



SHOULD THE NAMES OF POLICE OFFICERS BE MADE PUBLIC?

By James Abrenio,

BenGlassLaw DUI and Criminal Defense Attorney

In the wake of cases like John Geer and countless national news headlines about police misconduct, the Virginia Senate has passed a bill that would prevent the disclosure of all police officer and deputy sheriff names in Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.



It appears that this bill was drafted in response to a November Court ruling that permitted the newspaper *The Virginian Pilot* to access the names, agencies, and employment dates for Virginia law enforcement. The newspaper sought this information because it wanted to examine how often officers who got into trouble were able to find other jobs in law enforcement.

The argument in support of this bill: our culture has changed and law enforcement is now subject to threats of violence from the public, al-Qaeda, ISIS and, apparently, the hacking group Anonymous.

Look, I get that being in law enforcement is difficult. Most in law enforcement are good people just trying to do their jobs, like any of us. And, of course, no one wants to subject them to violence or harm. But this is NOT the answer. Keeping these records public provides a check on patronage abuses, favoritism, discrimination and moonlighting by public employees at the public's expense.

In our criminal justice system, there must be MORE transparency, not less. Were this bill signed into law, it would place the General Assembly's stamp on a truly concerning law, a law that says to the public, "You do not have a right to know what is going on behind closed doors." And it will only widen the gap of trust between law enforcement and a skeptical public.

The bill has been tabled in the Virginia House, delaying the debate and potentially killing the bill, but we must stay vigilant should the topic arise again. ■

What do you think? Email jabrenio@benglasslaw.com

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Letters to the Editor

In March, Ben wrote a story on Virginia colleges in our Inside the Mind of Ben Glass Report. "You are Nuts if You are Thinking about Leaving Virginia for College" drew a lot of great responses, and we wanted to publish them here.

Angela Hampton writes:

Hi, Ben! I was pleased to read your opinion in "You are Nuts if You Are Thinking about Leaving Virginia for College." Despite the state of our State here in Illinois, after spending six years in higher education at one of our many fantastic community colleges, it became very apparent to me that paying more for a private or out-of-state institution does not equal happiness or success- and it certainly doesn't equal financial security.

Many of our local students are willing to pay 10x the cost of community college tuition simply because they want to "get away from home," or have a "more prestigious" name on their diploma. Yet, as anyone in higher education can attest to, some of the most successful doctors, lawyers, marketers, and tradesmen have come directly from these community colleges and without the financial baggage that out-of-state and private school students must bear.

After spending the better part of a decade helping high school students plan their transition to the workplace, I can vouch for the fact that most employers share your opinion on what they look for in potential hires. I never interviewed a single employer who cared about what school is listed on a student's diploma. While I'm sure there are a few exceptions to that rule, as you stated, it matters much more what you are made of and how hard you are willing to work to grow and learn.

The growing student loan epidemic is due in large part to students who believed that the name of their college or how pretty the campus is mattered more than the interest rates on their loans. How refreshing it is to hear about a Dad educating his teens on such an important subject. Parents everywhere should thank you!

Dixon Hemphill (a name readers will recognize!) writes:

Hi, Ben,

With reference to your article about leaving Virginia for college, I am in full agreement with your comments. To prove my point, the following members of our family chose Virginia schools:

Daughter - James Madison; Grandsons - two at Radford, one at Roanoke; Granddaughter - Virginia Tech. We believe Virginia schools are among the best in the country.

On another subject, You and your staff certainly got me off to a good start as regards recognition of my running ability. I have recently been given two awards: the 2015 Potomac Valley Track Club Outstanding Athlete Award and the 2015 DC Road Runners Outstanding Male Masters Award.

Regards, Dixon

We love getting responses to the newsletter. Want to comment on an article? Email staff@benglasslaw.com ■

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How to Spend Less and Have More Fun This Summer Vacation

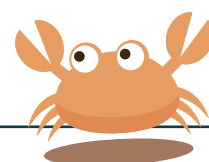
destination and try to book around it. You'll also avoid the biggest crowds this way, especially if you're planning a beach vacation.



Tip #3: Budget for souvenirs and other impulse buys

Don't just plan ahead financially, plan for space in your bags, as well. Nothing will make you hate a pointless knick-knack more than not being able to fit it in your bag for the return journey. It can also help to give kids a heads up before the trip. "You can each get one souvenir or t-shirt" prepares a child psychologically for what to expect, and can help avoid a mountain of impulse buys.

Good luck on your vacation planning, and welcome to summer! ■



BGL's Best Bites: FAMILY FAVORITE — CHICKEN FRANÇAISE

Ingredients:

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
(flattened out a bit for even cooking)

3 eggs

4 oz grated Romano cheese

1 tsp sea salt

½ tsp white pepper

1 tsp dried parsley

Olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan

1 tsp paprika

1 cup flour

1 ½ cups chicken stock



1 tsp garlic powder

1 or 2 lemons

4 tbs butter

Directions:

1. Whisk together eggs, Romano cheese, parsley, salt, paprika, garlic powder, and white pepper. Set aside.
2. Heat oil until the surface of your pan becomes very wavy and smoke just starts to rise.
3. Dredge chicken in the flour on both sides. Tap lightly to remove excess.
4. Coat chicken in egg mixture, allowing excess egg to drip off.
5. Fry each side of chicken until a light golden color.
6. When all the chicken is done, pour in a splash of the chicken stock. Be careful because it will steam and may splatter hot oil.
7. With a spatula or wooden spoon, deglaze the pan.
8. Add the rest of the chicken broth and wait until it starts to slowly boil.
9. Add the butter and stir constantly until it incorporates into the broth.
10. Add the juice of one lemon. If you're a lemon fanatic, add a second lemon.
11. Pour your glorious sauce over the chicken and serve with pasta, rice, or vegetables.

Enjoy your Chicken Française! ■

WHAT WE'VE DONE FOR VIP MEMBERS RECENTLY



- Helped interpret a contract not drafted by a lawyer regarding a personal loan (and what could be done now, years later)
- Strategized with a local business owner about how to get more quality customers through the door (yes, we know this isn't legal help, but Ben Glass is a marketing expert)
- Answered questions about a Homeowners' Association and changes a property owner wanted to make to his house

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*What has the BENGLASSLAW VIP
Program been doing recently?
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How to Spend Less and Have More Fun This Summer Vacation



Tip #1: Book your plane reservations early, but wait to book your hotel

It's common sense that the longer you wait to book a flight, the more expensive it will be, but the opposite is true for hotels. Most hotels are only 60% occupied on any given day. The closer you are to check-in, the more those prices will drop, because the hotel has an incentive to fill rooms quickly. Unless you know for a fact that every hotel in the city will be booked (for a major holiday or event), your wallet is better off waiting.



Tip #2: Avoid "Peak of the Peak" travel dates

Most Americans vacation during the summer, so you will likely already be paying a peak rate for your trip, but you will be paying the peak of the peak prices from early July through early August. If you are able to book in June or late August, your budget will take less of a hit. "Google" the busiest times of year for your target

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