

K&K NEWSLETTER

Issue 5 – February 2026

**** Celebrating 93 Years of Service ****

💍 Love Is in the Air — But Is It *Legal* in Rhode Island?



Valentine's Day brings plenty of engagements 💍 — but what if you never make it to Town Hall to sign that marriage certificate?

Rhode Island is one of the few states that still recognizes common law marriage, meaning a couple *could* be considered married without ever saying “I do.”

But here's the catch ➡ proving a common law marriage exists can be long, costly, and complicated. The Court looks at how you hold yourself to the community, such as how you file taxes, list each other on insurance, and even what you tell friends and family.

If your intent is to be married — make it official.

The signature on that marriage certificate can save years of legal uncertainty later ♥

💡 *Have questions about your relationship rights or family law in Rhode Island?*

Contact K&K Law — we're here to help you protect what matters most.

Attorney Jesse Nason

Meet Pamela — *The Steady Force Behind Our Success*

Pamela LaPlante joined K&K in November 2021. She lives in Danielson, CT with her husband and dog Cutty.



If you have spent any time with our office, you already know Pamela. If you have not, it will not take long to understand why she is so universally admired. As our executive assistant, Pamela is the quiet engine that keeps everything running smoothly—and running well. Pamela has an extraordinary ability to keep everyone on task while maintaining a sense of calm and clarity, even on the busiest days. She manages client information with absolute care, precision, and discretion, earning the trust of clients and colleagues alike. Her attention to detail is matched only by her unwavering professionalism.

What truly sets Pamela apart, however, is her presence. She brings a calm, steady demeanor that puts clients at ease and keeps the office grounded. She is thoughtful, kind, and unfailingly supportive, and her positive energy is felt by everyone who walks through our doors.

Quite simply, everyone loves Pamela—and for good reason. We are incredibly fortunate to have her as part of our team, and we are grateful every day for the excellence, grace, and stability she brings to our firm.



 **Honoring a Legacy of Passion and Kindness:**
The Susan C. Russo Memorial Scholarship

Five years ago, our family established the Susan C. Russo Memorial Scholarship at Johnson & Wales University to celebrate Susan’s extraordinary life – her love of cooking, her generosity of spirit, and her passion for helping others.

From an early age, Susan found joy in the kitchen, preparing Sunday dinners alongside our mother, Janet. Those cherished family moments sparked her lifelong love for food — and a deeper inspiration to teach and share that joy with others.

As her skills and curiosity grew, Susan combined her love for writing, cooking, and teaching into a remarkable career. Her adventures across the United States and Europe deepened her appreciation for food, culture, and community — a connection she captured beautifully through her award-winning food blog, Food Blogga (<http://foodblogga.blogspot.com/>), where readers can still enjoy her delicious recipes and vivid storytelling. Her words didn’t just describe food — they made you *smell* and *taste* it.

Susan also authored two well-loved books:

- ***Recipes Every Man Should Know***, a witty and approachable cookbook “for hungry guys who want to learn their way around the kitchen.”
- ***The Encyclopedia of Sandwiches***, a delightful collection celebrating the history, creativity, and flavor of sandwiches across America. Susan often said with a smile, “Make life better, eat more sandwiches.”

To those who knew her, Susan was much more than a talented writer — she was a light. Friends lovingly called her the “Julie McCoy” of travel for her gift of crafting unforgettable adventures filled with culture, laughter, and connection. Her warmth, curiosity, and boundless generosity touched everyone around her.

Our family partnered with Johnson & Wales University to honor Susan’s legacy in a way that reflects her love of food and her spirit of giving. We chose JWU for its excellence in culinary arts and its forward-thinking College of Food Innovation & Technology, where tradition and innovation come together to educate future leaders in the culinary world.

Through this scholarship, we hope to help students pursue their dreams — nurturing new storytellers, chefs, and innovators who will keep Susan’s spirit alive in kitchens and classrooms around the world.

We know she’s smiling at the thought of helping the next generation follow their passion for food.

To support the Susan C. Russo Memorial Scholarship and help us continue Susan’s legacy, please visit:

 <https://alumni.jwu.edu/susan-russo-memorial-scholarship>

K&K GIVES BACK TO COMMUNITY

This season we were proud to sponsor the **Scituate Youth Soccer Boys U12 Division Team**. The boys worked hard, had fun and had a great year!

For the 2nd year in a row K&K happily sponsored the **Kent County YMCA Sea Otters Swim Team** for their annual fundraising swim challenge. The fundraiser was a great success!



For the 2nd year in a row K&K **adopted several families at the Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center** to provide them with an extra meaningful holiday experience! Please contact Savanna Noe at 401-738-9700 for more information.



2nd Annual K&K Scholarship Awards for West Warwick High School Students. Please visit: www.kirshenbaumri.com for details.

A CUP OF JUSTICE



We were honored and thrilled to help Joyce. She was an unfortunate victim of a company just not caring about their customers to make sure it was safe to walk in their store. A customer left a box returning items and the store was too busy to move it and poor Joyce fell and was badly injured. The company tried to deny the claim of course saying it was her fault for not paying attention. We kept pushing and in they caved and paid Joyce.

Congratulations Joyce!

Your Lawyers for Life.

THE HISTORY OF VALENTINE'S DAY

Saint Valentine, or Valentinus, was a priest who lived during the Roman Empire. He was imprisoned and sentenced to death for performing the marriage ceremonies of young soldiers after Emperor Claudius II made it a crime for young men to marry, believing single men made better soldiers. During his imprisonment, Saint Valentine is said to have healed the daughter of his jailer, with whom he was possibly in love. Before he was put to death, Valentine wrote her a farewell letter and signed it "Your Valentine."

About 200 years after the death of Valentine of Rome, Pope Gelasius named February 14 St. Valentine's Day. Some believe that the date was chosen not because of Saint Valentine's alleged burial date but as an alternative to a mid-February pagan holiday known as Lupercalia, a fertility festival in which young, unmarried women placed their names into an urn and bachelors chose a woman to be paired with for the rest of the year – an early form of dating.

Despite the fact that Saint Valentine was executed for facilitating forbidden unions and that the pagan holiday that allegedly inspired the date also paired off couples, the romantic connotation of Valentine's Day didn't emerge until the Middle Ages. By the 18th century, February 14 had become a day when people expressed their love for one another by exchanging presents, handmade cards (known as valentines), and, of course, sweet treats all around the world!

SIGN UP

K&K VALENTINE'S RAFFLE DRAWING: FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Visit www.kirshenbaumri.com Home Page



