and potentially freezing.
10. Kit out - Keep an emergency kit. It should include an ice scraper and snowbrush, jumper cables, flashlight, a blanket, flares, bottled water, food and a first aid kit.

Family of Virginia Man Killed by Box Truck is Awarded \$1.5 Million

Although all cases are different and we cannot guarantee a particular result, the attorneys at Cooper Hurley Injury Lawyers are pleased to announce we recently secured a \$1.5 million settlement for the family of a man who was killed by a box truck in Hampton Roads. The compensation for the widow and children brings to a successful close a difficult case that the insurance company for the delivery trucker fought hard.

In December, 2013, the driver of a commercial box truck rear-ended a van in the right hand lane of a major road with a 35 mph speed limit. The driver of the van was ejected and died at the scene. His family hired John Cooper and Jim Hurley to file a wrongful death lawsuit against the driver of the truck and the company that employed him. The truck driver's speedometer was stuck at 45 mph after the crash.continued on page 4

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The driver of the truck lacked a valid medical certificate at the time of the accident and potentially suffered from sleep apnea. Cooper Hurley Injury Lawyers uncovered hours of service violations by the commercial driver who did not get required rest when moonlighting at a second job during the weeks before the wreck.

The van driver left behind a widow and three young children. The case was settled at mediation for \$1.5 million and resolved fully within a year of the event. The husband and father who was 57 had alcohol in his system at the time of the wreck and the delivery driver claimed the man took an improper turn in front of the box truck.

Cooper Hurley Injury Lawyers have handled many complex trucking accidents involving injuries and deaths and are the authors of *The Best Book About Virginia Trucking Accidents*.

The fall of 2014 also saw John Cooper being included in the list of the Best Attorneys of America by Rue Ratings. Selection put him in a group of less than 100 attorneys in Virginia who are granted this honor. You can follow the latest news from Cooper Hurley Injury Lawyers by following us on our recently upgraded LinkedIn page. You can also like us on Facebook.

Five Strategies to Avoid Holiday Arguments

The holidays should be a happy time to get together with families and friends. However, statistics show the average family will have five arguments on Christmas Day with the first one starting as early as 10.13 a.m.

In other words, just a couple of hours after the joy of Santa's visit appears on the faces of your kids, the Season of Goodwill could be quickly sinking in a day of bad blood. The good news is there are some strategies to save your day. Here are Cooper Hurley's top five tips.

1 Don't Take the Bait. Do you have a constructive criticizer in your family? This person gives unsolicited advice along the lines of "when I had young kids I never let them stay up until 9" or "Do you really think that coat is suitable for cold weather?" Sue Fox, author of *Etiquette for Dummies*, advises those who are faced with the constructive criticizer not to take the bait. Constructive criticizers thrive on a good argument. Cutting them off deprives them of the oxygen of disagreement. Thank the criticizer, point out facts he or she may have overlooked, and move on.



The Cooper Hurley cookies may be good but they are not worth fighting over..

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2 Plan in Advance. If you are prepared, you are less likely to create a vacuum that can be filled with arguments. Have a plan for the holiday meal and don't let things slide because family members could become irritable if they are hungry. Plan in advance. Open up discussions early on how and where things will happen and who will do what so that everyone has time to give their input and tasks can be shared fairly.

3 Avoid Trigger Points. If your father-in-law has a shrine to Sarah Palin in his garage and your brother is a big fan of Leon Trotsky, talking politics over the turkey may not be a great idea. There's a reason why the old cliché about not talking about politics and religion is a cliché. Likewise, if last year's family meal descended into a shouting match over the cost of aunt Mable's hip replacement, you probably don't want to go there again. Steer the conversation to new and upbeat topics.

4 Don't Sweat the Small Stuff. Uncle Fred has his shoes up and they are grazing your very expensive couch. You fear there may be dirt on them. This may not be grounds for World War Three. When dealing with family members as well as kids, you sometimes have to let things go. It's better to choose which issues are big enough to battle over, advises Michele Borba, the author of *The Big Book of Parenting Solutions*. Learn to bite your tongue about the small stuff.

5 Curb Alcohol Consumption. Although you may feel you need to down a crate of beer to cope with the family over the holidays, it's seldom a good idea. Excess alcohol is likely to exacerbate arguments and make you grouchy when you end up with a sore head the next day. If you have been consuming alcohol you should never get in your car and drive.

New Faces at Cooper Hurley

Cooper Hurley welcomed two new faces this fall - John Cooper's paralegal Patty Lauer and Assistant Marketing Director Corinna Pugh.

Patty said a desire to help the underdog led her to personal injury work. She has worked in the legal field for more than two decades but says personal injury work is particularly rewarding because she is helping people who have been injured in their fight with the big insurance companies.

Patty grew up in California but has lived in Virginia Beach since 1997. "I have done everything from legal assisting to paralegal.

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Corinna Pugh

[Click here to play the video](#)

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I have worked in defense for quite some time,” she said. “I transferred over to the plaintiff’s side and it seemed to be more interesting than the defense side,” she said.

She attained a paralegal certificate at Century Schools in California before moving to Virginia Beach. She has continued her paralegal education in that time.

She has previously worked for a large personal injury firm but said she values the more client-focused approach at Cooper Hurley. “It’s a smaller firm but they have a lot of personal one-on-one interaction with the client,” she said. “I knew from the start when I met Mr. Cooper that I was going to learn a lot from him,” Patty said. She said John Cooper has a “vast knowledge” of personal injury law. “I am very happy to join the Cooper Hurley team,” she said.

Corinna has more than 20 years’ experience in marketing and advertising. She is the former marketing director of an electronics and furniture company. She has an 11-year-old son and lives in Virginia Beach.

Trivia

There are many stories about the legend of St Nicholas, the man who gave his name to Santa Claus. He lived on the southern coast of Turkey. One story concerns a poor man with three daughters who had no money for dowries. Without dowries, they were to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home-providing the needed dowries.



The bags of gold which were tossed through open windows are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry, leading to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Another story has him throwing a bag of gold down the chimney. Reindeers are conspicuously absent in this tale.