

702 3 2 1 Clients often come into my office with complicated contract disputes. These can be difficult and expensive.

Friends, today I offer some insight to law abiding citizens on avoiding half of all legal problems. Under our common law tradition, civil actions can be divided roughly into two categories: tort and contract. Injury for negligent conduct, such as may be involved in an automobile or boat collision, gives the injured party a cause of action in tort. Injury from breach of contract, such as incomplete repair work, improper repair, nonpayment, supply of defective goods, or unworkmanlike performance, gives the injured party a cause of action in contract.

Listen to me very carefully. You can choose the party with whom you contract. You cannot always pick the person who will cause a car wreck, but you can always choose the party with whom you contract. If you choose to do business with crooks, or litigation freaks, legal problems will follow. But you can choose to do business with reputable persons or firms with a track record of avoiding litigation.

In summary, to avoid contract disputes do business only with good people. This will avoid legal problems more effectively than any contract language ever drafted by a lawyer.

Now insights on the boat business from two who have been there.

This just in from Walter who has a proven method to earn \$1 million in the retail boat business. Says Walter, it's a two step method. Step one: invest \$2 million of your hard earned money into a retail boat business . . . step two: sell fast before you lose

701 3 2 1 This year, to set the tone for our study of admiralty and maritime law, let's loosen up with some lawyer jokes. Remember, jokes are like lawyers, some are good, some are not so good, and some are bad. Here's a full assortment.

What's the difference between a lawyer and a vampire? A vampire only sucks blood at night.

Why won't sharks bite lawyers? Professional courtesy.

How can you tell when a lawyer is lying? His lips are moving.

How cold was it on the coldest day of the year? It was so cold, I saw a lawyer with his hands in his own pockets.

Where can you find a good lawyer? In the cemetery.

The Tooth Fairy, an honest lawyer, and a drunk walked down Calhoun street and together they came upon a \$100 bill. Who do you think fell on the \$100, wrestled it to the ground, and promptly took it to the nearest bar? The drunk, of course, the other two are mythical characters.

What's the difference between a lawyer and a bucket of warm vomit? The bucket.

What's the difference between a dead rattlesnake in the road and a dead lawyer in the road. Skid marks in front of the rattlesnake.

Said the high priced out of town lawyer to his new client, "No need to worry, I will be arriving before your trial with my own witnesses."

Why do so many lawyers have broken noses? Chasing parked ambulances.

What's the difference between lawyers and admiralty lawyers?

Admiralty lawyers drink more, swim faster, and use high floatation business cards.

Ok, enough for one day. Now, for those of you who own dogs and know what dogs think of their owners, I will close with a prayer brought to my attention by attorney, Robert Carpenter, "Lord, please help me become, the kind of person my dog thinks I am."

More next week on The Admiralty Docket. Until then, remember your rights and responsibilities may change as you approach the shore and may God Almighty grant you pleasant sailing. 701