



Bill



Jay



Jeremiah

Broken Bow: (308) 872-8327
Kearney: (308) 767-2650

Grand Island: (308) 767-2695
North Platte: (308) 221-6204

Lincoln: (308) 767-2061
Omaha: (402) 401-2864

August 2024

Wrongful Death Explained

Rights, Claims, and Legal Procedures

Losing a loved one is always a traumatic experience, and overcoming that grief is never easy. When the loved one's death is the result of another's negligence, however, the pain is worse, and it is only natural to yearn for justice. Wrongful death lawsuits can earn monetary compensation in these cases. You will need to understand some things about wrongful death, how it differs from other claims, and your legal recourse. I will explain relevant legal terms that may help for the sake of clarity. *Decedent* is the legal term used to refer to the deceased; a *claimant* is an individual making a legal complaint against another; and a *beneficiary* is an individual who benefits from a will, trust, or contract. We are here for you to help you understand these cases and to help you through the trial process should you choose to file suit against the negligent party. However, before doing so, you should understand some of the fundamentals surrounding wrongful death cases.



What Is Wrongful Death?

According to Nebraska Statute § 30-809, a wrongful death has occurred when it is "caused by the wrongful act, neglect, or default of any person, company, or corporation[.]" Fortunately, in the event of a wrongful death, the next of kin can bring action against the negligent party, so long as it is commenced within two years of the death, for monetary compensation. Nebraska weighs next of kin beneficiaries in the following order:

- Spouse and children
- Grandparents
- Parent(s)
- Grandparents' children
- Parents' children

What Compensation Is Available?

Legally, all wrongful death claims are reduced to a monetary value. The monetary compensation is primarily based on the financial contributions and income the decedent would have brought had the death not occurred. The beneficiaries can bring a wrongful death claim, as well as others who can provide evidence they were receiving financial support from the decedent at the time of their death. The claimant cannot seek damages for their own pain and suffering, but they may seek separate action seeking damages

related to the pain and suffering of the decedent. Expenses related to the funeral can also be sought in damages. According to Nebraska Statute § 30-810, "Medical and funeral expenses resulting from wrongful death may be recovered," so long as those expenses were the responsibility of the decedent's beneficiaries.

Important Factors

It should be noted that damages can still be sought regardless if the widow of the decedent has remarried, or if the next of kin has received inheritance from their estate, or compensation in the form of insurance or workers' compensation benefits as a result of the death. These factors are not considered relevant in a wrongful death suit.

Professional Help

If you or your family has lost a loved one due to another's negligent actions, we can help. Our experienced wrongful death attorneys can assist in recovering damages for the pain and suffering endured in the wake of your loved one's passing. Contact us online, or give us a call at 308-365-0571 to speak to one of our attorneys for a free case review today.

- Bill Steffens

NO MORE NIBBLES

Do's and Don'ts for Training Puppies Not to Bite

Puppies are adorable and entertaining family members, but training them not to bite is crucial as their teeth grow and they learn the rules of companionship. All puppies go through a nibbling phase as they discover the world around them using their mouths. The teething process won't last forever, but establishing proper training now will stick with them for a lifetime. Here are some do's and don'ts for training your puppy not to bite.

Chew Toys

Don't give puppies chew toys while training them; they are too young and inexperienced to differentiate between what they can chew and can't. An inexpensive and safe alternative is giving them an ice cube. Not only are these fun for a puppy to chew and won't damage your home, but they also provide soothing relief for their gums.

Grab Technique

Don't get angry, yell, or react adversely if your puppy mistakenly nibbles on something or isn't succeeding in their training. You can traumatize your pet if you use physical or verbal force to show them something isn't allowed. Teething is not an act of aggression; it's one of exploration. Try what trainers refer to as the "grab technique." Gently place a finger over and under their muzzle. Though this is uncomfortable for a puppy, it is not painful and reinforces that the behavior is something they must stop.

Puppy Party

Don't keep your puppy away from other dogs or people. Socializing and playing with other friendly dogs can teach your puppy by example. Puppies learn how to control their bites naturally when playing with other dogs. If a puppy nibbles on its



playmate too hard, it usually results in a yelp that shows the puppy it was biting too hard. Supervised play opportunities with puppies will also reduce their energy, making them less motivated to chew on you or your belongings.

By using gentle corrective actions and positive reinforcement, you can teach your puppy to play with you and others safely. Have patience through the process and trust your puppy's ability to grow and learn.

Transfer Trouble

LIMITATIONS AND RISKS OF TRANSFER ON DEATH DEEDS

Many once-complicated processes have become simplified in the modern age of convenience, such as booking a hotel room online. It can be tempting to try to simplify other parts of our lives with a couple of clicks on a computer. However, when it comes to estate planning, simple does not always mean better.

An example of this is the Transfer on Death Deed or TODD. TODDs allow you to name a beneficiary who will receive your property upon your passing. While this seems like an elegant and hassle-free way to establish your inheritance, it has significant downsides and potential pitfalls.

Joint Ownership

One of the greatest points of contention around TODDs involves joint ownership. If you are a joint owner of a property, the other joint owner will inherit sole ownership upon your death — regardless of whether there is a TODD on record. This

is an especially important issue for married couples, who often share joint ownership of a property, such as a home; this joint ownership will supersede the TODD, even if the intended beneficiary is someone other than your spouse.

Disinheriting by Mistake

If a will and TODD contain conflicting information regarding property



inheritance, it can cause significant problems for your beneficiaries. Existing TODDs can also resurface and derail other estate plan documents representing the deceased's most recent and accurate wishes. Because of this, it is important to revoke TODDs before completing new estate plan agreements.

Potentially Costly

With TODDs, there is no warranty of title, which means a property owner's debts may be passed on to their beneficiary along with the property. In effect, your beneficiary may be liable for your financial obligations, which can cause undue economic hardship. Another shortcoming with TODDs is that, unlike wills, they cannot be amended and must be revoked. If you want to rework a TODD, you must incur the costs of drafting one entirely from scratch, making the money you spent on your previous TODD meaningless.

TAKE A *BREAK*

P G Y R R E H C F A K F E D U
A U B Q H Z T D F I V C T H L
D U A A Y O V Q B O N R W E L
D M X L R Y P A U E A F T N I
L S N I H E L T D O R C H I D
E Y G E F L K N Q P F P L L H
B N Q N P W E C A J U E G O N
O L E A A P E T A E B P G P B
A O R E E L R M F R J J A M R
R K X D R I L E J N C D L A A
D R N Z O C Y Y R X T E F R B
Q I S T N K S H G F V I R T I
F U I B H V B N X X P H P I S
G C B P U V K T U L A E Y U F
P F E A D N U S H S H X B K Z

ALIEN
BALLPARK
CHERRY
FIRECRACKER
FLAG
INDEPENDENCE
ORCHID
PADDLEBOARD
PATRIOTIC
SUNDAE
SUNSCREEN
TRAMPOLINE



QUINOA VEGGIE BOWL

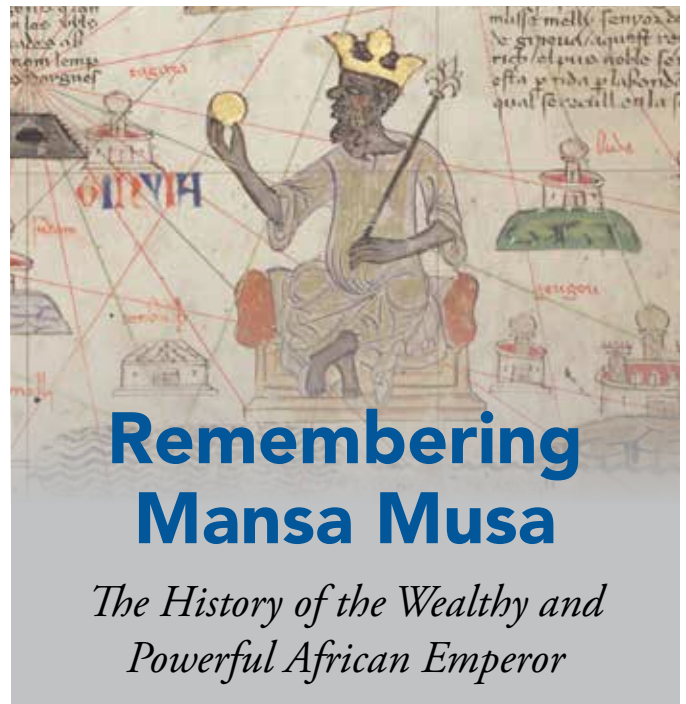
This recipe is packed with protein-rich quinoa and a colorful array of vegetables. It's ideal for a healthy lunch or a quick dinner!

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced mushrooms
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 cup diced zucchini
- 2 cups cooked quinoa

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
2. Add bell peppers, zucchini, and mushrooms and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Add oregano, salt, and pepper and stir to combine.
4. Add the cooked quinoa and mix thoroughly.
5. Cook for an additional 5 minutes, then serve.



Remembering Mansa Musa

*The History of the Wealthy and
Powerful African Emperor*

Like a spark, some legends flicker and fade, whereas others give birth to a roaring flame that spreads far and wide. The title of Mansa, which means emperor, was the honorific used by rulers of the ancient kingdom of Mali in West Africa. Musa I inherited the title in 1312, after the kingdom's last ruler, Mansa Abu Bakr II, set out on an ill-fated voyage to explore the Atlantic Ocean and never returned. While his predecessor may have had grand ambitions, Mansa Musa's legacy would be immortalized by his astounding achievements.

The Unknown Kingdom

In the early 14th century, Mali was a flourishing kingdom that profited massively from its seemingly bottomless salt and gold mines. Despite the nation's wealth, it was largely unknown outside of West Africa. This relative anonymity ended in 1324 when Mansa Musa, a devout Muslim, began his 4,000-mile pilgrimage to Mecca. Mansa Musa did not travel alone; 60,000 men, including over 10,000 slaves and 80 camels, each carrying 300 pounds of gold, accompanied him.

The Legend Begins

Mansa Musa's legacy was born during his stop at Cairo, then part of the Mamluk Sultanate. According to a description of the visit written just a few years later, Mansa Musa showered the Mamluk courtiers and merchants with gifts of gold, spending and giving away vast swathes of wealth during his stay. So great was his expenditure that the value of gold plummeted in the country and would not recover for over a decade after Mansa Musa's pilgrimage.

Give and Take

More than a giver, Mansa Musa was also a builder and conqueror. He annexed the Kingdom of Songhai in West Africa and the city of Gao, where he would later construct a great mosque. He also established the city of Timbuktu, which became famous as a center for Islamic studies. His reputation as a wealthy and generous ruler is still prevalent today, and some claim that he holds the title of the wealthiest man who ever lived!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Legal Recourse for Wrongful Death
- 2 How to Master Puppy Manners
The Drawbacks of Transfer on Death Deeds
- 3 Quinoa Veggie Bowl
How Mansa Musa's Splendor Impacted
the Ancient World
- 4 An Inside Look at Matthew Perry's Living Trust

TRAGIC LOSS AND LEGACIES

THE LASTING IMPACT OF MATTHEW PERRY'S ESTATE

An estate plan is crucial for several reasons: It ensures your assets are distributed according to your wishes after you pass away and minimizes potential disputes among family members. You can also

designate guardians for minor children to ensure they are cared for. Matthew Perry, well-known for his role in "Friends," proved to be one step ahead when he set up a living trust in 2009.

beneficiaries. His half-sister, Caitlin Morrison, and ex-girlfriend, Rachel Dunn, were also listed. Perry also indicated that any children he had would not be entitled to access his estate. (He never had children.) According to FindLaw, "The Alvy Singer Living Trust trustees are Lisa Ferguson and Robin Ruzan. Ferguson was Perry's business manager, and Ruzan was a friend and executive producer. Perry's estate is valued at over \$120 million."



The 54-year-old Hollywood star was found unresponsive after drowning in his Los Angeles, California, home on Oct. 28, 2023. According to NPR, "His drowning, coronary artery disease, and the effects of buprenorphine — a medication used to treat opioid use disorder — were noted as factors that contributed to his death, but were not the primary cause, according to the autopsy results. The death was ruled an accident." According to a recent filing, most of Perry's belongings will be placed in the Alvy Singer Living Trust, named after Woody Allen's character in "Annie Hall."

His father, John Perry, and his mother, Suzanne Morrison, are the trust

The passing of Matthew Perry marks the end of an era as fans mourn the loss of a talented actor whose work left a significant impact on the entertainment industry. However, beyond his artistic legacy, Perry's death highlights the importance and benefits of estate planning, the significance of living trusts, and the blessing of orderly distribution of assets. His family is the fortunate recipient of his generous gift.