

STAYING IN TOUCH

At Rich Cassidy Law, we focus on representing individuals. We have great clients with whom we tend to develop personal relationships. We care about you and want to stay in touch. If we can be helpful, even if it's with a referral outside of our practice areas, please feel free to call—Rich

RESILIENCE!

“On the other side of a storm there is strength that comes from having navigated through it. Raise your sail and begin.”

– Gregory S. Williams

On June 14, Vermont’s Governor, Phil Scott, announced that 80% of eligible residents of the State have been inoculated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Some 15 months after the governor’s emergency order was imposed, it has been lifted, and it appears that — at least for Vermont — the acute stage of the pandemic is over.

Still, we live in a small world where there remains the risks of variants and of transmission among unvaccinated persons. As I write this, the Delta variant is on the rise. And we must mourn the dead and comfort the injured and bereaved.

But hopefully, we have crossed the threshold to post-pandemic life. We don’t yet know exactly how that life will differ from life before the pandemic, but we do know that it will be different.

Epidemiologists tell us that the virus will never leave. We now enter an endemic, rather than a pandemic, phase. COVID-19 will be a continuing, chronic problem. We also know that it will take time for people to adjust to post-pandemic life. If the past is any guide, many will remain fearful for a considerable time.

And we know that doing things differently during the pandemic has been a vast social and technological experiment. We’ve learned some lessons that will stay with us. For example, we know that we can get along without some of the business travel that was routine in the past. Conferences and conventions intended primarily to exchange information will likely continue to allow virtual participation, at least for some.

We know, too, that public meetings that were theoretically available to all when conducted in person, can be far more broadly available through web-based technologies.

But I think we have learned something much more fundamental. As humans we are truly resilient. If we need to, we can change more and faster than we ever believed possible. Our innate resilience should give each of us confidence to meet the challenges of an inevitably uncertain future. We should all congratulate ourselves for staying the course and altering it as necessary during the past 16 months.

At Rich Cassidy Law, we are largely back to a pre-pandemic execution of each day’s work, but with more technology-based options. Zoom conferences are an easy alternative to many in person meetings. Please see P.5 for our office procedures.

Thank you to all who stayed in touch, sought our counsel, zoomed, phoned, and e-mailed during the strangest of times. We are grateful for all clients, friends and family who remained so supportively within our circle. We are here for you as you navigate the ever-changing post pandemic landscape. We’re grateful for our enduring relationships both, personal and professional.

Rich



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Sweet corn and coconut cake!
- See what clients have to say about Rich Cassidy Law
- Carla’s Photo

RICH CASSIDY LAW IN THE COMMUNITY

SOUTH BURLINGTON'S NEW LIBRARY



Jon Brooks, radio announcer from KOOL 105 (Hall Communications) broadcasts live with Becky at the grand opening



Photo by Penne Tompkins

In late July the beautiful new S. Burlington Library opened to the public and Becky Cassidy, a member of the volunteer Marketing Committee, handled the media relations/media sponsorship for the event. A long time in coming for eager S. Burlington residents, the new library offers spacious, enhanced collections and welcoming and engaging spaces. These include a year round fireplace, and a 100 seat auditorium.

An inviting Children's Library offers a hands-on Early Learning Room for ages 0-5 as well as a Make and Do Activity Room and a Wiggle Room! Bright colors and murals provide a lively and engaging background.

A Senior Center is located within the library and includes an activity room, living room and catering kitchen. The Library Complex also houses the S. Burlington City Offices and gives the community an outside terrace for enjoyment during Vermont's warmer weather.

Many area cities and towns have reciprocal borrowing arrangements with the S. Burlington library so if you are not a resident, you are still welcome and should check with your local library about reciprocity.

"Public Libraries are crucial centers of community activity, places where people from diverse backgrounds and with varied interests connect; public libraries are American at its best."

-Jason Chin, Caldecott Honoree and S. Burlington Resident

(For more information about the library visit www.southburlingtonlibraryfoundation.org)



Photo by Penne Tompkins

Pictured is the Grand Staircase Clock, the centerpiece of the access to the second floor of the library designed by Vermont stained glass artist, Phil Godenschwager. The artist drew the elements of the clock by hand and worked with a local astronomical advisory group to ensure accurate representation of the night sky over S. Burlington., The clock was transported to S. Burlington in 40 boxes and assembled by the artist.

Here's a recipe for sweet corn and coconut cake. Courtney had this while staying with a host family in Recife, Brazil in 2006. It is adapted from a recipe found on Olivia's Cuisine.



Cake pan greased with butter and cornmeal.



Cake flipped out of the pan to finish cooling before cutting.



This sweet, dense, moist cake can be served for breakfast or dessert.

2

BRAZILIAN SWEET CORN AND COCONUT CAKE

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups fresh corn kernels (defrosted frozen or drained canned corn work too)
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 2 cups fine cornmeal
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup neutral oil
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup shredded, unsweetened coconut
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon baking powder

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Place an oven rack in the middle position. Butter and flour a 10-inch angel food cake pan.
2. In the jar of a blender, combine the corn kernels and milk. Blend until smooth.

3. Add the coconut milk, cornmeal, sugar, oil, eggs, coconut, and salt. Pulse until combined.
4. Add the baking powder and pulse a couple of times just to incorporate into the batter.
5. Pour batter into the prepared cake pan. Bake for about 50 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean or with a few moist crumbs.
6. Remove from the oven and immediately run a thin knife around the edges to loosen it. Let it cool in the pan for about 20 minutes, then turn the cake onto a cooling rack to finish cooling.
7. Slice and enjoy!

Notes:

- To keep the cake entirely gluten-free, use cornmeal instead of flour to prepare the pan.
- I doubled the recipe to take to the Juneteenth BBQ and filled two 9-inch cake pans and a small loaf pan. Leave at least 1/2 inch clearance at the top of the pan.
- Allowing the cake to cool in the pan for about 20 minutes then to about room temperature once out of the pan is critical to the texture and flavor of the cake.

SOPHIE COUGHED

By Becky Cassidy

In mid-July Sophie Ann, our beloved mini golden doodle, encountered her own pandemic, Kennel Cough. She frolicked about the neighborhood in her customary way, kissing her friends and human acquaintances. This time it was the canine buddies who transmitted the cough, unbeknownst to us.

Kennel Cough is a highly contagious respiratory disease. Wikipedia tells us that “there are multiple causative agents, the most common being the bacterium Bordetella bronchitectasis.” Untreated it may lead to pneumonia.

So, our little girl coughed and spit up foam and it was clear she had contracted the illness. Our first call was, of course, to our beloved vet, Dr. Nate Heilman. A one sentence description of symptoms led immediately to the appropriate diagnosis and prescribed antibiotics. And at Qi Veterinary, there is also abundant sympathy and support always offered to Sophie’s parents. How blessed we are in our loving relationship with Dr. Nate and his staff.



Sophie Ann is a resilient little creature, filled with joy and love reflective of her nature and upbringing. But, Sophie coughed. For the first time in her young life, she faced the challenge of not feeling well and found it baffling. She placed her head in our laps, a customary pose. But she lingered longer with a question in her eyes. Why is my world different? And we might all echo that thought as we reflect on the stunning impact of Covid on our lives.

Throughout the weeks of her illness, Sophie walked a little slower, showed limited playfulness and wanted most of all to be close to her human parents. Like other “children” she knew where to go for comfort. But she did not complain. There was no barking frenzy, no whining, no whimpering and no bad behavior. Instead, in her own resilient little way, she endured the indignities of her illness and soldiered on.

Animal and human behavior can sometimes run parallel courses. Sophie coughed. The world has, in a much larger sense, coughed. But we are alive, blessed, and resilient. In the words of Maya Angelou, “This is a wonderful day. I’ve never seen this one before.”

WELCOME, LEMONADE!

By Courtney Seale

For the past few months, Associate Attorney Matt Shagam and his wife, Courtney Seale, considered welcoming a third dog to their home. Matt and Courtney’s puggles, Gia and Dexter, love nothing more than to snuggle together and beg for treats as a team. Courtney and Matt thought they would like a third partner in crime. In late May, Courtney saw Lemonade, a 9-year-old retired hunting beagle who spent his entire life outdoors, on Petfinder. The timing was not quite right as Courtney was going to be traveling and needed to be there when introducing a new personality to their brood.



Lemmy at home in Vermont

She decided if Lemonade was still available following her travels, she and Matt would offer him a home. Lemmy was still up for adoption, so Courtney applied. Within a few hours, East Coast Beagle Rescue had checked Courtney and Matt’s references and a virtual home visit was scheduled. On July 24th, Courtney traveled to New York City to pick up Lemmy! He is as sweet as can be and fits right in with his pugle siblings. Lemmy is a very good boy and will definitely make an appearance at **Rich Cassidy Law** once he has acclimated to his new life as a beloved indoor pet in Vermont.

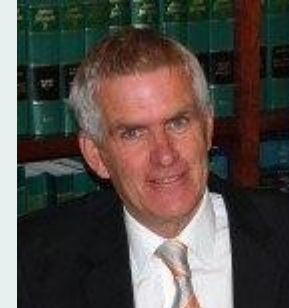


Lemmy, Dexter, and Gia meet for the first time

OUR FIRM:



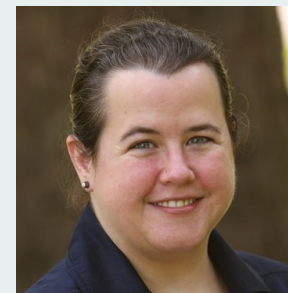
Founding Attorney Richard Cassidy



Attorney Mike Brow



Associate Attorney Matthew Shagam



Associate Attorney Amanda Lee

Linda Jackman - Business Manager

Becky Cassidy - Marketing and Community Relations Director

Courtney Seale - Administrative Assistant

Our attorneys are talented in many ways. Amanda Lee has been writing poetry since she was 10.

CHESHIRE MAGIC

By Amanda C. Lee

That silver sliver of moon hangs low over the horizon
Venus bright and shining nearby;
the rainsong thrum of cicadas dense in the air.

Beads of sweat drip down her face,
she wipes her brow with a soft old cloth,
and sways with the warm light breeze.

Lightning bugs wink in warm summer air;
children's laughter dances through the night.
A smile plays across her upturned face.

She hums as she dances in the moonlight,
the frogs keeping time with their croaks.
The mosquitos buzz, but she pays them no mind.

She dances the weight of the week off her shoulders
each step a hopeful wish for the coming days.
Some spells need no words; some prayers are silent.

Waltzing with the wind on a Saturday night
she knows one thing for sure.
Mischievous and magic are both likely under this
Cheshire moon.



HOME THOUGHTS—ONE LANE BRIDGE

By Becky Cassidy

To reach our home, friends and visitors must cross a one-way bridge. That is not a metaphor for the experience of coming to see us, but a simple geographical fact. We have lived on the other side of this bridge for over 20 years. Through snowstorms, spring thaw and leaf peeping season, cars traverse the bridge with patterned politeness. One car goes and the car coming in the opposite direction waits. It takes only a few seconds to cross the bridge. Those of us who live “on the other side of the bridge” have a rhythmic timing to our wait. We know it will happen. We are prepared and we really don’t begrudge the ten seconds as our neighbors, a city bus, Fed Ex and delivery trucks migrate from one side to the other.

During the pandemic, the traffic on the bridge and in our lives slowed. Fewer people crossed the bridge because fewer people were out and about. On some days, it was even a straight shot across the bridge as no one was waiting. That seemed both wonderful and terrible. It’s always a tad annoying to be in a queue, but the easy crossing gave me its own pause. In an escape from Covid mentality I pondered, “Where is everybody?” But of course, I knew.

With more people back to work and restrictions easing, the bridge is largely trafficked again. Sometimes four or five cars at a time are waiting on one side or the other. There will always be the person who eschews patience and revs their engine as others cross. But for those of us with a different mindset and spirit, crossing the bridge with a quick wave to the opposite driver is its own nod to the resilience of our city, town, country, continent, and world. We can still acknowledge each other, and gratefully. After all, we are alive and can cross the bridge in whatever direction it is leading. So, for me, it is a wave and an unmasked smile to the oncoming driver. As Christina Rossetti reminds us in her poem, *Up-Hill* “The road winds up hill all the way.”

I keep this poem learned in childhood close to my heart:

I expect to pass through this world but once.
Any good therefore that I can do,
Or any kindness I can show to any human being,
Let me do it now,
Let me not defer or neglect it,
For I shall not pass this way again.

-Stephen Grellet



The one way bridge beckons.

I hope to see you crossing the bridge.

CLIENT REVIEWS



Rich,
Thank you for believing in me and helping me through this difficult process. Grateful for your wisdom.
Take care,
Kira

Rich,
I can't thank you enough but I will try.

Thank you to the 10,000.000 power

Joe & dog jack who loves your beach!



A MEDIATOR'S TOOLKIT: THE POWER OF PATTERN

By Rich Cassidy

As we return to in person client contact and mediations, here are a few thoughts I'll share about how I successfully mediate. The human touch always matters whether you are mediating between your children, with your spouse, or as a client in a legal matter.



"Life is like tightrope walking" — 1997, is due to Adi Holzer [Attribution], via Wikimedia Commons

Sometimes "patter" — in the sense of empty or entertaining talk — is just what a mediation needs. Nature abhors a vacuum, and mostly so do people engaged in communication. When hard news is delivered, or when one party to a mediation is waiting for what feels like an interminable length of time for another party's response, silence may not be golden.

What kind of communication fills that kind of space is something that a mediator can, and should influence. If what is about to come out of a participant's mouth will undermine movement towards settlement, a mediator might be better off to fill that space with neutral content.

When I first started representing clients in mediation, one of the most successful mediators in our area was a retired judge. He had stories and lots of them. I have always enjoyed a raconteur, and I liked hearing the judge's anecdotes. But I frankly thought that the judge just liked to hear himself talk. And perhaps he did. Most of us do.

As I approach the twentieth year in which work as a mediator is an important part of my practice, I understand that —when well timed and of the right length — the light anecdote can be a mediator's gambit. It can hold a participant's attention in an otherwise boring interim, insulate a participant from the receipt of disturbing news, or buy time to prevent an impulsive reply.

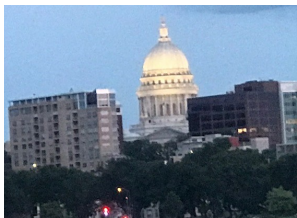
So I have borrowed a tool from my friend the judge/mediator. When I need to make some time pass, I tell a story. Sometimes the relationship to the mediation is tangential, if that. Usually, the story is just filler. Sometimes it's a parable with a point aimed at a party.

The key is balance: don't over-use the tool and waste time.

(Rich Cassidy has served as a mediator/arbitrator for over 40 years. It remains one of the most enjoyable and fascinating areas of his practice. Let us know if we can resolve ongoing cases with mediation.)

ULC CONFERENCE MEETS IN MADISON, WI

In July, Rich and Becky attended the Annual Meeting of the Uniform Law Commission in Madison, Wisconsin, where President Carl Lisman, courageously and determinedly convened the 127th meeting of the ULC. Some 135 Commissioners who have received COVID-19 vaccines attended in person, while other Commissioners attended virtually. Rich has been a Commissioner, appointed by successive Vermont Governors, for 27 years.



Since 1892, the ULC has provided states with non-partisan, carefully conceived uniform laws. Its work simplifies life for people who live, work, or travel in multiple states and improves local economies by facilitating interstate commerce. Each uniform act is drafted in an open and deliberative process that draws on the expertise of state-appointed commissioners, legal advisors and observers. ULC members are practicing lawyers, judges, legislators and legislative staff and law professors, who have been appointed by state governments as well as the US Territories. Members research, draft and promote enactment of uniform state laws in areas of state law where uniformity is desirable and practical. Notable Uniform Acts that have been widely adopted include the Uniform Commercial Code, the Interstate Family Support Act and the Uniform Trade Secrets Act.

Rich served as the 53rd President of the Commission from July 2015 to July 2017. He continues to work actively for the Commission, co-chairing its Public Information Committee and chairing its Development of Privacy Law Committee. This year, Rich served as Chair of the Uniform Restrictive Employment Agreement Act Drafting Committee. The Act, which was adopted at the Madison Meeting, will regulate restrictive employment agreements, most notably non-competition agreements, which prohibit or limit an employee or other worker from working after the work relationship ends. The new Act fairly balances the public interest in protecting the rights of workers to change jobs and use their skills, with the interests of employers.

As we emerge from the pandemic, the importance of the work of the ULC in modernizing and harmonizing state law has become even more obvious. State legislatures turn to the Commission's work facilitating Electronic Signatures on legal documents, permitting Electronic Wills, and remote notarizations (from the 2018 Amendment to the [Law on Notarial Acts, Revised](#)). Next year, in Philadelphia, the Commission will consider the proposed Uniform Telehealth Act, designed to assist states by clarifying what services may be provided through telehealth and establishing a registration system for out-of-state medical practitioners.



Rich and Becky's beloved niece, **Carla Mazzariello**, shares this gorgeous photo which she took on a walk in the forest behind her house. The lovely light shining through the trees reminds us that beauty is all around us here in Vermont.

VERMONT HAS LIFTED COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS!

At Rich Cassidy Law we are delighted that Vermont's Governor has lifted all Covid-19 restrictions as of June 14, 2021!

We are aware that VT Public Health Officials still encourage unvaccinated persons to use facial coverings indoors and to continue social distancing.

Our staff is fully vaccinated.

While many client meetings and conferences are still being conducted remotely by phone or video, some may prefer to meet in person.

We are conducting in-person meetings with persons who:

1. Have an appointment;
2. Are not experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness, i.e., fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath; and
3. Are fully vaccinated against Covid-19; or
4. Are unvaccinated but wear a mask covering the nose and mouth while in our office.

If you are unvaccinated, we will wear a mask during your appointment.

In good weather, outside meetings are another option.

If you wish to confer with one of our lawyers, please call our office at 802-864-8144.

Of course this may change depending on public health needs.

Thank you!



RICH CASSIDY LAW

Our firm represents people, not businesses or institutions. We focus on personal injury litigation and employment law. We represent people who have been injured due to the fault of others, and employees in disputes with their employers or former employers.

Justice is not given; it is achieved. Without help from a competent, experienced lawyer, you may get nothing, or you may get whatever pittance the insurance companies or employers choose to give you. We offer the very best legal counsel, advice and support available. The experienced staff at Rich Cassidy Law will assist you from the time you contact us through the conclusion of your case. You can count on being treated humanely and courteously throughout the course of your time as our client.



Photo courtesy of Alison Redlich

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