

# GLASSGAZETTE

Volume 24  
Issue 12

A monthly publication of lighthearted stories and information from your friends at BenGlassLaw, a leading personal injury and disability firm

## A Family Recipe That Will Warm Your Heart and Tummy



By:  
**Janet Lawson,**  
Disability On-Claim  
Coordinator

***The Christmas after my husband and I got married, we wanted to put together holiday recipes from our families to give out. I recall my mom talking about how much she loved my paternal great grandmother's Coubion. My brother and I were picky eaters when we were young and when she talked about it, we just cringed. Not that we had ever tried it (because we hadn't), but the description of "fish stew" just wasn't appealing to us. We really missed out on some good cooking in those early years!***

When we started putting together recipes for the small cookbook, my husband and I started experimenting with new and different recipes and my mom suggested Coubion. We didn't have an original recipe from

Mama Vaughan, but finally came upon a recipe in Emeril's Real and Rustic Cookbook and tried it out. My husband grew up fishing with his dad and grandparents on the Chesapeake Bay and we usually had some rockfish in

our freezer. His family had always fried it in pancake batter, but we decided to use this white flaky fish in our Coubion. We have loved and made this recipe for years now and love to share it with others. ■

### INGREDIENTS

- |                                                                                                            |                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 pounds redfish fillets or other firm white fish, such as snapper, drum, grouper, rockfish or catfish | 2 bay leaves                                                                   |
| 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon Cajun Seasoning                                                               | 1 tablespoon minced garlic                                                     |
| 1/3 cup vegetable oil                                                                                      | 2 cups chopped, peeled, and seeded tomatoes, or 2 cups chopped canned tomatoes |
| 1/3 cup flour                                                                                              | 1 cup water                                                                    |
| 1 cup chopped celery                                                                                       | 1 3/4 cups Chicken Broth                                                       |
| 1 cup chopped onions                                                                                       | 3/4 teaspoon salt                                                              |
| 1/2 cup chopped bell peppers                                                                               | 1/4 teaspoon cayenne                                                           |
| 2 mild green chilies or banana peppers, sliced lengthwise in half and seeded                               | 1/4 cup chopped green onions                                                   |
|                                                                                                            | 2 tablespoons chopped parsley                                                  |

### DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the fish fillets into 3-inch pieces. Season with 1 tablespoon of the Cajun seasoning. Set aside in the refrigerator.
2. Make a roux by combining the oil and flour in a large cast-iron or enamel cast-iron Dutch oven over medium heat. Stir slowly with a wire whisk or wooden spoon for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the roux becomes dark brown, the color of chocolate.
3. Add celery, onions, bell peppers, and chilies. Cook, stirring often, for 6 to 7 minutes. Add the bay leaves and garlic and cook for about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, water, and the remaining 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, uncovered, for about 1 hour, or until a thin oil film appears on the surface. Stir occasionally to prevent the mixture from sticking.
4. Increase the heat to medium, add the broth, salt, and cayenne and cook for about 15 minutes. Lay the fish in the mixture and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the fish flakes easily with a fork. During the last 5 minutes of cooking time, add the green onions and parsley.
5. Remove the bay leaves. Serve hot, over rice with a side salad and slices of a warm French baguette.



Four Generations of Vaughans and Evers Family Members! (I'm the baby in this picture)



## Upcoming Holidays

- Dec 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Dec 4: National Cookie Day
- Dec 16: National Chocolate-Covered Anything Day
- Dec 25: Christmas Day
- Dec 30: National Bacon Day
- Dec 31: New Year's Eve

## Out in the Wild



Tammy enjoyed some time off and visited a store that only served oatmeal cream pies! Be sure to check out OMG OCPS cream pies if you are ever in Richmond!

## Did You Know?

**Fun Fact:** In Japan, Christmas Eve is often celebrated with a bucket of KFC. This unique tradition started in the 1970s and it is so popular that people pre-order their fried chicken meals weeks in advance!

## Book Club Pick

If you are looking for a read full of resilience and redemption, consider reading *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls!



# Happy Holidays

FROM THE BENGLASSLAW TEAM!



## AS A REMINDER

Our business is built on referrals. If you or someone you know can relate to the stories above or need help after being injured in an accident or whose long-term disability or life insurance claim has been denied, we'd love the opportunity to use our years of experience & compassion to help them.



# Inside the Mind of LISA DERCO

Personal Injury Attorney, Wife, Boy Mom  
& Lover of Travel, Food, & Wine



## Tips and Tricks to Keep the Magic of the Holiday Season

*As much as I love Thanksgiving, Christmas holds my heart. The decorations, excitement, and gatherings make it the perfect way to end the year. I can be a bit of a control freak, so holiday stress sometimes gets to me, but this year, I'm vowing to sit back and enjoy it. Even if the presents aren't perfectly wrapped, it'll still be magical! Here's how I'm keeping my sanity and joy this season:*

- 1. Set Realistic Expectations:** The holidays often come with a lot of "shoulds"—you should buy the perfect gift, host the perfect party, or create the perfect meal. However, that can lead to burnout so instead set realistic, achievable goals for yourself.
- 2. Create a Budget:** Financial stress is a common holiday trigger. Between gifts, decorations, travel, and special meals, expenses can quickly add up, so instead set a budget. Think creatively about gifts and consider drawing names for a gift exchange to reduce the number of presents you need to buy.
- 3. Prioritize Self-Care:** This is one I (and all working moms) really need to focus on! Amid the hustle and bustle, it's easy to neglect your own needs. Remember that taking care of yourself is essential—not just for your well-being, but for your ability to be present and enjoy the season. Taking a walk or meditating for a few minutes can make a huge difference.
- 4. Learn to Say No:** This is a huge one for me. With countless invitations and gatherings, know your limits. Politely decline what doesn't bring you joy or peace.
- 5. Embrace Imperfection:** The pursuit of perfection is often the root of holiday stress. Embrace the messiness and unpredictability of the season. Allow things to unfold as they will, and focus on the connections, love, and joy that come from simply being together.
- 6. Focus on What Matters Most:** Remember that the holidays are about more than just presents and parties—they're about connection, kindness, and gratitude. Shift your focus from "doing it all!" to enjoying moments of togetherness with loved ones.
- 7. Let Go of Guilt:** Remember, you're doing the best you can, and it's okay not to be perfect. Let go of the guilt and give yourself permission to enjoy the season on your own terms.

I hope you can take some of the stress out of the holidays and enjoy this special time with friends and family! ■



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**As 2024 wraps up, what's a memory from this year that you'll forever treasure?**

*Our recent trip to Maui! It was my first time, and it was truly magical. Watching my youngest snorkel with wild sea turtles up and down the beach was one of those moments that I knew was truly special while in it and will always cherish.*



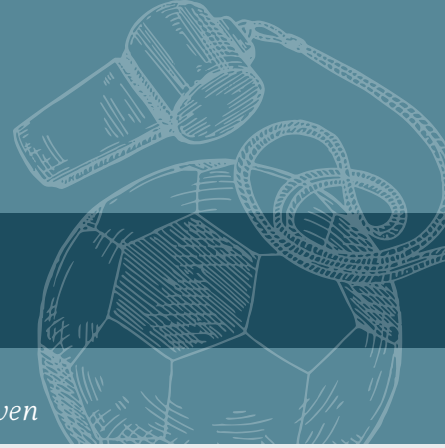
### LISA LOVES...

**Luckett's Holiday Market in Leesburg is such a fun experience for anyone who loves all things Christmas.** I look forward to going with my neighbors every year. We even make a stop at a vineyard to make a day out of it!



# Inside the Mind of BEN GLASS

*Disability Attorney, Entrepreneur, Business Coach, Author,  
Soccer Referee, Husband, Father to Nine, Grandfather to Seven*



## Arguing in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals: A Career Highlight

***Representing our client, Jeremy, before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals on his long-term disability claim was a true honor—a "World Cup" moment for me. This historic courthouse in Richmond, Virginia, has seen many landmark cases, and the chance to argue a case there is rare and significant. The experience reminded me of why I do what I do: protect clients from unfair insurance practices.***



*Damon Miller, Nikole Crow, my opponent in Jeremy's case, and I headed off to enjoy a waffle breakfast together after an oral argument in Richmond.*

Before we took on his case, Jeremy had been navigating this complex legal process on his own, pro se. **Our argument to the court was simple: these insurance companies must have their feet held to the fire and stop unlawfully denying long-term disability claims.**

Rules exist to protect people like Jeremy, and it's crucial that courts enforce them fairly.

It's been five long years since the insurance company abruptly stopped his payments (after paying him for seven years!)

**For anyone interested, you**

**can listen to the argument** by scanning the QR code below and clicking play on the episode, 'Ben Glass argues after Aetna Cuts Off Benefits After Seven Years', or by going to my bio page at [BenGlassLaw.com](http://BenGlassLaw.com) and following the link to 'Listen to Ben at work in Court'. We expect a decision in late December or early January, and we're hopeful that the court will uphold the principles that protect claimants against unjust denials. ■



# As We Approach 2025, Here's What I Want You to Know



**Your happiness is primary. Work on this because it's difficult to fully share your gifts and talents with the world.**

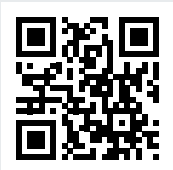
Owning your happiness means you—and only you—decide the values you'll pursue in life. Others may challenge your choices. Ask thoughtful questions to understand their perspectives, but if they bring only opinions without facts, feel free to disregard them.

On the other hand, some people will offer insights that can genuinely help you on your

path. Listen to them and ask questions that fuel your curiosity and growth.

Remember, there is no one else like you in this world. There never has been, and there never will be. That's why you matter.

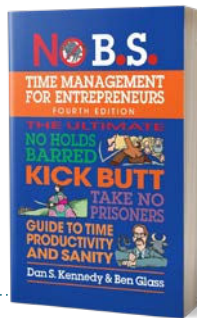
Ever want to get on Zoom to explore this more? Check out [LunchWithBen.com](https://LunchWithBen.com) ■



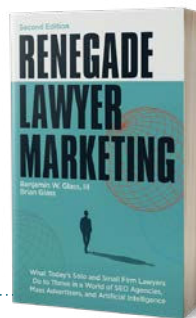
## Still Looking for the Perfect Christmas Gift?

**This year, I published two books!**

- *No B.S. Time Management for Entrepreneurs* (co-authored with Dan Kennedy)



- *Renegade Lawyer Marketing* (co-authored with my son and law partner, Brian Glass)



At their core, both books are about the “philosophy of living”—so if you’re looking for effective strategies and a glimpse into “how Ben thinks,” pick them up on Amazon today!



### PODCAST EPISODE OF THE MONTH

#### Master Social Media for Lawyers: Kris Bryant's Expert Tips

**In this episode of The Renegade Lawyer Podcast, I dive into the world of social media with Kris Bryant from Crush It With Kris.** Discover how small firm lawyers can build a personal brand without breaking the bank. Kris shares insights into leveraging platforms, overcoming shyness, and the power of storytelling.



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**As 2024 wraps up, what's a memory from this year that you'll forever treasure?**

*Being told by the interventional cardiologist who had just finished up my cardiac catheterization “uh, yeah, we’ve put you on the schedule for bypass surgery on Monday.” Saved my life.*





# Inside the Mind of BRIAN GLASS

Personal Injury Attorney, Entrepreneur, Business Coach,  
Husband, Father to Three Boys, & Avid Traveler



## Elevate Your Game

*"Be the dumbest one in the room" is only half of the advice.*

Most people can't figure out what to do once they're in the room.

Here's the reality - **Being the dumbest one in the room is good for you, but it's hardly beneficial to the rest of the group.**

And so, if you find yourself looking around and thinking **"how did I get here?"** Your next thought needs to be **"how do I add enough value to get invited back?"**

### Some ideas:

- Implement, implement, implement. The guy who takes three ideas, executes them, and reports the results will always get invited back over the guy who has seventeen ideas and executes none.
- Find your edge. Is everyone successful in business but out of shape? Are they great lawyers with miserable home lives? You're the

best in the room at **something**. Figure out what that is.

- If all else fails, offer to do set up, breakdown, and bring lunch next time.

Groups of **successful entrepreneurs prize humility and hunger over almost everything else**. Show those things and **you'll get to hang with people doing bigger and better things than you are.** ■



### GLASS BROS BANTER

*Our 6-year-old is a non-stop talker. Recently he said "Dad, I like to think about what I'm going to say before I say it." I told him that was a great trick, and more people should do that.* That being said, I can solidly say that after hearing him speak with his brothers, he in fact does NOT think about what he's going to say before he says it.



### PODCAST EPISODE OF THE MONTH

Episode: Trembling Less, Achieving More: Brett Trembly's Secrets to Delegation and Life Mastery!

Feeling stuck in the daily grind, dreaming of a life that's truly yours? You're not alone! In this episode of Life Beyond the Briefs, we're shaking things up with Brett Trembly, co-owner of Get Staffed Up and author of 24 Months to Freedom. Brett's journey from overwhelmed lawyer to thriving entrepreneur is a game-changer for anyone looking to escape the rat race. He shares how redefining leadership, and mastering delegation can unlock your freedom and fulfillment.

Don't just dream about freedom—let's make it happen! Tune in now!



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**As 2024 wraps up, what's a memory from this year that you'll forever treasure?**

*Snorkeling with the kids off the coast of Belize.*

# Inside the Mind of DAMON MILLER

*Long-Term Disability Attorney,  
Husband, Storyteller, & Dragon Slayer*



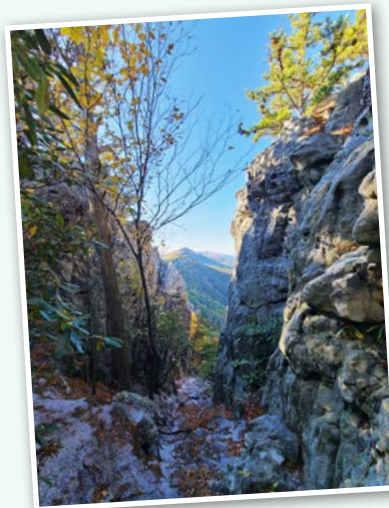
## New Year, New Boots: Cheers to New Hikes and Adventures!

***These boots were made for walking... 341 miles, to be exact!***

After covering 341 miles, climbing 27,484 feet in elevation, and spending 96 hours and 6 minutes on the trail, it's safe to say my boots have earned their retirement. They may not have been top-of-the-line when I got them, but they put in some serious mileage and took me through many beautiful hikes before finally giving up the ghost. Each scuff and scrape on those boots tell a story of a journey well-traveled.

As I prepare for new adventures, it's time for an upgrade—a trip to REI to invest in a pair of high-quality boots that can keep up with the trails to come. Here's to many more hikes, more miles, and, hopefully, fewer blisters along the way!

In the meantime, I thought I'd share a few snapshots from my favorite hike of the year. It was absolutely breathtaking—both literally and figuratively. The trail was steep

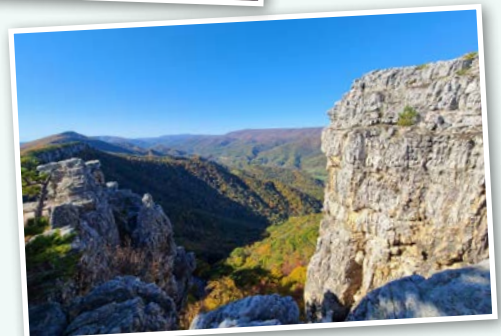


enough to leave me out of breath, but the reward at the top was more than worth it. The view from the top was nothing short of stunning.

Here's to new adventures, a new year with fresh boots, and unforgettable views on the trails ahead! ■



*Here are a few snapshots from my favorite hike of the year.*



### FREE DENIAL LETTER REVIEW

**Did you know that if you or a loved one have been denied disability or life insurance benefits by the insurance company, our team will review the denial letter for free?** We provide feedback and inform you whether hiring an attorney could strengthen your claim. Visit the QR code to simply upload your letter straight to our team for review.



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**As 2024 wraps up, what's a memory from this year that you'll forever treasure?**

*Vacation to Williamsburg with my wife!*



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## GLASSGAZETTE

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## December 16, 2024: Underdog Day

By: BenGlassLaw Staff

**Did you know that every third Friday of December is National Underdog Day? This is a day to celebrate those who defy expectations. Throughout history, underdogs have captured our hearts and inspired us to believe in ourselves. Here are a few real-life examples:**

**Wilma Rudolph:** Despite being diagnosed with polio and told she might never walk again, Wilma went on to become a legendary Olympic sprinter, winning three gold medals.

**Nick Vujicic:** Born without limbs, Nick faced immense challenges but went on to become a motivational speaker and author, inspiring millions around the world.

**Bethany Hamilton:** A professional surfer who lost her arm in a shark attack at the age of 13, Bethany returned to the sport and became a symbol of resilience.

At our law firm, we see the same resilience in our clients every day. Whether they are facing injuries or disabilities, they embody the indomitable spirit of these famous figures. Our clients confront their challenges with courage and determination, striving to reclaim their lives and rights. It's our honor to support them on their journey, fighting to ensure they receive the justice and compensation they deserve.

In celebrating these everyday heroes, we are reminded that true strength lies not in our circumstances, but in how we rise above them. ■