



The Medlin News

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WE'VE MOVED!
As of 6/1/18, find us in Suite 318 of the same building.

THE MOST HAUNTED PLACE IN THE WORLD

The Horrors of Poveglia, Italy

When you think of spooky places, odds are good that the local version of a haunted house — perhaps with teenagers dressed up as chainsaw villains — comes to mind. You might even get someone to take you to the local penitentiary, where they'll try to convince you that a draft is actually the movement of a tormented soul. After Oct. 31, though, that spooky atmosphere will fade away, and you'll be left with just a fleeting memory of what you believed might be a haunted place. But there is one location on earth that is truly haunted year-round.

The abandoned island of Poveglia, Italy, was the site of some of the worst horrors in human history. In 1348, the region surrounding Venice was struck with the bubonic plague, and the infected were sent to Poveglia to die. Once the plague had taken their lives, the victims' bodies were stacked on pyres and burned. It's said that 50 percent of the soil on the island is made up of the ash from these funeral rites.

While the ash-ridden soil would deter many, it did not stop the locals from turning the island into a mental asylum in the 1800s. Shortly after the asylum opened, all its inhabitants reportedly lost their wits, making it impossible to tell the doctors from the patients. The doctors on the island were rumored to have gone



insane and begun performing questionable experiments on live subjects. Some patients died; others lost their minds. The island quickly claimed them all.

Today, Poveglia is completely abandoned. Local fishermen are unwilling to cast their nets off its shores out of fear. They even report hearing chimes from the island's church bell, but they still refuse to dock their ships. Locals decline to visit the island for fear of the curse that claimed the lives of so many. The very few who dare set foot on the island do not stay for long, claiming to feel a profound disturbance that overwhelms the soul.

If you're taken to a haunted house this Halloween, be thankful. Anyone can handle a quick scare from someone dressed up in a costume. No one has been able to handle the curse of Poveglia, and no one ever will.

HOBOS, PRINCESSES & SPIDERMAN

Halloween Is Here

The weather's starting to cool off, and the trees are beginning to don their fall regalia. This time of year, as the magic of Halloween approaches, I can't help but feel nostalgic for my childhood. After all, what's not to love about a day of dressing up with your friends and getting free candy?

Growing up in Dallas, my costumes were almost always homemade. I remember one year in particular, I dressed up as a little hobo, with frayed jeans and a stick with a bandana tied around it for me to carry all my worldly possessions. My mother added the final touch that really made the costume work: She charred the end of a cork, then used it to smudge a beard on my young face.

Back in those days, we kids had free reign of the night when Halloween rolled around. We'd roam far and wide, from neighborhood to neighborhood, until we either got too tired or didn't have any room in our bags for more candy. Looking back, my favorites were milk duds and candy corn. Since outgrowing my fondness for sweets, it's hard to imagine just how many of those sugary triangles I consumed — my teeth hurt just thinking about it.

Since becoming a father, I've gotten to experience the magic of the holiday through my daughter's eyes. She's dead set on going as Spider Man this year (she loves everything Spider Man). So while our little hero is web-slinging around the neighborhood with her mother, I'll be handing out the candy to the ghouls and goblins that come to our door. It's always great to see the costumes kids come up with these days. I don't dress up anymore, but now that I think about it, maybe I should!



These days, whole vans of kids show up on our street. When they pull up and unload, it looks like when the posy comes out of the railcar in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid." There's just no end to them. And yet, every year, my wife and I somehow manage to buy too much candy. Come Nov. 1, there's more than likely going to be a bowl or two of complementary candy making its way around the office, courtesy of the Medlin household.

Halloween is just a great tradition and the perfect way to kick off the holiday season. It's a time when kids can embrace their imaginations and their sweet teeth, while adults get to relive their own memories and pass on the joy to their children. From all of us at the Medlin Law Firm, have a safe and happy Halloween!

— Gary L. Medlin, Esq.





BECOME A 'DOG WHISPERER'

Train as a Pack for Better Results

pent-up energy, too. It may also be beneficial to practice obedience exercises and games that challenge your dog.

Discipline

To put a stop to the behavior, you'll first need to change any of *your* behavior that's reinforcing it. Any attention your dog gets when he's barking — even yelling, "Rover, stop!" — teaches him to keep going, because you're rewarding him with attention. Wait until your dog has stopped barking to give him any sort of attention, including looking at them. "To be successful with this method, you must wait as long as it takes for him to stop barking," advises the Humane Society.

Affection

Of course, your dog needs love and attention to thrive — a lack of it could contribute to barking behavior. Reinforce silence by giving your dog a treat and an encouraging pat when she demonstrates good behavior, like not barking. "Our pups want to work for our attention," Cesar Millan reminds us. "Allowing her to do that and to see your happiness is, to your dog, the biggest reward of all."

To make your training program successful, consistency is key. Enlist the help of the whole family to stick to the principles. Together, you can foster a calm, peaceful home where you and your dog happily coexist.

Your whole family adores your dog — but not the barking. This issue can lead to feelings of frustration, and the more frustrated you get, the more your dog barks. It's their only way of communicating, and they're telling you, "My needs are not being met." As Cesar Millan, the original "dog whisperer," explains, "A barking dog needs exercise, discipline, and affection, in that order."

Exercise

Part of the barking issue may be due to pent-up energy. According to the humane society, "A tired dog is a good dog and one who is less likely to bark from boredom or frustration." If you already take your pup on a morning walk, try adding in an evening walk. You could add it to your child's chore list and help get out some of the kid's

THE SCARIEST TREND IN THE WORLD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

With Halloween on the horizon, you might be thinking about all things spooky: how to create the most frightening costume, how to build the most terrifying haunted house, or how to pull off the most alarming prank. In their considerations regarding the holiday craze, most people tend to overlook the scariest trend in the world of criminal justice. Here at Medlin Law Firm, our attorneys consider police officers' tendencies to search cars without probable cause to be the worst of all.

With an average of over 2 million traffic stops occurring in Texas each year, we believe it is important that civilians know their rights when they are pulled over. This is why we wanted to specifically highlight the four instances in which officers can search their car *without* a warrant.

1. Plain View

This instance might seem fairly straightforward, but if a policeman approaches your car and sees illegal paraphernalia, such as an open alcohol container or drug-related substances, then they have the right to search your vehicle.

2. Search Incident to Arrest

When an officer has probable cause to arrest you, they may have the right to search your car. However,

there are many limitations to this, and officers often search cars illegally. Do not consent to a search!

3. Combination of Suspicions

When an officer has probable cause to believe your car may contain contraband or evidence of a crime, the officer *MAY* have legal cause to search your car without a warrant. Typically this occurs when the officer claims to smell marijuana. However, we often find that officers lie about the odor of marijuana.

4. You Give Consent

Regardless of any other factors, if you give an officer consent to search your vehicle, then they have the right to do so.

As you can see from this list, there are very specific circumstances that require you to exit your vehicle to allow it to be searched. This is why you should be cautious when allowing voluntary searches, because even if you were stopped for a traffic violation like speeding or failing to signal, you haven't forfeited the rights you have as a citizen. If you have any other questions regarding these rights, please feel free to reach out to our attorneys here at Medlin Law Firm.



MAKE HALLOWEEN SAFE FOR HUMANS AND PETS

Most of the time, dogs are loyal companions, goofy sidekicks, and our best friends. But in high-stress situations when a dog may feel scared or threatened, they can lash out. Every year, over 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs in the U.S. alone, and scary, confusing events like Halloween can make such incidents far more likely. Here's what pet owners and trick-or-treaters need to know to stay safe.

As an Owner

Even if you know your dog is normally good with people, it's best to play it safe during Halloween. Strangers in masks coming to the door in droves can make even the most mild-mannered dogs anxious. To make matters worse, young trick-or-treaters may not know to respect your dog's space, increasing the likelihood of a violent outburst that could leave a child hurt.

To avoid such a situation, dedicate a closed-off section of your house to your dog for the evening. Give them toys to play with and gnaw on to help with stress, and keep the blinds closed. While you wait to pass out candy, try to get to the door before trick-or-treaters. Doorbells or knocks will only set off your dog's alarm bells.

As a Trick-or-Treater

Make sure your children know not to approach dogs that are on the street or that come to the door when candy is being passed out.



If a dog's presence feels threatening, notify the owner and have them put their pet in a safe place away from the trick-or-treaters.

If a Bite Does Occur

Regardless of who you are, if you're present when a dog bite occurs, it's critical to take swift action. The dog needs to be removed from the area and secured, ideally by the owner. If the owner is not available, this is best left to animal control professionals.

Next, the dog's vaccination records need to be confirmed. Rabies shots are extremely unpleasant for humans. Knowing a dog has been inoculated can spare the bite victim this painful procedure. Either way, the victim should seek medical attention immediately to avoid further complications.

The dog's owner should exchange their contact and home/renter's insurance information with the victim. Most policies cover dog bites. In the aftermath of a bite, consulting with an experienced personal injury attorney, like those at the Medlin Law Firm, can give you a better idea of what your legal options are.

Brain Buster

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Braised Chicken & SPRING VEGETABLES



Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 small bone-in chicken thighs
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 12 radishes, halved
- 4 large carrots, cut into sticks
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped
- Salt and pepper

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Brown in pan for 6–7 minutes per side.
3. Remove chicken from pan and scrape off excess fat. Add broth and stir in radishes, carrots, and sugar.
4. Return chicken to pan, placing on top of vegetables. Gently simmer with lid on pan for 15–20 minutes. Finish with chives.

Recipe inspired by Real Simple