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We love helping people, and most of our clients come to us because someone they trust sent them our way. Referrals mean the world to us. They're the biggest way we grow and keep doing good work for others. If you know someone who was hurt at work, it's super easy to connect them to us. Just give them our phone number, **614-334-4649**, or send them to our website, **MonastLaw.com**. You can even call us and we'll take care of the rest. Thank you for thinking of us. Your referrals help more than you know, and we **never take that for granted**.

CRACKS IN THE CROWN

THE GLASS KING'S FRAGILE HISTORY

History is chock-full of rulers who believed they were untouchable, and one French king took that idea to the extreme. King Charles VI, who ruled from 1380 to 1422, became convinced his body was made entirely of glass. The medieval monarch believed he could shatter at any moment, avoiding contact that might crack him, and even reinforcing his clothes for extra protection. You might say this king had a rather *fragile* relationship with reality, but he was not the only glass man.

THE TRANSPARENT THRONE

The king's crystal conviction started when he was about 24. Though historians don't know why he believed his body changed so dramatically, his affliction was forged in flames, not unlike actual glass. Just weeks before he had his royal tailor sew iron rods into his clothes, a tragedy struck. The king and a group of his companions, dressed as wild men for a celebration, were set ablaze by a spark from the fire. Going down in history as "the Dance of Burning Men," the event killed four of his nobles and left him scarred. From that point on, he did everything he could to protect his body.



AN AGE OF FRAGILITY

His strange belief wasn't his only act of madness. Months before the fire, he killed four of his own knights in a fit of paranoia. While his tumultuous life may explain King Charles' delusion, it doesn't explain all the other glass men of the age. During the 15th and 16th centuries, tales were told of others who believed they were made of the delicate material. One was afraid to sit because he thought his backside would shatter. Another wanted to fling himself into a kiln to be transformed into a goblet.

Medieval medicine claimed that melancholia, caused by black bile in the body, gave sufferers a glassy sheen. Paintings of the age often featured glass as a symbol of fragility, and glass makers were viewed as alchemists. Historians believe that all the sparkling symbolism may have influenced the beliefs of these unusual men.

Some kings ruled with an iron fist, but King Charles VI led with a much more delicate touch. Talk about living in a glass house!



Workers' COMPanion

OCTOBER 2026

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RUN THE DRILL AGAIN

*Good Coaches Build Confidence.
Good Lawyers Do, Too.*

When you're a kid, you don't always appreciate your coaches. You're hot, tired, your legs hurt, and somebody is telling you to run the same drill for what feels like the hundredth time. At the time, you might wonder, "Why are we still doing this?"

Years later, you understand. The good coaches weren't just teaching us how to play a sport. They were teaching us how to build good habits, stick with something when it was difficult, and trust the fundamentals. I've come to realize that those lessons have followed me into just about every part of my life, including the way I practice law.

I was fortunate to have good coaches growing up. My brother-in-law coached me in YMCA basketball, and one of my brothers helped coach our Boys Club football teams. What stands out to me now is how patient they were. They treated everybody fairly, and they didn't expect us to know everything right away. We practiced the basics. Then we practiced them again ... and again. You don't build confidence by throwing someone into the deep end. You build it by teaching the fundamentals and practicing them until they become familiar.

There's another part of coaching that may be even more important in my work: making complicated things understandable. When someone comes into my office with a workers' compensation issue, they're usually worried about their health, their paycheck, their job, or what the future looks like. They may have never spoken to a lawyer before, and they certainly shouldn't be expected to understand all the rules, terminology, and procedures that come with a workers' compensation claim.

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That's where I see my role as a little bit different. Yes, I'm their lawyer. But I'm also their teacher and, in some ways, their coach. I need to take something convoluted and make it understandable. I need to explain where we are, what comes next, and what they can expect. Sometimes, I need to slow things down and reassure someone who is understandably overwhelmed.

I've learned that lesson from teachers, coaches, mentors, and even family members throughout my life. My father, for example, taught me a great deal simply by me listening to how he talked with people. He understood that you treat everyone with respect. You listen. You don't make people feel small because they don't know something that you happen to know. That matters enormously when you're working with someone who is already vulnerable.

National Coaches Day on Oct. 6 gives us a chance to recognize the coaches who helped shape us, but I think it also reminds us that coaching is something we encounter throughout our entire lives. Sometimes it's a sports coach. Sometimes it's a parent, teacher, mentor, or friend. Sometimes, it's your turn to be the coach, and it's an act of respect when you take that role seriously and commit to a lifelong process of learning and teaching, over and over.

And the best coaches never make you feel foolish for not knowing the answer. They meet you where you are, teach you the fundamentals, and help you find your footing. That's what I try to do for my clients. After all these years, I'm still learning, and I'm still trying to be a good coach.

-Jim Monast

FEELING BROKE AFTER EVERY VISIT WITH FRIENDS?

FRIENDFLATION COULD BE THE CULPRIT

Meeting up with friends used to be simple. A coffee, a stroll through the park, or a movie night at someone's house was enough to stay connected. These days, catching up can feel more like planning a vacation. Between pricey dinners, destination birthdays and weddings, concert tickets, and group trips, maintaining friendships can take a serious bite out of your budget.

This growing trend has earned a name: friendflation. It describes the rising cost of staying socially connected, and it's leaving many people wondering whether they can afford to keep up.

FRIENDSHIPS COST MORE THAN EVER!

While actual inflation can be partly to blame for this "friendflation" phenomenon, expectations have shifted, too. Once low-key celebrations have become elaborate events. Birthdays turn into weekend getaways. Bridal parties involve flights, matching outfits, and expensive accommodations. Even a casual night out can cost far more than expected.

Social media has also played a role. Seeing friends post about luxury vacations, trendy restaurants, and picture-perfect gatherings can put pressure on you to say yes to experiences that don't fit your budget. Even when no one intends to make others feel excluded, it's easy to feel like you're missing out if you have to decline invitations constantly.

THE HIDDEN EMOTIONAL 'COST'

Many people feel uncomfortable admitting they can't afford certain plans. Instead of being honest, they may make excuses or skip events altogether. Over time, this can lead to guilt, isolation, and the fear of drifting away from close friends.

The challenge becomes even greater as people move through different stages of life. Friends who once shared similar budgets may now have very different incomes, financial priorities, or family responsibilities. What feels affordable for one person may be a major expense for someone else.



YOU CAN PROTECT YOUR FRIENDSHIPS WITHOUT OVERSPENDING.

Keep in mind that meaningful friendships aren't measured by how much money you spend. Honest conversations about budgets can prevent misunderstandings and reduce unnecessary pressure. Choosing lower-cost activities such as hiking, hosting potluck dinners, game nights, or coffee dates can be just as memorable as expensive outings.

Friendships shouldn't come with a price tag! The strongest friendships are built on trust, shared experiences, and mutual understanding, not on who can afford the fanciest dinner or the most extravagant weekend away.

WHO'S THE FATTEST MARMOT OF THEM ALL?

MOVE OVER, BEARS. MARMOTS ARE BRINGING THE CHUNK!

The ultimate championship is here. Not the Super Bowl, not the World Cup ... Fat Marmot Week. While the name is undeniably adorable, this unusual online competition has a serious purpose: helping researchers raise awareness and funding for one of the world's longest-running studies of wild mammals.

For 25 years, UCLA ecology and evolutionary biology professor Daniel Blumstein has studied yellow-bellied marmots at Colorado's Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL). The project now boasts an astonishing 58 years of data, making it one of the longest-running studies of free-living mammals in the world, second only to Jane Goodall's famous chimpanzee research.

Unfortunately, funding has become increasingly difficult to secure. After repeated attempts to renew his National Science Foundation grant, Blumstein and his colleagues got creative. Their first fundraising brainstorm? OnlyMarms, a G-rated OnlyFans page featuring marmots. Yes, really. Apparently, the internet was ready for it.

Now the researchers are doubling down with Fat Marmot Week, inspired by Alaska's beloved Fat Bear Week. The competition celebrates these chunky alpine residents as they prepare for one of nature's toughest endurance challenges: hibernation. Marmots spend the summer eating and gaining weight because those extra pounds help sustain them through the long winter ahead.

Naturally, every competition needs contestants, and these marmots come with personalities.

There's Open Kite, the "girl boss" of the RMBL townsit, who apparently devoted all her energy to self-care after not breeding this year. There's Citroen, the newest addition and devoted stepdad, who is apparently determined to become one seriously chunky boy.

We also have Dawn, a very special boy with a taste for rocks. He's fathered numerous litters over the past five years and apparently takes his dad duties seriously, keeping an eye on his pups and checking in on his ladies every year.

So, yes, Fat Marmot Week is about adorable animals getting gloriously chonky. But underneath the laughs and lovable marmot personalities is something much more important: supporting science that has spent decades teaching us about wildlife, ecosystems, and the remarkable lives of animals we might otherwise overlook.

Sometimes raising awareness takes a grant proposal. Sometimes it takes 58 years of research. And apparently, sometimes it takes putting a very fat marmot on the internet and asking everyone to cheer him on.

Check out [Sites.google.com/view/fatmarmotweek/](https://sites.google.com/view/fatmarmotweek/) for ways to support the marmot mayhem!

Turning Conflict Into Common Ground

WHEN EMOTIONS RUN HIGH, MEDIATION CAN BRING EVERYONE BACK TO THE TABLE

When a workers' compensation case becomes emotional or complicated, it can be hard for either side to see a path forward. Everyone may feel strongly about their position, and sometimes, both sides dig their heels in so hard that compromise seems out of reach. **That's where mediation can help.**

WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Consider mediation as a structured conversation with a neutral guide. The mediator doesn't act as a judge and doesn't decide who wins or loses. Instead, they help both sides understand the issues, consider their options, and explore whether there's a solution everyone can accept.

Mediation may take place in a mediator's office, a law office, a neutral conference room, or virtually. Typically, the injured worker or surviving family member, their attorney, the employer or

insurance representative, the employer's attorney, and the mediator participate.

The mediator goes back and forth, carrying offers and counteroffers, asking questions, and helping each side evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and risks of its position.

A NEUTRAL VOICE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Our team recently saw the value of mediation in a heartbreaking death claim involving a bank executive who fell in a shower while attending a company conference. For his surviving spouse, the situation was understandably overwhelming. No one expects a business trip to end in such a devastating loss.

In a case that emotionally charged, finding common ground isn't easy. A mediator can provide something both sides may need: perspective.

Because the mediator isn't advocating for either party, they can bring some calm to an otherwise tense situation. Sometimes, hearing something from a neutral person is exactly what it takes to make a difficult reality easier to understand.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If mediation succeeds, the parties sign a settlement agreement, which may require judicial approval in a workers' compensation case. If they don't reach an agreement, the case can continue toward a hearing or trial, and mediation discussions generally remain confidential.

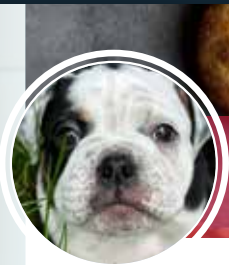
During Mediation Week, from Oct. 18–24, it's worth remembering that sometimes, moving a case forward doesn't require more confrontation. Sometimes, it requires bringing the right neutral person into the room to help everyone take a step back, listen, and find a way forward.

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ANSWER



EATS WITH ELLIE PILLOWY PUMPKIN SNICKERDOODLES

INGREDIENTS

- 3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1/2 cup light brown sugar
 - 3/4 cup pumpkin purée
 - 1 large egg
 - 2 tsp vanilla extract
- Cream cheese filling:**
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
 - 1/3 cup powdered sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Cinnamon-sugar coating:**
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

DIRECTIONS

- Whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
- In a separate bowl, beat butter and sugars. Mix in pumpkin, egg, and vanilla.
- Add dry ingredients and mix until combined. Refrigerate an hour.
- In another bowl, blend filling ingredients. Refrigerate an hour.
- Preheat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
- In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon for coating.
- Flatten a tablespoon of batter like a pancake.
- Place a teaspoon of cream cheese mixture in the center. Place another tablespoon of batter on top, and roll into a ball.
- Roll in cinnamon-sugar and place on baking sheet. Use a glass to flatten cookie balls.
- Bake 10–15 minutes. Cool and serve.