

## *This Spring,* **GROW** *Where You're* **PLANTED**

By Tammy H.



*As spring arrives and flowers begin to make their appearance on porches and in meadows, I want to share with you a way of thinking that I was taught during my nine years of service in the United States Marine Corps: grow where you're planted.*

**Service members and their families are all too familiar with the uncertainty of their futures.** Sometimes you're not sure where you're going to be the next month, let alone the next year. Duty stations change, training exercises begin and end, and deployments happen at a moment's notice. And every change requires a new plan for your family and future. Sometimes those plans don't always work out like you thought they would.

**This fact of life isn't restricted to military families alone.** We all find ourselves, at times, with expectations that have not been met and plans that must change. Not long ago, I found myself making a drastic career change just shy of 30 after a spinal fusion ended my military aspirations (and my ability to sneeze without bracing myself.) The cards I was dealt in life were taken from me, shuffled, and tossed into the air in an unwanted game of 52 Pickup. And I'll be honest with you, I spent many days feeling sorry for myself and lamenting the loss of where I thought my life would go. But at some point, I had to pick up my cards and get back into the game. And five years later, I find myself with a great job that I love, a wonderful husband, a house, and a brand-new puppy who has almost stopped biting my toes 24/7. None of that would have happened without a change in attitude and the desire to grow, no matter the circumstances.

**Ask yourself, what sort of things help you grow?** Is it support from your friends and family? New educational pursuits? Physical fitness? Immaculately crafted spreadsheets? Whatever you find that gives your life purpose and meaning, harness its power and use that to move and propel yourself forward.

**So, what do you do when all your life plans are blown around like dandelion seeds in the breeze?** Grow where you're planted. Adapt to the situation and overcome your challenges. Wherever your roots are forcefully put down, spread them out and grow. Grow like a weed. Grow in the sun and in the rain. Grow in gardens and between the cracks in the concrete. And when someone reaches into the soil and tries to pull out your roots, grow back just as big and strangle their azaleas. ■



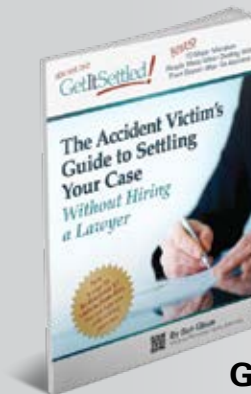
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## BGL INSIDER: CASES WE'VE SETTLED



### DISABILITY

- **Last month we wrote about the life insurance case Ben argued to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and this month we are so happy to report that... we won!** The Court agreed that on the larger of the two policies at issue, the policy language was crystal clear, and our client was entitled to life insurance benefits. She and her kids are feeling relieved, but we are not quite done yet as we continue to work to have Lincoln Financial reimburse our client's court costs—including our legal fees...with interest since 2015!
- **In a different case, it's always nice to get a win without even having to fire a shot. Our client worked on oil rigs as an engineer, and he was disabled by back problems.** Cigna refused to pay his short-term disability, even though he had a physically demanding job, was receiving treatment for his back condition, and all of his doctors agreed that not aggravating his back further was an important part of his recovery. We will never understand why disability insurance companies reject such clear and well-supported claims. Maybe it was because our client was out of the U.S., and they figured no lawyer would take such a complicated case? They should know us better than that by now! **When he found us, our client had exhausted his appeals, and his last resort was to file a lawsuit.** To begin our case, we requested his entire claim file from Cigna. We were pleasantly surprised to get back not a claim file, but a claim approval letter! Cigna approved his short-term disability claim and said they would evaluate his claim for long-term disability if we got them updated medical records. We did that and got an approval letter for long-term disability this week.

***Pro tip: we see plenty of short-term disability denials that seem like a clear attempt by the insurance company to avoid what may become a long-term disability claim. BenGlassLaw will review any letter you get from a disability or life insurance company for free. ■***

## BGL's Best Bites:

# TEMBLEQUE PUERTO RICAN COCONUT PUDDING

*By Sydnie Coffee (BGL Intern)*

This traditional recipe comes from my Spanish teacher. Enjoy!

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Additional: 3 hours

Total: 3 hours 15 minutes

Yield: 6 4-ounce servings

### Ingredients:

2 (14 ounce)  
cans coconut  
milk

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon  
kosher salt

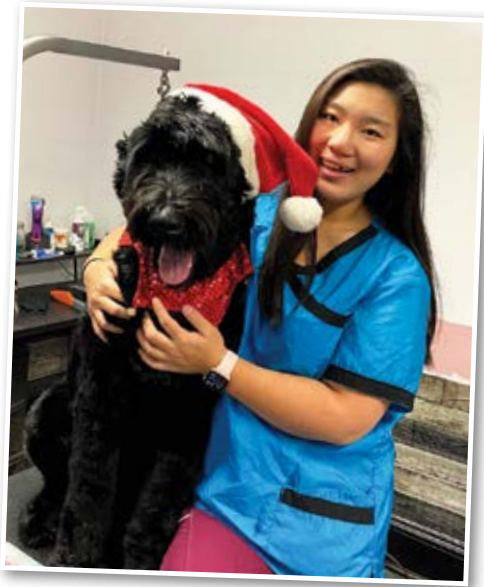
$\frac{1}{2}$  cup cornstarch

1 pinch ground cinnamon



### Directions:

- 1 Stir coconut milk, sugar, and salt together in a saucepan. Spoon a few tablespoons of the coconut milk mixture into a small bowl and stir cornstarch into the mixture to dissolve; pour into the mixture in the saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil while stirring constantly; cook until smooth and thick, about 5 minutes.
- 2 Pour the coconut milk mixture into molds, cover each with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until cold and firm, 3 hours to 2 days.
- 3 Run a thin knife around the edges of the mold and invert onto a plate to remove the pudding. Garnish with sprinkled cinnamon. ■



## Leah's Tips for DOG OWNERS

*Most people are aware that puppies need to be brushed, bathed, and have their nails trimmed on a regular basis. Some dogs need to be professionally groomed to not only look their best but also to stay healthy.*

Common breed, long-haired dogs like doodles, golden retrievers, schnauzers, Shih Tzus, Poodles, shelties, some terriers, and some spaniels (to name a few) benefit from regular grooming. Many owners rely on groomers to do the job. As a groomer, I have some tips to make your and your dog's experience more pleasant.

**It is important for dog owners to maintain their pets' coats by frequently brushing them—ideally once a day.** If a dog is not brushed daily, it can cause matting in its coat. You may not see the mats, but you can feel them, especially under the limbs, tail, and ears. If your dog's hair gets badly matted, the groomer may not be able to de-mat it and will need to shave it out. This is the number one problem I have as a groomer; owners want their dogs to be trimmed, not shaved, but if the dog's hair is matted, I do not have a choice. Mats cannot be combed out, the only way to get rid of them is to cut under the fur with a blade (like sheering a sheep).

**Severe matting is not only difficult to groom (resulting in having to be shaved), but also harmful to the dog.** The mats prevent air circulation and pull on the dog's skin. The more a dog's hair is matted, the tighter his fur is, which also increases the risk of the dog being nicked by the blade because it is so close to the skin.

**For long-haired dogs, the best brushing routine includes using a slicker brush, first to loosen any knots and to pull out the loose fur, and then using a metal comb to ensure all the knots have been worked out.** Slicker brushes need to have bristles and not plastic tips. My favorite brush is the SureGrip Flat Slicker brush available from Groomers Choice. When choosing a metal comb, make sure it is intended for dogs—not humans. **For short-haired dogs, the “brush” to use is a plastic Curry Comb.** This will help remove any loose hair and clean the surface of their fur. Your dog (and groomer) will thank you! ■

*Leah Glass*

Groomer, Canine Classics, Lorton, VA  
(and Ben's daughter)

*To reach Canine Classics,  
call 703-690-3054*

### Reminder About Our Firm's Communication Policy

Our promise to you is that while we are working on your case, we don't take inbound phone calls, faxes or emails. Ben Glass takes no inbound unscheduled phone calls whatsoever. It makes him much more productive and helps get your case resolved faster. You can always call the office at 703-544-7876 and schedule an in-person or phone appointment, usually within 24-48 hours. This is a lot better than the endless game of “phone tag” played by most businesses today. Remember, too, that email is “quick,” but is checked no more than twice a day. Replies are then scheduled into the calendar. So if it's really important, don't email—call the office instead.

This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, ERISA disability, and small business issues. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.



## Lessons for Young People

*Students, Please BEG Your Parents to Not Send Emails to Employers (or Potential Future Employers)*

*Life is full of adversity and obstacles. Were it not, things would be pretty boring. One challenge is going to be job hunting. Other challenges will be dealing with coaches, teachers, and work supervisors. As a young person, you absolutely should be asking your parents (and other wise adults) for their advice on handling tough times. But here is a life tip: NEVER let your mom email any of these people “on your behalf.” It will never end well.*

Here is a message I received from a mom:

*Hi Ben - I’m just reaching out to let you know I’m a bit disappointed with your firm. My daughter had been in contact with your office for months regarding an internship this summer. She had been told over and over that it would not be a problem to get her an internship this summer. My daughter reached out quite a few times to assure it was happening and was told “not to worry.” Then last week, she received an email that you all would not be offering her the internship. It is mid-March, and most good, paid internships are spoken for. This is extremely disappointing as she was assured it was taken care of. She is now scrambling to find an internship as it is a requirement for her to graduate from her honors college.*

Oh, what horrible people we are. Kiddo is scrambling because big bad Ben withdrew a promise.

My response to mom: “Uh, would you like to see the email thread on this subject?”

Mom: “sure.”

We sent the email thread to mom.

It turns out while last year’s internship had been cancelled due to COVID, it was us who reached out to the daughter in January to see if she had graduated, as we had an opening.

By the time the daughter had responded to inquire about the

internship, the internship slots were filled (you can see some of their work in other parts of the newsletter). When we initially reached out, I was clear that no promise had been made. Mom probably heard a different story from the daughter and did not have the facts correct.

After we sent the emails to mom, we heard nothing back.

Lesson:

**For everyone:** make sure you know your facts before you cast an accusation. There are lots of ways “mom” could have started a meaningful and respectful conversation. Blaming us if her daughter doesn’t graduate on time didn’t set a good tone.

**For young folks:** in today’s highly-competitive world, employers don’t actually mind if you keep in touch often. In fact, most of us are impressed. Figure out a way to “show up like no one else.” [See last month’s article on how Leah got her new job.] I’m not sure if mom just butted in, or if her daughter asked her to get involved. If it’s the former, make sure mom never does that again. If it’s the latter, learn to advocate for yourself.

I could do a whole seminar on the amazing opportunities available to young people on how to show up like no one else and how most are clueless about figuring out where those opportunities lay. I think schools do a poor job of teaching these life skills but maybe that’s not their real job. Any young person who is ever interested in having a lunch here at the office to ask me questions about the real world please reach out. ■



# WHAT WOULD BEN SAY

*Here are my thoughts for the month:*

- **SPRING SPORTS** – By the time you read this, we will be halfway through the spring high school soccer, baseball, softball seasons, and your children will be deep into recreational and travel seasons. This is a year to be particularly kind to all of the sports officials, referees, umpires, etc. who are out there working these games. Across the board, the number of “match officials” is down about 30%. Part of this is due to COVID, but a lot of it has to do with the abuse match officials take from stupid adults.
- **I’M WORKING ON MY NEXT BOOK.**  
If you are a teenage soccer referee, check out [www.refereesurvey.com](http://www.refereesurvey.com) to see how you can be featured in the book!
- **IT IS NICE** to wake up each morning and to realize that some wacko Tweet has not set off another world crisis.
- **AMBITION OR TALENT?** Which is more important? That’s a really interesting (and deceptive) question, isn’t it? First, we all come out of the womb pretty much equal in ability. We have NONE. We rely on the adults in our lives to keep us safe and to do things for us. Over time, though, we each discover things that interest us. I discovered an interest in reading at a very early age. That interest gets me nowhere unless I actually do something (like carve out time to read and make good choices as to what to read.) It was not until much later in life that I became interested in human achievement: What leads some people to be so successful, while others are not? My conclusion: it has little to do with talent. This is disappointing to those who have talent but lack ambition. Many think the world owes them something because they have talent. It doesn’t. Anyone with true ambition can achieve success, no matter what their talent level. Just remember, the government does not owe you an outcome equal to the next person’s outcome. The government’s duty is to keep your opportunities free and open.
- **THE THING I WISH MORE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE LEARNING ABOUT:** how to sell something. I talk to a lot of young folks who have graduated college having studied marketing and sales. I ask them: Did you ever actually sell anything while you were in college? Did any project your professors had you do involve creating an idea from scratch? Did you ever put that idea out into the marketplace by way of advertising/marketing and try to get someone to buy your creation? The universal answer I get is “no,” yet selling makes the world go around. Nothing happens until you have sold something. If you are in college and are reading this, I’ve just shown you something very important that you might want to think about. You are going to have to sell something in your life, even if the only thing you ever sell is yourself—to an employer. ■

### **SMALL BUSINESS TIP:** Make Sure Your Digital Ads are Running in the Right Place

**I recently had an ad pop up in my Facebook feed for a car accident lawyer. He has obviously paid someone to create an ad program for him (good) and is now paying Facebook to show the ads (OK, but some businesses are not really suited for Facebook advertising, and personal injury law firms are one of them.)**

This lawyer was getting ripped off. First, when I clicked on his ad, it did not go to his website or landing page, it went to some third-party site that creates ads for lots of different businesses. This tells me that no one on his team tested the ad before putting it out into the world.

But it gets worse! He is in Washington state. The ads were running in Virginia. I couldn’t, for the life of me, understand why he would be advertising in Virginia until Charley Mann, who is the President of my company, Great Legal Marketing, explained. Charley told me that “whoever he hired to run his ad program is likely overseas and, when told to “make sure the ads show up in Washington,” didn’t realize that Washington, D.C. is not Washington state!

It makes perfect sense, Charley! Hopefully, this lawyer will figure it out before he spends a bunch of money and declares “digital marketing just doesn’t work.” ■



## "I'm Calling You Because of Your Coaching Experience."

*This was the call I got from the director of the local Little League asking whether I'd coach my son Kellan's machine-pitch baseball team. My "coaching experience" consisted of one season of "herding cats" for the kindergarten soccer team while Kellan sat inside the goal and told me he didn't want to be there anymore. My "baseball experience?" I played two years of Little League beyond machine pitch.*

It seems like I'd be a great match for the position, I thought. "Tell me, what level of coaching expertise do you require?" "Almost none," said the director, "we need warm bodies, and I'll teach you everything. Besides, the important thing is just that the kids have fun!"

Ok, sign me up. I can learn how to do anything (including coaching baseball) on YouTube and a few books from Amazon.

**Over the past month, I've learned that the job is way more complex than showing up as a warm body.** You would not believe the complexity of the scorekeeping app this league uses. Have you ever wondered what your kid's batting average is with runners in scoring position? I'll know what my kid's is by the end of the season. Did you know that if you don't position the ball in the machine with the seam of the ball just kissing the knob, you'll screw up whether the pitch is in the strike zone by the time it's traveled 42 feet to the plate? I do.

**That is not to say that coaching Little League isn't fun.** The kids are entertaining, and sometimes they say some wild things. And they try hard. **The 8-year olds on our team are at that fun age where they still believe they can be or do anything.** They can hit the ball, they can field the next grounder, they can throw the ball over the fence from 200 yards... if they just try one more time. It's fun to watch, and my goal this season is to make sure they come out the other end of the year with the same youthful enthusiasm.

In the meantime, if you've got any great baseball drills, I could use them! ■



# Inside The Mind of Brian Glass

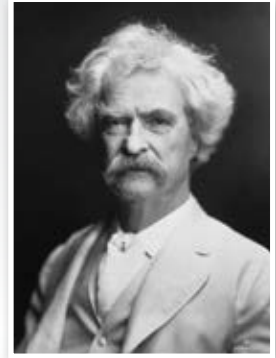
## BESTS OF THE MONTH

### Audio

I recently re-listened to David Foster Wallace's *This is Water* commencement address. A good reminder that your reality is not the only reality and that the most obvious parts of our reality are often the hardest to talk about. Just sitting down and acknowledging those two facts offers you more perspective than most people have.

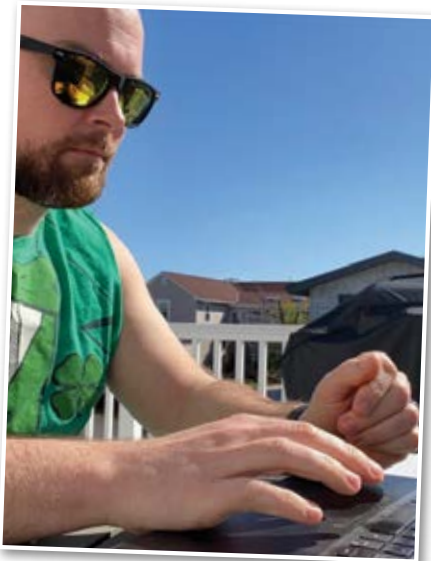
### Quote

Along those same lines, a Mark Twain paraphrase keeps coming back to me.



"It's not what you don't know that hurts you. Or what you don't know that you don't know. The real danger is the thing that you're absolutely certain of that just ain't true."

## What I did on my Spring Break Vacation



We took the family up to Fenwick Island, Delaware, for a few days during Spring Break. During the week, I found some time to take (and pass) the Maryland Bar Exam. In an homage to the Virginia bar, where applicants are required to wear a coat and tie, I dressed

in my finest cut-off shirt. Pending a few more forms, our firm will be able to file auto accident and long-term disability cases in Maryland.

## A *Must-Try Restaurant* in Northern Virginia

By Nadia Iacoletti (BGL Intern)

Mim's Food  
9990 Main St. Fairfax 22031

If you're looking for an opportunity to support a small business and try a new cuisine, look no further. Mim's is a family-owned Uyghur/Halal spot in Fairfax City.

Because of the unique geographical position of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in Northwest China, fans of middle eastern, south Asian, and east Asian cuisines will no doubt find something delicious to try on the menu. I sampled the Pearl Noodles, Korma Chopped Noodles, and Cold Chicken Salad, each dish was full of flavor and made from quality ingredients. Mim's Food uses fresh, house-made noodles for all of their dishes. The texture of the noodles makes all the difference for an authentic meal, as they are chewier and softer than most noodles. I was also impressed with the ample portion sizes, the flavor depth of the sauces, and the exceptional service. I will definitely be coming back to try more, and I encourage you to do the same! ■

3998 Fair Ridge Drive Suite 250  
Fairfax, VA 22033  
tel 703.991.2870 fax 703.783.0686  
www.BenGlassLaw.com

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## Mother's Day Around the World

By Yasemin Tanyu (BGL Intern)

*On Sunday May 9th, families in the United States will come together to*

*honor motherhood with flowers, gifts, and the classic breakfast in bed. Mother's Day, unlike many other traditional American holidays such as Thanksgiving, is not exceptional to the United States. Although Mother's Day was declared a national holiday in the United States in 1914, many other countries and their traditions date as far back as the 16th century. Here's a look at how 4 other countries around the world celebrate their mother's and ways you can implement some of these traditions at home to celebrate your own mom!*

**JAPAN** – To help comfort mothers who had lost their sons, husbands and fathers during WWII, Japan began to popularize their own version of Mother's Day by presenting carnations. Carnations symbolize fascination, distinction and love and are generally given to family members and significant others. Although in modern day white is the more traditionally seen color, white carnations used to be given when a mother had died, and red carnations were given to a living mother.

**What you can do:** Let the moms of families who may have helped you in your community know how much you appreciate them! You can leave short notes of gratitude along with a carnation along their doorsteps.

**ETHIOPIA** – The Antrosht festival takes place in early fall at the end of the rainy season. This festival, dedicated to moms, is celebrated with large meals and celebrations including telling stories of family heroes and traditional dances.

**What you can do:** Share stories with your family about important women who may have come before you by going through old photo albums together.

**INDIA** – In October, Hindus in India celebrate the goddess Durga, or Divine Mother, with a 10-day festival known as Durga Puja. The festival, which is thought to date back to the 16th century, celebrates the victory of goddess Durga over demon king Mahishasura and represents the win of good over evil. The festival is filled with storytelling, gift gathering and meal preparations weeks ahead of time.

**What you can do:** Make meals with your family and bring them to the moms around you and in your community.

**FRANCE** – After so many lives lost during WWI, in 1920, France and other European countries began to award mothers of large families with medals for helping rebuild the population. The actual date of Mother's day in France, known as "fetes des meres" on the fourth Sunday in May (May 25 this year), was established in 1950 and involves flowers, food and many times an outdoor activity, as it is during the time when flowers in Paris are in full bloom.

**What you can do:** You can give your mom a medal too, or even little gifts to show how thankful you are to have her in your life and for simply being who she is. ■