



**RIZK  
ESSENTIALS**

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“THE LIFE JOURNEY OF RICHARD RIZK”

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“Do what you do best,  
plant seeds and they  
will bear fruit soon”  
- ***Mahfouz Rizk, M.D.***

# RIZK ESSENTIALS



## EARLY YEARS

Richard was born in Manhattan, New York near Central Park, but his family was soon forced out of the U.S. when his father's student visa lapsed. They could not go back to his father's country of origin (Egypt) because it was ruled by the dictator Gamal Nasser, who previously seized Rizk family assets, including several cotton factories.



Richard's father, Mahfouz Rizk, M.D., led his young family to a small village deep in the South American jungle, Kwakwani, Guyana. For two years, Richard's parents operated a sparsely equipped medical clinic for the Reynolds Aluminum Company there.

Eventually, Dr. Rizk was able to move the family back to the U.S. They lived in or near Cleveland, Ohio; Gary, Indiana; and Kankakee, Illinois.



*“Dad was a headstrong immigrant medical doctor from Egypt. Mom was an underestimated registered nurse from small town, central Indiana. We three lived in a ridiculously small flat in the Bronx on a tight budget until I was several months old when we left the urban jungle for the real jungle of Guyana where I learned to walk, swim and talk. I was stalked by a boa constrictor and swam with piranha in the local river. Whenever I face hard times, I think of obstacles my parents faced in those early days of my life.” - Richard Rizk*

## EARLY EDUCATION & TRAVELING

Thanks to the extraordinary grace and patience of his mother, Jane Dunn, Richard learned to read and write before grade school. (Jane helped launch a small Montessori school from a church basement.)

By then, the Rizk Family had moved to Kankakee, Illinois where his father, Dr. Rizk, worked as a private practice Obstetrician Gynecologist. After a few years Dr. Rizk became professionally successful, but regularly lost sleep over hospital politics and malpractice concerns.

The family traveled to Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. But parental tensions peaked during a trip to England the late 1970s. Richard's parents divorced a few years later.

Weary of parental drama, Richard saw independence through higher education. At age 13 Richard left home to attend Culver Military Academy in northern Indiana. Richard now sees his time at Culver as one of the most pivotal times in his life.

## STUTTERING IN GRADE SCHOOL

Children can be cruel, which is a lesson Richard learned growing up with a speech impediment.

*"I would stutter words beginning with T, D or F and kids loved to harass me about my fluent speech, over and over. On one occasion, my third-grade teacher singled me out to the rest of the class as a disabled student because of my speech.*

*"While other kids practiced sports after school, I took speech therapy sessions. By high school, the stutter was gone and so was my endurance for bullying. Overcoming stuttering and opportunistic bullies was one of my earliest and most enduring accomplishments. Those early challenges brought me deep empathy for underdogs and tenacity to finish off bad actors."*  
- Richard Rizk



*“Jon Shadid is the big brother I never had. He will always be a source of inspiration for me.”*

**– Richard Rizk**



## ■ JON SHADID

*"In 1975 a bitter civil war erupted in Lebanon when I was 12. I recall the news reports well, but none of it seemed particularly relevant to me until 1976 when I met Jon Shadid, then a handsome fluently English-speaking 17-year-old, with a giant smile, and a bigger heart. Months earlier, Jon escaped Lebanon, but not before being shot on the backside after a car chase which turned out to be a case of mistaken identity. The driver of his car was killed in the incident. Every few weeks Jon would gaze into space each time he learned that another of his friends at home perished in the conflict. A refugee without a home, Jon lived with my family for two or three years until he settled in at college.*



*"I felt Jon's silent pain although he never complained. Tragedy struck Jon again when his face caught fire while working on a car in freezing temperatures. He was able to put flames out by rolling in the snow, but his face was burned, and he was barely recognizable for several months.*

*"His face eventually healed, and he would go on to establish "The Caravan of Hope," a traveling educational initiative in Mauritania which stemmed the tide of AIDS in that country." – Richard Rizk*

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/54364/mauritania-aids-caravan-hope-travels-river-valley-break-taboos>

## ■ FRUITS OF LABOR

*"About the time stuttering faded away, I realized that my greatest bully was not my fellow classmates, but my own father. He was a confident, skilled surgeon of obstetrics at a time when surgeons were largely unquestioned.*

*"He built a successful medical practice from the ground up, took orders from no one and I learned from all of it. After he passed, I searched past emails from him for words of encouragement. I found these:*

*'Do what you do best,  
plant seeds and they will bear fruit soon'  
- Mahfouz Rizk, M.D.*



*“Mom endured his heavy hand for two decades until one day. That day, dad came home to an empty house. Dad never got over the failure of his marriage and I never forgot how poorly he treated me and mom because of it. They would divorce in 1980 or ‘81.*”



*“Mom would go on to earn her master’s degree in psychiatric nursing (valedictorian) and be honored as a ‘Prestigious Alumni’ by Barnes-Jewish Hospital for her charitable work in emerging central American nations. I would go on to found Rizk Law.” – Richard Rizk*

## **MILITARY SCHOOL & A SERIOUS CAR CRASH**

*“By age 13 I was singularly focused on removing myself from parental fighting as soon as possible. I quickly agreed when parents suggested a prestigious school about 80 miles from home. But there was a catch. The school, Culver, was a military school, and I was still a rebel. I was a good student, but I was underwhelmed by the “military dogma” and those who thrived in that environment. I graduated from Culver in 1981.” - Richard Rizk*



During the winter of 1980 Richard became terribly ill while at military school. After a finishing surgery, Dr. Rizk drove 85 miles to retrieve his ailing son from the school infirmary. But it was late at night, it had been snowing and Dr. Rizk was very tired.

Dr. Rizk fell asleep at the wheel at high speed and the car missed a turn and flipped over several times into a cornfield. Shivering, bleeding, and sick, Richard faded in and out of consciousness, eventu-

ally waking up in a hospital bed many miles away. This terrible experience is a source of Richard's motivation to help others in similar situations.

*"I was 17, recovering from mono and recovering from a life-threatening high-speed roll-over crash. Too young, hurt, and inexperienced to consider making an insurance claim on my father's auto policy. I wish I knew my future self then." - Richard Rizk*

## ■ YMCA CAMP COUNSELOR & LIFEGUARD

Richard spent about ten summers at Phantom Lake YMCA camp, first as a camper and then as a counselor, lifeguard, and boating instructor. There, he learned how to put others first while enjoying life in a caring community. At Phantom he first realized his natural story telling skills.



*"Outside my tent I heard sticks break and leaves shuffle. Someone was out there. I weaved it into the story, slowly building suspense toward the final reveal. The next day, a fellow counselor stopped me, 'My God, you are a natural'. The counselor would also become a defense lawyer. He would eventually introduce me to Lewis & Clark Law School. We are still friends.*

*"I told campfire tales and taught sailing, canoeing and row boating to school-aged children. I also worked as a lifeguard, a skill that would come in very handy much later in life.*

*"Phantom YMCA camp is a sacred place where lifetime friends are made. Although I am not a religious man, in life I strive to live by Phantom Lake's mantra:*

*'And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' (Luke 2:52)"*



## SPECIAL OLYMPICS



Richard's childhood stuttering experience helped him appreciate what it feels like to be ridiculed because of a deficit. He first coached Special Olympics in 1982 for an Illinois Special Olympic softball team and would later coach Special Olympics skiing on Oregon's Mount Hood.

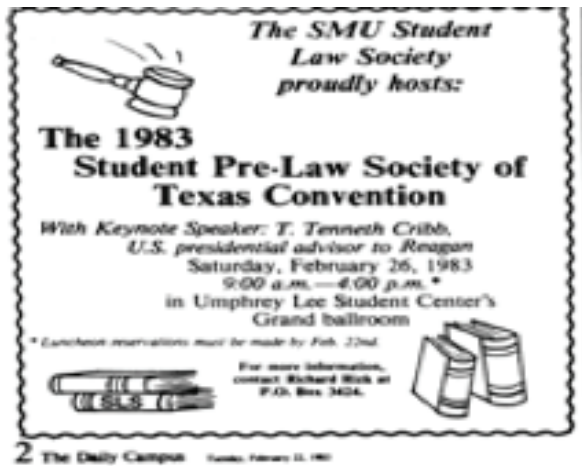
*"What a joyful experience! Our sluggers helped the team earn a silver medal. The season culminated in a dance party that left me overwhelmed with joy, humility, and hunger for more.*

*"I returned to coach Special Olympics in 2013. I was not a trained ski instructor at the time, but I became acquainted with the athletes better than in my softball coaching days.*

*"I recall one chair-lift ride with a soon-to-be adult athlete who privately shared his fears of losing his foster mother upon reaching majority age. At that moment, I felt the depth of his anxiety and vulnerability, all which made me embarrassed of my own problems and more eager to help deserving people like him.*

*"I continued to coach skiing until my hips required surgery a few years later. I did not realize that Special Olympics coaching would lead me to first class talent that would forever transform Rizk Law to becoming one of Portland's top plaintiff's law firms." - Richard Rizk*

## LEADER & PHOTOGRAPHER AT SMU



Richard earned degrees in Political Science and Advertising at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas, Texas. A close friend started the SMU Law Society. Richard became the group's second president. The group hosted speakers, such as educator Stanley Kaplan, judges and legal professionals with insights on law, the legal profession and law school.

Richard also served as a school photographer and developed student programs as a member of the SMU Program Council. Richard lived in Salzburg, Austria as an exchange student during his final semester at SMU. He traveled throughout Europe that summer.



*“Living in Europe helped me realize the glory of other cultures and people. American life presents one point of view. Take a peek outside a window. Other worlds are out there. I am so happy I took a turn off the main road to explore at a young age.”*  
– Richard Rizk



“Professor Mandiberg was my favorite law professor. She was so down to earth, smart as a tack but most of all she was kind and really cared.”

– ***Richard Rizk***

## LEWIS & CLARK LAW



Mr. Rizk relocated to Portland, Oregon in 1985 to attend Lewis & Clark Law School where he graduated in 1988. At LC Law Richard learned from Oregon's most talented and respected law professors. Richard explains:

*"At the time it seemed everyone I knew studied environmental law, but few ever worked in the field. I, on the other hand, studied zero environmental law, but would eventually be responsible for some of the largest environmental claims in the county."*

*"Professors I learned from were legends of law, including Bill Newell (contracts), Jack Bogdanski (tax) and Susan Mandiberg (criminal law). L&C law was already nationally known for its environmental program."*

*"Professor Mandiberg was my favorite law professor. She was so down to earth, smart as a tack but most of all she was kind and really cared. I looked up to her and wanted to be like her. On March 7th, 2020, L&C recognized her accomplishments at a gala event — that was the last large social event I attended as the coronavirus pandemic broke open just a few days later. I felt the beginnings of a seismic shift. Earlier in the day at the same venue a funeral occurred for a former L&C law student who died - an apparent suicide, I heard. Law school is a distant memory now, one I treasure deeply." - Richard Rizk*

Rich fell in love with the City of Roses during his law school years. And his respect for Lewis & Clark Law as an institution has deepened so much that he has since hired several law clerks from LC, two of whom graduated Cum Laude from LC and who are now Associate Lawyers with Rizk Law.

## EARLY INSURANCE DEFENSE & PLAINTIFF FIRM EXPERIENCE

Richard first began learning the insurance game in 1987 while still in law school after landing a position with Oregon's largest workers' compensation insurance company, SAIF corporation. There he learned from many talented lawyers. One, Jerome Larkin, would later work for Rizk Law writing long term disability appeals.



When SAIF permanently relocated to Salem in the late 1980s, Mr. Rizk accepted a clerking position with then prominent Portland personal injury firm, Vick & Gutlzer, where he continued drafting appeals and pleadings in workers' compensation matters, but for injured persons, not an insurance company. Coincidentally, Vick & Gutlzer's former office is only a few blocks away from Rizk Law's current building in Portland's Johns' Landing neighborhood.

## ■ NATIONWIDE/WAUSAU INSURANCE: DEFENSE OF OREGON BUSINESS



**Nationwide**<sup>®</sup>  
is on your side



In 1990 Mr. Rizk accepted an associate lawyer position with Wausau Insurance, then a subsidiary of Nationwide Insurance. In that role he defended Oregon businesses in workers' compensation and personal injury matters. Richard explains

*"I travelled all over Oregon in that job and learned all about a wide range of industries, from large timber operations to small mom-and-pop machine shops. It was an adventure.*

*"In my first hearing ever, a claimant in a workers' compensation case I defended told a story. It sounded plausible, but something was off. After the claimant finished her description of the accident, I looked her in the eye to ask, 'What really happened?' She burst out in tears, 'I lied, I injured myself at home, not at work.' The judge and jury turned to each other in disbelief. My first case and first win.*

*"In my first trial I defended Blitz Wienhard Brewing in a case where the plaintiff argued that a can of beer brewed by the company exploded, causing the plaintiff injury. Neither I nor the jury found the story believable and I won easily after getting a personal tour of the old, now-defunct brewery on Burnside.*

*"Another matter required travel to Burns, Oregon. I flew into Bend from Portland and then drove to Burns to find a short, handwritten note on the hearing door, 'Richard, the hearing has been cancelled.' After shaking off momentary anger, I decided to make the most of Burns, so I drove my rented Tempe - cheaper than a Taurus - to where I thought a lake would be. A nice place to read, I thought. But the lake was all dried up, so I continued up a large, steep, barren hill. I noticed dust and smoke in the distance.*

*"Then the ground shook. As I reached the crest, I could see a hundred or more cattle stampeding toward my little Tempe. I furiously yanked the car into reverse, but the herd was gaining on me. I could not believe it. All that studying to be a lawyer and I was about to die in a cattle stampede. But the cattle parted like the red sea and I lived to tell the story.*

*“That would not be my only brush with danger while defending Oregon businesses for Nationwide Insurance. I had so many out of town matters. If possible, I would fly in, conduct business, and return the same day. So, on one sunny day in the early 1990s I was in Redmond, Oregon preparing to board a small commercial passenger propeller plane back to Portland.*

*“As I walked toward the plane, I noticed a Rabbi dressed in traditional garb waving his arms emotionally while talking to the apparent pilot. As I walked past, I heard the Rabbi express concerns about the weather. ‘What is he worried about, I thought. It’s a sunny day.’*

*“I ended up sitting next to the Rabbi. As we passed Mount Hood on the left, the plane shook violently, and again and again. Suddenly, the plane was in free fall, tumbling, not flying. The motor became silent leaving only the sound of the wind as we tumbled, I saw the ground becoming closer and closer on each tumble.*

*“Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, the plane engine revived, caught momentum and began flying again. After one more much briefer engine failure we made it back to PDX. All passengers were pale but happy to be back.*

*“About 1991, I was assigned to defend a workers’ compensation claim in Astoria, Oregon where there was no hearings office. Instead, the hearing was to be held in an old school building from a time gone past. To greet me was an older, seemingly experienced plaintiff attorney who would later become a judge (Mr. X). Almost immediately after I sat down, Mr. X launched into a homophobic, profanity-laced diatribe about the judge (Mr. ). Almost immediately after I sat down, Mr. X launched into a homophobic, profanity laced diatribe about the judge who would be hearing the case. I looked ahead and said nothing.*

*“Then, the judge walked in from a side door, his face beet red. Mr. X proceeded with his opening statement. I began mine but was cut off by the judge who declared he could not proceed with the case and abruptly left the room without further comment.*

*“After leaving, Mr. X raised his voice at me demanding to know what I had done. I stood up. Looked Mr. X in the eye and left the room without a word. A month or so later another judge resumed the case and summarily declared I had won, without hearing any evidence.*

*“By the mid-1990s, I honestly believed I was a rather good insurance defense attorney, not fully realizing that the deck was stacked in favor of defense lawyers. I knew methods insurance defense lawyers used to undermine claims very well. I did not see the bigger picture yet.*

*“One day, after returning from a hard-fought and eventually victorious legal battle, I rode the elevator. To my surprise, the president of my insurance company, Galen Barnes, walked in. This is my big chance to share a victory with top brass, but he*

was unimpressed, barely acknowledging me. Galen was an underwriting numbers guy and I was still a small number.

*"In a flash, I realized how little my work really mattered. I rush-read the works of Tony Robbins, Napoleon Hill, Dale Carnegie and enrolled in their self-development courses. I soon understood that I needed a focused purpose addressing a worthy, unmet societal demand that played to my strengths. But what?"*

*"By this time, I was living in a houseboat on the Columbia River and commuting to Beaverton. I love life on the water. All my friends had boats and I sailed a small 24-foot boat regularly. Life on the water was grand, but bigger things lay elsewhere." - Richard Rizk*

## NATIONWIDE INSURANCE: ENVIRONMENTAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

### HOW INSURANCE COMPANIES SETTLE CASES

BY DAVID FRANGIAMORE

In 1996 Richard earned a transfer and promotion to Nationwide Insurance's home office for environmental claims in suburban Chicago, Illinois. There, he supervised environmental insurance coverage litigation and claims across the United States. In that role, he resolved and managed environmental litigation for some of the highest exposure claims Nationwide Insurance had at the time. Mr. Rizk explains:

*"Nationwide's environmental claim unit (ECU) was the brainchild of former plaintiff attorney and insurance guru Bill Cor-*

*mack. Bill turned insurance on its head by creating a claims unit filled mostly with attorneys. He designed the ECU to become a profit center, rather than a money pit, as claims units traditionally have always been. "The ECU made money by setting up other recalcitrant insurers who owed the policyholder polluter a duty to defend suits against it but did not.*

*"The job played to my negotiating and litigation management strengths. It was akin to playing three chess games at once:*

- 1. Managing the insurance coverage disputes made by the alleged polluters*
- 2. Managing the underlying claims made by those harmed by the pollution*
- 3. Pursuing claims against other responsible insurance companies and parties*

*"My work required in-depth understanding of insurance coverage laws of many states. As a result, after a couple of years I pieced together a 'big picture' of it all - insurance coverage law, how insurance companies operate and negotiate, what makes them hunker down and what makes them sweat. Armed with this knowledge and experience, by the year 2000 I was ready to set out on my own." - Richard Rizk*

## LIFE IN CHICAGO

*Richard discusses his time in Chicago:*

*“I loved visiting old friends and family while in Chicago. Every summer weekend we sailed Lake Michigan and just under propeller planes flying out of now defunct Meigs Field.*

*“Our sailboat was moored at Burnham Harbor, just a couple hundred yards from Soldier Field, so we would walk from the boat to concerts and events at nearby museums. One time I recall hearing party music while on the boat. I followed the sounds to Grant Park where the B-52s played impromptu for folks hanging out in the park. I miss those days, but winters were brutal, and I longed for my true home, Portland Oregon!” - Richard Rizk*



## RETURN TO PORTLAND



*“In the fall of 2000, I moved back to Portland. I married someone who was not right for me and took a job at a well-respected, uptight law firm without vision. The law firm would eventually crumble due to its top-heavy hubris and over-investment in the real estate market. In the end, neither the job nor the marriage would work out long-term, but those experiences would lead me to create a law firm of my own and a person to share it with, Jill Rizk, Rizk Law’s current paralegal. But first there would be turbulence.” - Richard Rizk*



## ■ RIZK LAW STARTS ITS ENGINES

# RIZK♦LAW

### “Helping Everyday People, Every Day”

*“In the early 2000s, Rizk Law was a one man show: me. Nimble and hungry, I wanted to ‘slay the dragon’ at trial, in a difficult case against a formidable opponent. I called around in search of such a case. ‘Be careful what you ask for,’ a colleague chuckled, continuing ‘You’ll have fun with this one.’*

*“Parents of a young restaurant server helped her with the down payment for a beautiful, shiny, new convertible sport car. One night, the daughter had a few friends over but ended up talking on the phone with a known car thief instead. The next morning, the sports car was gone.*

*“Her parents submitted a claim for the stolen car, which was later found ransacked and without the shifter. The insurer predictably denied the claim, alleging that the young lady had arranged for the car to be stolen the night before, which seemed obvious given the preceding long phone call with Mr. X.*

*“The insurance company’s star witness was the young server’s roommate who testified by video that the server confided in the roommate about the server’s plot to steal the sportscar and had given roommate the gear shifter to keep as a memento, which the roommate dramatically produced during her testimony.*

*“When the time came for my cross examination of the roommate, I set aside my prepared questions, looked at the witness and said, ‘You look different today’. I continued, ‘You have a wig on, don’t you? Everything unraveled for the defense from that point on. Verdict for the plaintiff.*

*“It was not among our biggest or most difficult cases. But it was an early win at trial against an insurer who was blindsided by its own arrogance. For that reason, I will never forget it.*

*“I also should mention one hairy trial loss I would rather forget. But that case is on appeal. The fat lady has not sung. It’s not over ‘til it’s really over and it’s rarely, really over.” – Richard Rizk*

## ■ CASCADE SKI CLUB LEADER

A lifelong downhill skier, Richard joined Cascade Ski Club. In 2005 he was selected club president, a position he held through 2008. His leadership at Cascade Ski club was documented in the Oregon State Bar Bulletin in 2011.

<https://www.osbar.org/publications/bulletin/11jan/profiles.html>

*“When I became President of Cascade, I had no idea the club would need my skills as a litigation manager. Unbeknownst to me, the club was on the precipice of disaster. I soon discovered that a prior president had embezzled several hundred thousand dollars from the club, was still incarcerated, and as a result, Cascade was burdened by significant debt. At the same time, a ski resort asserted rights to the land Cascade owned. It was not easy, but by the end of my tenure as president we resolved the land dispute, remodeled our lodge, and hired a first-class manager pictured below on the far left. I loved Cascade so much Jill and I decided to get married there. For the last few years, I have been Cascade’s volunteer legal counsel.” – Richard Rizk*



*“Even though I graduated from  
LC Law over 30 years ago, it  
seems like yesterday!”*  
**– Richard Rizk**

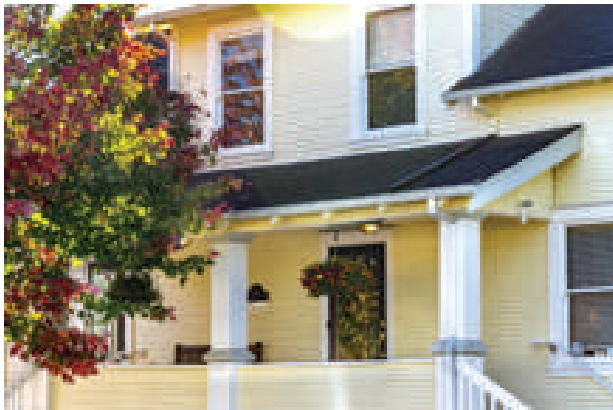


## RIZK LAW MOVES TO PORTLAND

Initially, Rizk Law operated from Washington County, Oregon. After the economic recession between 2008 and 2009, Rizk Law moved its office from Washington County to Multnomah County and eventually to its current location on South Iowa Street.

*“With success, I hired more law clerks, most of whom would become associate lawyers at Rizk Law and most of whom were from Lewis and Clark Law School. I have also hired paralegals who studied at Portland Community College.*

*“Recently, Lewis & Clark Law school approached me about possibly becoming an adjunct professor teaching Insurance Law. I cannot help but feel the wheel turn full circle. Even though I graduated from LC Law over 30 years ago, it seems like yesterday!” – Richard Rizk*



## CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATE

*Diversity & Inclusion: Making Us Stronger*



## ■ DISABILITY RIGHTS OREGON ASSIGNMENT- DAMMASCH STATE HOSPITAL

During the summer of 1987, Richard accepted an internship at Disability Rights Oregon, then known as Oregon Advocacy. Inspired by his mother's work in psychiatric nursing, he requested an assignment at the now defunct Dammasch State Hospital, a mental hospital and asylum for the mentally ill located in Wilsonville, Oregon.

*"Working at Dammasch was gut-wrenching. Human suffering dripped from the building's walls. It was my job to protect the civil rights of patients at Dammasch, including their rights to access mail, make telephone calls and receive treatment.*

*"One day I will never forget. A former clergyman and patient stopped me in the hall as profane non sequiturs echoed in the halls. As he came closer, I could see he had something important to say. I stepped a half step back to minimize the impact of unbelievably bad breath. 'Why can't people just love each other?' he asked. I looked him in the eye and replied, 'I don't know, I don't know.' I quickly made my way to the restroom to silently cry outside anyone's view." – Richard Rizk*



## ■ OREGON STATE BAR DELEGATE (PORTLAND)



*"In 2013, I served as Portland's delegate to the Oregon State Bar. I would advocate and vote on matters impacting my constituents. Most matters were boring and procedural. However, one meeting in 2013 was vastly different and quite contentious.*

*"The issue? Should the Oregon State Bar support same sex marriage?"*

*"During the debate one lawyer who seemed to have strong feelings on the issue stood and exclaimed, 'If we allow same sex marriages, what is next, men marrying mules?'"*

*"There were audible gasps while I quietly moved toward the microphone to speak. I turned to the main who feared mules and said, 'Men may not be able to marry mules, but you sir are an ass.' The crowd went berserk and the other lawyer rushed me." – Richard Rizk*

The resolution to support gay marriage passed. You can read more about this contentious meeting here:

[https://www.oregonlive.com/news/oregonian/steve\\_duin/2013/11/steve\\_duin\\_in\\_oregon\\_it\\_turns.html](https://www.oregonlive.com/news/oregonian/steve_duin/2013/11/steve_duin_in_oregon_it_turns.html)

## LITIGATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN

Richard Rizk and Rizk Law associate lawyer Alex Pletch have filed several cases against those responsible for sex abuse to minor children as well as persons hurt by aggressive actions of the police. These cases are active. More details will emerge as these cases enter trial, which should be soon.

*“We are passionate about seeking justice for people who have been bullied and taken advantage of in humiliating ways by others. We recently resolved a case against a school-age child who was hit in the face by a skateboard pro bono (without charge to our client) simply because the bully needed to be held accountable.*

*“I wish I knew a trustworthy firm to call when I was bullied as a child. I know how terrifying childhood can be without true allies.” – Richard Rizk*

## SOUTH PORTLAND NEIGHBORHOOD



*“From 2018 to 2020, I sat on the board of directors for the South Portland Neighborhood Association (SPNA). SPNA had been feeling pressure from one or two city council persons who sought to limit the group’s role because SPNA was, in their eyes, a ‘racially exclusive’ club underrepresenting lower income people and persons of color.*

*“In that context, the then president of SPNA brought up ‘lynching’ one of his minority political opponents. Although I did not believe his comments were meant literally, I found his word choice highly offensive, so I privately confronted this person about his inappropriate remarks. He summarily resigned before the next meeting.” – Richard Rizk*

## BUILDING A BETTER PORTLAND

From 2018 to June, 2020 Richard served as the South Portland Business Association (SBPA) President and took great pride in his work to help build a better Portland, which he considers his true home.



## ZIDELL YARDS V. CITY OF PORTLAND



Photo from: ZRZ Realty Co.

At the start of 2018 Zidell Marine, a former shipbuilder on the west bank of the Willamette River was about to complete its ambitious redevelopment of the former shipyard grounds. Currently, both travel ways end abruptly, preventing continuous travel by foot, bicycle, or car along the river. But as projected costs skyrocketed, neither the city nor Zidell wished to pay for the new project shortfall.

*“As a South Portland resident and business owner, I realized the importance of through streets to increase access to the area and to reduce traffic backups when special events (such as concerts) occur, or in the event of a catastrophe, such as an earthquake. Knowing I needed support from other community members to make this happen, I met with Mayor Wheeler, his staff, the then president of the SPNA and other stakeholders.*

*“My goal was to convince Mayor Wheeler and the City Council to re-open negotiations with Zidell so the Zidell property could be redeveloped for greater public use, Bond Street could be completed, and the river walk could also be completed. So far, my efforts have not been successful, but we will prevail to the benefit of all who live and work here in Portland.” – Richard Rizk*

[https://www.oregonlive.com/news/erry-2018/07/e0361af51f8546/millions\\_in\\_infrastructure\\_cos.html](https://www.oregonlive.com/news/erry-2018/07/e0361af51f8546/millions_in_infrastructure_cos.html)