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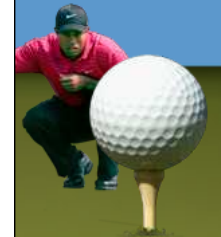


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Menu Foods claims update

Posted Jul 17, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jul 17, 2007 at 04:58 PM

A federal judge in NJ ordered [Menu Foods](#) to stop contacting customers who are seeking reimbursement for vet bills. A revised claims process may eventually be set up, so hang on to your receipts and paperwork.

Attorneys across the country are attempting to file class action lawsuits against Menu Foods. Many are no longer taking names, but I found one lawyer in Orlando who still is. If you are interested in participating, contact:

Luis Figuero
Martinez, Mangliardi, Diez-Arguless & Tejedor
Attorneys Trial Group
540 N. Semoran Blvd.
Orlando, FL 32807
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(0) [Comments](#)

Claim what's yours - for free

Posted Jul 03, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jul 03, 2007 at 04:17 PM

Tom B. knew he had some unclaimed funds being held by the state, he just didn't know how much. Investigators, accountants and other companies sent him mailers over the years offering to help him retrieve his money - for a fee. It is not illegal to make these offers, nor is it illegal to charge for these services. By why pay for it, when you can check for unclaimed property or money that's being held by the state for free>

Check out the [Bureau of Unclaimed Property](#).

(1) [Comments](#)

Airline Passenger Bill of Rights

Posted Jun 27, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Sep 19, 2007 at 04:10 PM

'9/19/07 update: The [Coalition](#) staged a "strand-in" designed to mimic conditions on a passenger-filled plane left for hours on a tarmac. [U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan](#) of Sarasota is the only Bay area lawmaker on the [House Subcommittee on Aviation](#). Share your viewpoints with him as he enters into debate and consideration for a Passenger Bill of Rights.

Spearheaded by the [Coalition for an Airline Passenger Bill of Rights](#), consumer advocates are in Washington, DC testifying in front of both the [U.S. Senate subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security](#) and the [U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure committee](#).

Travel industry groups such as [American Society of Travel Agents](#) are also weighing in.

The Bay Area has two lawmakers on these committees: [Rep. Vern Buchanan](#) and [Sen. Bill Nelson](#).

Share with us what you'd like to see included in the Airline Passenger Bill of Rights.

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Don't Take the Phishing bait

Posted Jun 19, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 19, 2007 at 05:02 PM

Ploys of refund information, threats of investigation - scammers are using those tactics to get you to give up personal information, or at the very least click on the links. DON'T DO IT. The IRS doesn't send unsolicited emails to taxpayers. The latest [phishing email](#) could also give a crook remote control to your computer.

Here's what to [do](#) if you get on of these in your inbox.

[\(0\) Comments](#)

Preventing Home Injuries

Posted Jun 18, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 18, 2007 at 12:44 PM

You think your home is the one place you'd be safe. But research shows home related injuries lead to 21-million medical visits and 20,000 deaths. The [Home Safety Council](#) has created a [brochure](#) with easy tips to help you make your home safer.

[\(0\) Comments](#)

Medical Tourism

Posted Jun 10, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 10, 2007 at 06:43 PM

Don't just let price be your guide if you choose to head overseas for surgery. Ask the following questions of the company setting up your "medical tour":

What is the doctor's education and experience? Where did he/she do his/her residency? Did he/she have any training in the U.S.? Sometimes you can confirm that with the educational institution he or she attended, but no school has the obligation to confirm. Also keep in mind some American doctors who have had their licensed revoked may be practicing outside of the country. If you find out the doctor previously practiced in the the U.S. or attended medical school in the U.S., contact that state's Board of Medicine to find out if any disciplinary action was ever taken.

How many procedures have they done? How many do they do?

What technique will the doctor use? Find out step by step. Ask about medications, tools, technology and equipment that will be used.

Review the contract. Figure out what rights you have and ones that you are waiving.

What is your recourse if something goes wrong, even after you return to the U.S.? No matter what the contract says, you may have little recourse if the company is based outside of the U.S., as there is no jurisdiction for American courts. The only possible exception: if an American doctor does the surgery and recruits patients in the U.S.

Talk to your primary care physician about what you're going to do. While he or she may discourage you from taking this step, they may end up offering some guidance, as they will be the one taking care of you when you return.

[\(2\) Comments](#)

The Kid's Room closes

Posted Jun 08, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 08, 2007 at 03:39 PM

[Hillsborough County Consumer Protection](#) is collecting complaints from consumers who paid [The Kid's Room](#), located on 302 N. Dale Mabry in Tampa, for furniture. The agency is working with the owner's bankruptcy attorney, Buddy Ford, to try to arrange delivery of furniture that may already be at the store and paid-for in full.

If you paid by credit card, immediately send a letter to your credit card company with proof of payment, disputing the charges. Send the letter via certified mail.

You may have to file a claim in bankruptcy court. You can check for when/if the case is filed on the court's [website](#).

[\(1\) Comments](#)

Sona MedSpa of Tampa update

Posted Jun 06, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 06, 2007 at 04:59 PM

Shortly after Sona MedSpa of Tampa abruptly shut its doors, you contacted me for help.

Those of you who paid by credit card should have already disputed the charges, in writing, to your credit card company for reimbursement.

Those of you who were not able to do so, we have help: local spa review company [TampaBayBeauty](#) has arranged for you to win free treatments and receive discounts. The offers expire July 1, 2007. Sign up [here](#). Again, these offers expire July 1st.

Sona MedSpa of Tampa was an independently owned franchise of [Sona MedSpa International](#). Bennlaser, LLC owned the franchise. As many of you may know, the company filed for bankruptcy. That information is provided in this [letter](#) that you should have received back in February.

If you're seeking treatment elsewhere and need your client file, this [follow up letter](#) that you should have received in March explains how you can get your information.

Before getting treatments at a medical spa, here's some questions to ask:

Do you follow the guidelines of the [International Medical Spa Association](#)?

How much experience does the person administering the treatment have with the treatments you're about to receive?

How long has this part of the spa's operation been up and running? Remember: a doctor can get a weekend certification and start providing the service next week. Is that sufficient enough background for you?

Stacey Brundage of TampaBayBeauty.com warns against treatments at a spa that just opened - "ones with bare walls, no pictures up yet". She warns the folks there may not have as much experience as they should.

(0) [Comments](#)

Airline bumping

Posted Jun 04, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated Jun 05, 2007 at 09:22 AM

- [Video: Flight bumps](#)

Passenger bumping is on the rise. The [American Society of Travel Agents](#) has a [tip sheet](#) to help you avoid the inconvenience, and know your rights if you are bumped.

If you are involuntarily bumped, you have rights to certain compensation, regulated by the [Department of Transportation's Air Consumer Protection Division](#). If you aren't satisfied, you can file a [complaint](#).

(1) [Comments](#)

Hurricane Supplies Tax Holiday

Posted May 31, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 31, 2007 at 02:28 PM

The Florida Department of Revenue has a [list](#) of items that qualify for the exemption.

(2) [Comments](#)

New Fire Standards for Mattresses

Posted May 30, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 30, 2007 at 05:14 PM

The [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) set new [standards](#) for mattress flammability, which take effect July 1st.

To see the difference these new materials can make, check out this [video](#). **Note: inclusion of this video in my blog is not an endorsement of its product.**

(0) [Comments](#)

Verizon's long distance service fee

Posted May 23, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 23, 2007 at 03:37 PM

[Verizon](#) has started charging a \$2/month fee to customers who have access to its long distance service on their landlines, but do not have a long distance service carrier. Verizon spokesman Bob Elek said the fee is for maintenance, upgrades and equipment to maintain the service.

You can eliminate the \$2 monthly fee by paying a one time fee. According to Elek, here's how the fees breakdown:

--\$5.50 to cancel/change your interstate (state-to-state) long distance service

--an additional \$1.24 to cancel/change your intrastate (within Florida, from Tampa to Panama City, for example) service at the same time as changing/cancelling your interstate service

--\$4.14 to cancel/change your intrastate service separately

(7) [Comments](#)

Unclaimed Property

Posted May 22, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 22, 2007 at 04:37 PM

Find out if you have money or items held for you by the state by checking out the Florida's [Unclaimed Property](#) division for free.

(3) [Comments](#)

Hurricane Window Protection

Posted May 19, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 19, 2007 at 04:42 PM

The [Institute for Business and Home Safety](#) has created a [buying guide](#) for window protection. IBHS' fantastic [grid](#) includes price ranges, pros, cons and other factors that can help you choose.

(3) [Comments](#)

Pool Cages

Posted May 15, 2007 by Victoria Lim
Updated May 15, 2007 at 04:54 PM

As storms approach, safety experts recommend slashing the screens in your pool cage to allow wind to pass through freely. That reduces the load and pressure on the frame so the entire structure doesn't collapse.

[Cage Works](#) has created a system that enables you to remove screens and stack them somewhere safely.

The average cost: 10% more than the cost of your typical pool cage. Pool cages and screens don't have certifications or ratings like hurricane shutters. That's why it's important to choose an installer who is [licensed](#) with the [Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation](#). You should also call the state's [Division of Consumer Services](#) to check on complaints: 1-800-435-7352.

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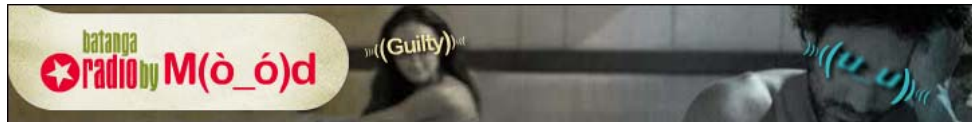
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