

ERIC DOUGHERTY AND THE FISHING-LINE CAPER

REFLECTING ON ONE OF MY BEST PRANKS AND LONGEST FRIENDSHIPS

One April Fools' Day back in my teenage years, my good buddy Eric Dougherty and I were inspecting the books in our high school library a *lot* more closely than usual. At least, that must have been what the librarian thought as we ambled from shelf to shelf, stringing tripwires of high-invisible fishing line throughout the place. By the time we were done, the library was a spider's web of traps — even if you didn't trip when you ran into one of the lines, it'd knock books off the shelf, causing general chaos.

Honestly, I'm amazed we didn't get caught, but in some ways, it makes sense. Back then, Eric and I were thick as thieves, flying beneath the radar. We were into camping, the outdoors, John Denver, and our jeeps. We didn't really fit into any of the stereotypical cliques within the high school hierarchy. So we looked innocuous wherever we went. And usually, we were — except for the April Fools' Day of senior year, when Eric masterminded this devil's snare of interlocking mayhem. The next day, when the principal came on the loudspeaker and implored the student body to come forward if we had any information about the "fishing-line incident," nobody had a clue it had been us. We were the last pair of guys anybody would suspect.

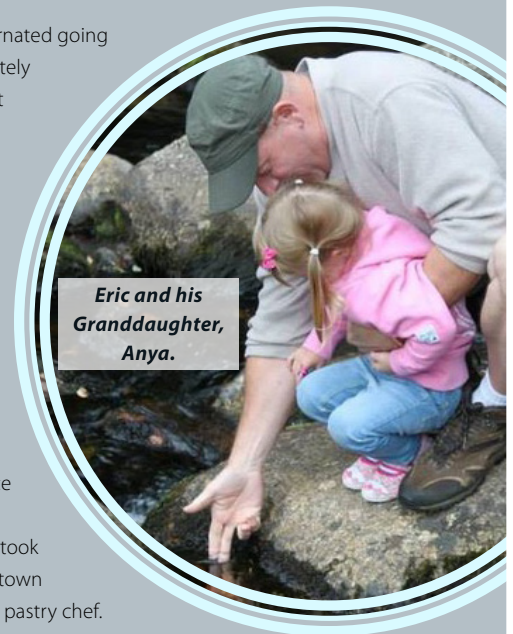
"Honestly, I'm amazed we didn't get caught, but in some ways, it makes sense."

Eric has always been a nonconformist. After his dad passed away when he was young, he became an incredibly independent kid, marching to the beat of a different drum. Right after we got out of high school, he started a tradition of frequent traveling. Almost every summer, he'd get a plane ticket out to Europe, pick up a Europass, and meander around abroad, meeting people and developing a whole network of friends along the way. One day while wandering, he met a beautiful woman named Julie, who worked at a tiny bookstore just outside of Avebury henge in southwest England, and his interest was piqued. When he

returned to the states, he alternated going to school and working, ultimately graduating and taking a job at a well-known French bakery. Meanwhile, he and Julie continued to correspond. Years later, when they fell in love, she moved to be with him in Columbus.

They stuck around for a bit before realizing that Europe was much more interesting, so they moved to England and took up residence as managers of an amazing, 1,000-plus-year-old castle. He took a job at a bakery in their little town and steadily became a master pastry chef. Later, they opened their own quaint coffee and pastry place near Avebury, where they met.

Every month or so, I still hear from him through the magic of social media. Sometimes I'll see him playing bagpipes in his kilt, mugging for the camera with his lovely grandchildren, or volunteering with the local fire department. His life is a monument to doing your own thing and to carving out your own unique space within the world. It's on my bucket list to visit him someday, but until then, I can reminisce about many happy adventures as friends, including laying booby traps in the high school library.



Eric and his Granddaughter, Anya.

-Jim Monast



GARDENING: BRINGING FAMILY TOGETHER

WHY YOU SHOULD CONSIDER INVESTING IN A FAMILY GARDEN

After spending a winter cooped up inside with your family, there might be a little tension between everyone.

Fortunately, it's spring, and the warm weather, melting snow, and blooming flowers offer a good way to ease restlessness. This season, why not bring your family closer together by starting a family garden?

A LEARNING EXPERIENCE Nearly every step in the gardening process can be a learning experience for kids and parents alike. Begin by discussing where you should start and why, what supplies you'll need, and the types of plants you want to grow. Gardening also offers opportunities to learn about science, ecology, and nutrition.

COLLABORATION Gardening gives your family a chance to collaborate. When you're stuck inside for long periods, you may be spending time together, but it's usually not quality time. Working in a group to create and maintain a garden is a hands-on experience for everyone. It's a chance to get the whole family involved with a single project, and you can literally share the fruits of your labor.

DECIDING ON PLANTS When it comes to deciding which plants you want in your garden, there are many variables to consider. Do you want to grow edible plants, ones that have magnificent blossoms, or ones that are easy to care for? Flowers are a good start if you want a plant that grows a little faster; plus, they lend a pop of color to your garden. Growing vegetables is also rewarding, as the kids will take great pleasure in eating what they've grown. Other possibilities include sunflowers, blackberries, peas, and lettuce. You might be surprised at how willingly children eat their greens when they've had a hand in growing them.

Family gardens can bring something new and fresh to your home. So, get outside, enjoy the sun, and discover the joys of plants and gardening.

SUCCESS STORY

Feeling Secure for a Lifetime

As Michael W. of Springfield put it, he started working after graduating high school to "get a job, start my life, work with my hands, and because I had no money!" He worked for many years at a plumbing supply warehouse. One day, at age 46, he was getting a toilet from an overhead shelf. As he pulled, lifted, and turned, he injured his lower back. Michael hadn't missed work in over 10 years, but he missed three months after his injury. He worked in pain for another seven years with the aid of regular treatment, injections, and medications, until the pain became unbearable. He underwent his first lower back surgery, a laminotomy. The procedure is an orthopedic neurosurgical procedure that removes part of a lamina of the vertebral arch in order to decompress the corresponding spinal-cord and/or spinal-nerve root. He had his second surgery a year later and a spinal fusion soon after.

In an effort to combat his ongoing and debilitating pain, his doctors implanted a spinal cord stimulator. A year later, they implanted a revision of the stimulator. In the next year, they inserted a programmable morphine pump. All told, Michael has undergone 13 surgical procedures, and claim costs have approached half a million dollars so far. Depression resulted from the pain and limitations, making it hard for Michael to even imagine a brighter future.

In his application for permanent total disability, Michael said, "I have lost everything in life that can be lost. When I do anything, I have to do it with incredible pain ... half of my life is spent on my back not sleeping ... thank God for television and frozen foods."

Although the Industrial Commission doctors opined that Michael should be able to do some sort of work in spite of several failed but diligent efforts at rehabilitation, the Industrial Commission hearing officer agreed with us that Michael is effectively precluded from any kind of work. Because of his injury, Michael had to sell his home, since he couldn't even afford his mortgage. Since we were successful in helping him obtain permanent total-disability compensation, Michael is now able to afford his own home and has the security of lifetime benefits.



3 THINGS WORKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CLAIMS PROCESS



1. Workers' compensation laws vary considerably from state to state. From determining whether or not employee fault is a factor in your case to the time you have to file a claim, laws regarding work accidents largely depend on the state in which you live. In Ohio, we have a constitutionally established state insurance fund known as the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC). This state agency is responsible for administering workers' compensation claims in Ohio for nearly all employees. Settlement is still an option, but it requires resignation from work at the employer of record in all but the rarest of circumstances. In addition, Ohio has a "no-fault" system for coverage, meaning that a claim may be pursued even if the injury is the result of the injured worker's negligence.

2. Don't just let BWC, Industrial Commission of Ohio, or your self-insured employer "work it out." Since the BWC and the few larger, self-insured (SI) employers provide much-needed payments when necessary, many people forget that the BWC is the state *insurance* fund and that SI employers and businesses are driven only by profit. In our day-to-day lives, we all hope others, including the BWC and our employer, will do the right thing by us — but don't

bet the farm on it. Injured workers often treat their claims representatives as someone who is there to help them, when, in reality, these adjusters are trained to find ways to deny claims or pay out as little as possible.

3. Choosing the right attorney can have a significant impact on the outcome of your case — and they're rarely too expensive! If your work accident involved only minor injuries with no time lost from work, you may not need to hire an attorney. But any worker involved in an accident that causes significant injuries, expensive or ongoing medical treatment, and prolonged time off work will almost always best be served by getting an experienced attorney's advice.

As an attorney who exclusively handles workers' compensation claims on behalf of injured Ohioans, I work on a contingency-fee basis, meaning there is no upfront fee for legal representation and no hourly billing. I'm only paid if and when I obtain money for your claim. If you're going through the bewildering claims process, give us a call at **614-515-2595** and give your claim the best chance at success.

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ANSWERS



ABBY'S APPETIZERS PASTA WITH TURKEY AND BROCCOLI

This simple, delicious recipe only takes 20 minutes from start to finish. It's also a great way to encourage kids to eat their broccoli. The next time you make pasta, leave the canned sauce in the pantry and make this instead!

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 pound pasta (shells or orecchiette)
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Salt
- Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Add broccoli when pasta is 1 minute from done. Drain both and return to pot.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the turkey, garlic, crushed red pepper, and a pinch of salt. Cook while breaking up meat with a wooden spoon for 3–5 minutes.
3. Combine turkey with pasta and broccoli mixture, adding the remaining olive oil as you stir. Serve in bowls topped with Parmesan.

Adapted from delish.com

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EARTHING: SLEEP LIKE YOU'RE ON VACATION

Have you ever fallen asleep on the beach after swimming in the ocean? If you have, you know

it's the most restful and relaxing sleep imaginable. You might have thought it was just the result of warm sunlight and vacation vibes, but research suggests you may have been experiencing the effects of a practice called "earthing."

Earthing, sometimes referred to as "grounding," helps bring our bodies into a natural balance. The theory states that our bodies naturally develop a positive charge. As leading nutritionist Dr. John Briffa explains, "During the normal processes of metabolism, the body generates what are called 'reactive oxygen species,' which are commonly referred to as 'free radicals' ... Free radicals

lack sparks of energy known as 'electrons.' When a molecule lacks electrons, it gives off a positive charge.

An unbalanced positive charge contributes to inflammation, which can then cause many chronic diseases, including heart disease. You should balance your natural positive charge with a negative charge. How can you safely expose yourself to a negative charge? Just let your skin touch the earth.

Earth gives off a mild electric charge, with plenty of electrons to balance out our overabundance of free radicals. There has yet to be a large-scale scientific study about the benefits of earthing, but current research is promising. One study published in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* found earthing helps reduce blood viscosity, which is a major factor in cardiovascular disease. Another study in the *Journal of Inflammation Research* showed that earthing might speed up healing. Firsthand accounts from individuals who practice earthing often report lower stress levels, increased energy, and better sleep.

Many people who practice earthing make it a point to walk outside barefoot on grass, soil, or sand at least once a day. You have to be careful where you walk, as you don't want to get cut on sharp rocks or broken glass. An alternative to walking barefoot is to use an earthing pad, which can imitate the negative charge of our planet inside your home.

Earthing is quickly gaining a following in the health community. If you are looking for a natural way to improve your overall health and sleep better, why not try taking a walk? Just remember to leave your shoes behind.