

# GLASSGAZETTE

Volume 25  
Issue 12

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

## Chickens and Chairs: My First Semester in Law School



By:  
**Massiel C.  
Gutierrez**

***This year I traded my spot at the front desk for a seat in a law school classroom. Everyone had advice, mostly encouraging and some a little terrifying. The truth is that nothing really prepares you for law school, and arguably that has been the best part.***

My very first case was Garratt v. Dailey, the one where a five year old pulled a chair away just as someone was about to sit and ended up in court. Since then, I have debated what counts as a “chicken” (promise I am not lying, look up Frigaliment) and developed a fine eye to torts (civil wrongs) going on in the world.

The learning curve has been steep, but I have found some hacks. Bookstands are my friend, and while my eyesight may have gotten worse, at least my Contracts casebook is finally at eye level.

Law school in 2025 is a fun mix of tradition and technology. We still get cold called, rely heavily on

outlines, and brief every case. At the same time, there are AI features integrated into our research databases, and we lean on digital tools that make studying smoother. The library books are mostly decorative, though they do make the building look very scholarly.

The first year is famous for being remarkably tough, and yes, it earns that reputation. But I have also found more to it. In the hardest parts I have discovered something grounding, and leaning into the difficulty has its own reward, reminding me of my “why.” Not in the easy moments, but in the ones that stretch me thin and remind me that growth



*Here is an update from my first semester at Boston University School of Law.*

rarely feels comfortable.

As 2026 approaches, I hope you chase something new that excites you, even if it means starting from page one again or experiencing discomfort. Whether it is going back to school, taking on a new hobby, or just buying a bookstand, lean into it. You never know what you will learn.

**Wishing you a joyful holiday season, a happy new year, and encouragement from one very tired 1L. ■**



**BENGLASSLAW**  
PERSONAL INJURY | DISABILITY

## Upcoming Holidays

- December 20: Super Saturday
- December 21: Winter Solstice
- December 24: Christmas Eve
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 31: New Year's Eve

## Out in the Wild

**Warda recently helped her brother move to Wisconsin for a new job opportunity.**

She had an amazing time exploring new places and trying delicious food along the way – and in Wisconsin, of course!



## Did You Know?

**The first New Year's Eve ball dropped in Times Square happened in 1907- and the original ball was made of iron and wood.**

**Wishing you a joyful and peaceful Christmas season!**

Whether you're one of our valued clients or simply part of our extended community, we're grateful for your connection and support. May your holidays be filled with warmth, laughter, and cherished moments.

**From the BenGlassLaw Team**

# FRESH from the FIRM

CURRENT EVENTS & STORIES OF THOSE WE'VE HELPED

**Last month our firm was proud to support the Paralegal Section Food Drive, joining together to help provide meals for families in need.** Thanks to the generosity of our team, we were able to make a contribution that will bring comfort to many households.



## Our LTD team just scored a major victory.

**After Prudential denied a long-term disability claim for a client battling Post-COVID Syndrome and central sensitization—conditions that made it impossible for him to continue working at Microsoft—we rolled up our sleeves and got to work.** Armed with detailed medical records, expert evaluations, and a powerhouse appeal, our team turned the tide. The result? A full approval and \$11,000/month in benefits. Huge kudos to the team for their persistence, precision, and heart. This is what advocacy looks like!

**Our PI team recently secured a \$58,000 settlement for a 20-year-old client injured in a car crash caused by an illegal U-turn.**



The accident left our client with serious injuries. After months of emergency care, orthopedic treatment, and physical therapy—totaling over \$12,500 in medical expenses—our team built a strong case and delivered results. Huge shoutout to the team for turning a painful situation into a powerful recovery.

## 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*



## *Lisa's Holiday Guide: My Favorite Things to Do in Northern Virginia This Season*

***As both an attorney and a mom, December always sneaks up on me. One minute it's summer soccer games, and the next, I'm hunting for wrapping paper and trying to remember where we stored the Christmas lights last year. But once the pace slows (just a little), I love taking time to enjoy all the magic that Northern Virginia has to offer during the holidays.***

If you're looking for ideas to make the season special, here are a few of my personal favorites:

### **1. Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights (Vienna)**

Every year, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens transforms into a twinkling wonderland. Walking through with a cup of hot chocolate in hand (or something a little stronger once I'm home!) has become one of my favorite family traditions. It's beautiful, easy to stroll with kids, and still peaceful enough for a grown-up date night.

### **2. The Middleburg Christmas Parade**

If you haven't been, go at least once! The parade, the hounds, the horses, and the small-town charm make it one of the most picturesque holiday events in Virginia. Plus, Middleburg's tasting rooms and cozy restaurants make it easy to turn into a full-day outing. I like to stop by Greenhill or Boxwood Winery afterward for a glass of something local.

### **3. A Winery Winter Tour**

Yes, most people think of Virginia wine country as a summer activity, but winter tastings have their own cozy charm. I love sitting by the fire at Stone Tower Winery in Leesburg or sipping a bold red at Walsh Family Wine. The views are still gorgeous – even without the vines in bloom.

### **4. Local Shopping Adventures**

I'm a big believer in supporting local businesses (probably the small business owner in me!). Places like Old Town Alexandria, downtown Leesburg, and

Clifton have wonderful boutiques, galleries, and local coffee shops that make holiday shopping actually fun. Plus, you can find gifts that feel a lot more personal than anything on Amazon.

### **5. Reston Town Center Ice Skating**

When my kids were younger, this was one of our go-to December weekend outings. We'd skate, grab dinner, and finish with hot cocoa under the lights. Even now, it's a reminder to enjoy the simple moments that make the season special.

As much as I love traveling and exploring new places, there's something comforting about celebrating the holidays right here at home in Northern Virginia. Between the lights, the wineries, and the laughter that fills our homes this time of year, it's a season that reminds me to slow down and savor what matters most – family, community, and connection.

**Wishing you a joyful, relaxing, and sparkling holiday season – wherever and however you choose to celebrate! ■**



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

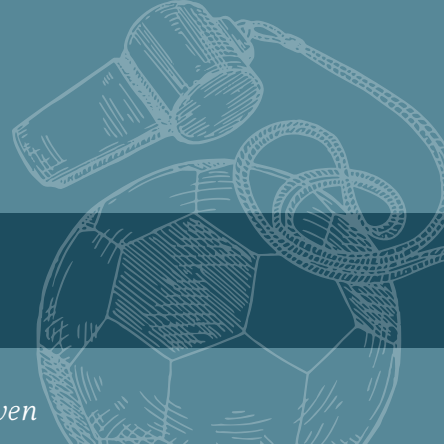
**What's a winter tradition you'd love to try for the first time?**

*I want to get the family back into skiing!*



# Inside the Mind of BEN GLASS

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



## Wealth Without Wisdom Is Wasted

### ***What I Learned About Kids, Money, and the “Three No’s” of Lost Inheritance***

A lot of my clients, and many of my friends, express the same fear:

“We’ve worked hard, we’ve built something real... and I’m scared the money will hurt our kids more than it helps them.”

Recently on the *Renegade Lawyer Podcast*, I interviewed Dr. Julia Myers, a pharmacist-turned-financial educator who helps successful families talk to their kids about money. She works with doctors, entrepreneurs, and professionals who’ve accumulated real wealth and are asking, “How do we pass this on *without* creating entitled adults?”

Dr. Meyers and I talked about a simple framework to think about this.

She says most wealth is lost in one or two generations because of three “no’s”:

1. *No skills*
2. *No ownership*
3. *No expectations*

#### **1. No Skills**

Most of us were taught at least something about earning money. Many of us had our first job at 12 or 13—babysitting, mowing lawns, refereeing or umpiring games, delivering newspapers. (Remember them? Mine was an afternoon paper called the *Northern Virginia Sun*.)

Today, the average age for a first paycheck is closer to the mid-20s. Kids can go from preschool to

college graduation without ever being paid for work in the real world.

If children never practice basic money skills—earning, saving, spending thoughtfully, giving generously—why are we surprised when they struggle to handle a large inheritance or even a modest start-in-life gift?

Skills only come from doing. That means inviting kids into age-appropriate work: chores that actually matter, small jobs, side gigs, even letting a teenager try a business and fail while the stakes are still low.

#### **2. No Ownership**

Parents like us are great at *providing*, but we’re not always as good at letting kids own their decisions and consequences.

Dr. Myers told a story about her daughter being offered a line of credit for Invisalign the day after her 18th birthday. At 18, the world is more than happy to hand your child a credit card, a car loan, or a “buy now, pay later” plan.

If the first real financial choice your child makes is at 18, alone, in a dentist’s office with a clipboard... that’s a problem.

We can do better by giving safe ownership early:

- Let them manage their own small budget.
- Let them feel what it’s like to run out of lunch money.

- Let them make a purchase they regret—and talk about it afterward.

If they never have “skin in the game,” they won’t be ready when the numbers have more zeros.

#### **3. No Expectations**

Finally, expectations. Do your kids believe the lifestyle they see now will simply continue forever—that there will always be a house, a car, a vacation, a streaming subscription, and money in the account... because that’s “just how life is”?

Or have you clearly communicated that your job is to launch them, not house and fund them indefinitely?

We have to tell them the truth:

- “We expect you to become a financially independent adult.”
- “We’re here to support you, not to rescue you from every consequence.”
- “Any inheritance is a tool, not a guarantee.”

Dr. Myers said something really important: “*A will controls the money. A family ‘constitution’ controls the meaning.*” The documents we lawyers draft are important, but they’re only one leg of the stool. The other legs are the stories you tell, the values you repeat, and the expectations you set while you’re still here.

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If you remember nothing else from this article, remember this line from our conversation:

Wealth without wisdom is wasted.

The good news? It's never too late, and it's never too early.

You don't need a perfect plan. You

just need to start one conversation:

- Ask your kids what they think money is for.
- Share one mistake you made with money and what you learned.
- Explain one expectation you have for them as future adults.

As a lawyer, I help families protect their income when disability or

illness strikes. As a dad of nine, I'm convinced that protecting our families also means passing on the wisdom to handle whatever we leave behind.

The money matters.

But the conversations matter more.

Scan the QR code below to hear more of my conversation with Dr. Julia Myers. ■



## PODCAST EPISODE OF THE MONTH

### Raising Financially Strong Kids with Dr. Julia Myers

In this eye-opening conversation, Ben sits down with Dr. Julia Myers—pharmacist, national speaker, and founder of Generational Wisdom—to unpack the intersection of wealth, parenting, and legacy.



## Q&A OF THE MONTH

**What's a winter tradition you'd love to try for the first time?**

*Skiing*

## We don't just do lawyer stuff all the time.



**In September, Sandi and I headed for New Hampshire for what can only be described as a “cruise on bicycles.”** This was a six-day tour, from the mountains (and fog) to the coastline (where it rained a bit), coupled with beautiful, sunny Fall days on the backroads of New Hampshire. We joined about 20 other riders from around the United States on a tour lead by the Great Bike Tours (GreatBikeTours.com).

Highly recommended and we'll be joining them again in January for a tour of the Florida Keys.



**In October, Brian and I hosted the Great Legal Marketing annual Summit.** We celebrated our 20th anniversary of teaching lawyers from around the world how to build practices that make their families happy that they decided to become law firm owners!



# Inside the Mind of BRIAN GLASS

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



## The Marathon Isn't the Hard Part

***The hard part is the hundreds of miles that come before.***

It's the 5 a.m. alarms.

The long runs in the rain.

The track workouts when everyone  
else is still asleep.

It's doing the work when no one is  
watching...

Where no one cares but you.

The marathon is the celebration.

It's the victory lap on months of  
discipline and discomfort.

And if you don't enjoy the race...  
if you can't look around and smile  
at what you've built... then what  
was the point of all that training?

Because it's not just running.

It's life.

The work is the hard part.

The race is the reward.

Celebrating that I was faster today  
at 42 than I was at 27, 28, and 31. ■



## Glass House Shenanigans

**Spirit Week in elementary school is always full of fun—crazy hair, pajama days, and all sorts of silliness.** This year's lineup included "Dress Like a Teacher Day." Our 7-year-old took it very seriously... and came home a little disappointed, saying, "I really thought they would let me teach something!" ■



### PODCAST EPISODE OF THE MONTH

#### 11 Client Communication Hacks | Gyi Tsakalakis & Jared Jaskot

Picture a new client on day 17. They signed last week. Their neck still hurts. Their inbox is quiet. The silence makes the story in their head louder. Did the firm forget me?

That moment is where this episode lives. From the first call through the first 30 days and beyond, Brian Glass sits with Gyi Tsakalakis and Abogado Jared Jaskot to map a simple system for better client communication and steadier client engagement. They show how to set client expectations on day one, why a real voice every 30 days calms anxiety, and how a welcome kit or closeout letter can anchor the relationship. You will hear where digital tools help and where they don't. Chatbot for intake, sure. Automation for reminders and scheduling, yes. But the real wins come from mixing law firm technology with a human check-in that proves you are working the file.



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**What's a winter tradition you'd  
love to try for the first time?**

*Take my family skiing*

# Inside the Mind of DAMON MILLER

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



## Building Traditions That Last

***The end of the year always invites reflection—on what matters most, and on the traditions that help anchor us through the busyness of life.***

For Emily and me, this season is about connection. We're spending time with family in Tennessee and Kentucky, catching up around familiar tables and sharing stories that have been told a hundred times—but somehow always feel new. We'll stop by Rock City to see the Christmas lights and gather for potato soup on Christmas Eve at my grandmother's house, just like we always have.

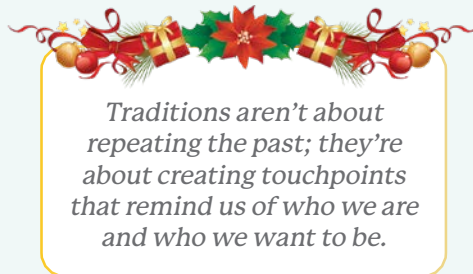
Over our five years of marriage, Emily and I have been building our own traditions—some old, some new, all meaningful. For the past two years, we've volunteered with Operation Christmas Child, helping to pack boxes for kids around the world. It's become one of our favorite ways to kick off the season and remind ourselves that generosity—of time, of presence, of love—is what gives this season its real meaning.

This year also brought a milestone of its own: we bought our first home together. That means even more traditions to come—new ones built around the table, in the kitchen, and in the quiet moments that make a house feel like home.

As we look ahead and think about starting a family of our own, we've been talking a lot about the kind of traditions we want to build. The truth is, they don't need to be grand or complicated. What matters is the time spent together—the quiet mornings, the shared meals, the laughter that fills a house. Those are the things we'll carry forward.

Traditions aren't about repeating the past; they're about creating touchpoints that remind us of who we are and who we want to be. And for us, that means keeping family and togetherness at the center of it all.

**From our family to yours, we wish you peace, joy, and moments of connection this holiday season. ■**



*Traditions aren't about repeating the past; they're about creating touchpoints that remind us of who we are and who we want to be.*



### Q&A OF THE MONTH

**What's a winter tradition you'd love to try for the first time?**

*I'd love to take ice skating lessons!*

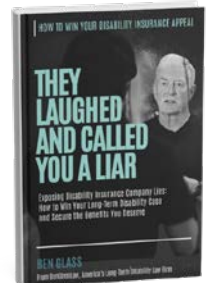
### Our NEW Long-Term Disability Book is Available Now for FREE

Ben recently published a new book, **They Laughed and Called You a Liar**,

which exposes disability insurance company lies

and breaks down how people can win their long-term disability case and secure the benefits they deserve. If your long-term disability benefits have been denied, this book is more than just a guide—it's your roadmap to justice. Ben Glass shares proven strategies that have helped countless clients stand up against insurance companies and win their cases. Don't let them control your future—take charge today.

Download now by scanning the QR code!



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## GLASSGAZETTE

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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.

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# Countdown to FRESH STARTS

By: **BGL STAFF**

***As the countdown begins, many people look for simple ways to start January feeling organized, refreshed, and motivated.***

Here are four quick steps to help you step into the new year with clarity and confidence:

- 1. Reflect & Reset** Look back on wins and lessons, then set 2–3 realistic goals for the year ahead.
- 2. Declutter Your Space** Clean out closets, organize files, and start fresh with a tidy environment.
- 3. Refresh Finances** Review your budget, set savings targets, and clear small debts to ease stress.
- 4. Prioritize Wellness** Book checkups, commit to a fitness routine you enjoy, and build a morning ritual that energizes you.

The new year is a chance to begin with intention. By taking these small but powerful steps now, you'll set yourself up for a year filled with clarity, growth, and momentum. ■