



**MONAST**  
LAW OFFICE

# Workers' COMPanion

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## A FACE ONLY A MOTHER COULD LOVE

### THE BULLDOGS, HUSKIES, AND PUGS OF MY LIFE

*"That's a face only a mother could love — and she'd be lying."*

That's what my law school roommate Mike Donahue used to say about my beloved first English bulldog, Max. But that didn't stop him from encouraging Max to stick his face in the lasagna I'd stepped away from for a minute. I bought the big lug (the dog, not the human) in mid-winter — stupidly I now realize — while we were living on the third floor of our apartment. He'd whine and whine to go outside, and usually, when we let him out, he'd just pee right there on the landing or the neighbor's little carpet. Obviously, it wasn't the best place or timing to take care of my first dog on my own, but hey, that "face only a mother could love?" It was a big, dopey face I just couldn't resist.

Max was my first foray into an all-out bulldog obsession. By now, I've seen four come and go, marking key periods of my life with their constant companionship. I had one that chewed the whole arm off an upholstered easy chair. Another destroyed an entire corner of my parent's stairs. They all got into much trouble despite their sweet dispositions and



Max

innocent look. And any bulldog has the unique talent of almost instantly clearing a room with its flatulence. Unfortunately, with their scrunched-up faces, they don't tend to live long, plagued with disorders like sleep apnea and COPD. Ask me to explain just what endears me to the slobbery dogs, and I'll find it difficult to answer, except to say *everything*. They're friendly, loyal, and can put up with any annoyance you throw at them. And then there's that face, flopping jowls and all.

When I was a little kid, I had a dog sleeping next to me most nights. First, there was our German shepherd, Lady, a gentle protector who'd watch over me while I played in the yard. Then we had Rosco, a goofy mix between a Pekingese and longhair dachshund or something, who was tragically run over when I was about 12.

When we moved to South Carolina for one summer, we adopted a Siberian husky named Nick. That guy dug more holes than any dog I've



Kodi and Garrett

ever seen. I remember a time when some men were doing work on the house, and one of them couldn't find the big bag of nails he'd left lying around. Turns out, Nick had swiped the bag and buried it out in the yard. Whenever he got the desire, he'd burrow under the fence and go tour the neighborhood, after which we'd get a call from somebody 20 miles away letting us know where he'd ended up.

Actually, since my bulldog Kodi died a couple years ago and Abby, the miniature schnauzer I inherited from my dad, passed away more than a year ago, this is the longest I've been without a dog in the house for some time. Amy's been talking about getting another one for my birthday, but with her regularly traveling out of town to take care of her parents and me being busier than ever at work, it's just not the right time. But you can bet that when it is, we'll have a new furry friend.

Luckily, my kids are getting dogs of their own for me to enjoy and not have to pay for! First, there's my stepson Jackson and his fiancée Britney's new Cane Corso, Riley. She's a big ol' beast, a gentle giant of sorts. Then there are my stepdaughter Whitney and her husband Robby's dogs, Nola (for New Orleans) and Brees, named after New Orleans Saints quarterback, Drew Brees. They've got them trained so whenever the Saints score a touchdown, the dogs will come up and give them a chest bump. It's hilarious.

Finally, there's my "grand-pug" Nug, the new face of our monthly recipes on page 3. He was brought home the tail end of January by my son Garrett and his wife Holly. They were visiting us from Fairfax a few weeks back, and if I'm being honest, I was just as excited to meet the pup (if not more so) as I was to see my own flesh and blood!

But that's the way it goes, isn't it — with a face like that, how could you not?



Kodi



Rocky and Garrett

*-Jim Monast*

# No Place Like Home

## BE A TOURIST IN YOUR HOMETOWN

Do you dream of adventure? Do you want to see something new, discover someplace interesting, and make memories you'll cherish forever? Do you still have to be at work on Monday? Finding adventure doesn't have to mean packing up and trekking across the globe for six months. Being adventurous is all about changing your mindset and looking for the unexpected in the familiar.



As you start planning summer vacations, instead of spending a lot of money to be a tourist somewhere else, why not try finding a little adventure at home?

### Get a Room

If you really want to experience your hometown through the eyes of a tourist, try waking up somewhere new. One night in a hotel room or bed-and-breakfast can really put you in the adventuring mindset.

### Find Local Events

Now's the time to check out the farmers market you've been meaning to go to for ages! Then you can swing by that free concert in the park before going to a play at your community theater. Attending local events is a great way to visit places in town you've never been before. You might even find a historical tour that can teach you all about the wonders of your town. Download an app like Eventbrite, or go old-school and check for fun local events in the paper.

### Appreciate the Arts

There are countless tiny museums and cultural attractions all over the place that most people overlook — especially those who have lived in an area for a while. Does your hometown have interesting art installations on Main Street? What about museums dedicated to strange and supernatural phenomena, parks, historical landmarks, or giant robotic farm animals? Check Yelp.com for lists of popular attractions near you, or ask your friends for suggestions. You might be surprised by what your hometown has to offer.

You might be thinking, "This would be great if I lived somewhere fun!" If you've ever thought your town was boring, that's all the more reason to try being a tourist! Adventures can happen anywhere if you just take that first step out the door.

## CLIENT STORIES

## DAWN C.

Anyone around my age remembers Olan Mills Photography. The company was founded in 1932 by Olan Mills Sr. and Mary Mills to provide portrait photography and church directories. It went bankrupt in 2008, and its assets were purchased by Lifetouch in 2011 (now operating as J.C. Penney Portraits). Back in the day, Olan Mills was the place to go for family portraits. My family still has an Olan Mills portrait of my mom and sister taken in the early 1950s!

Our dear client Dawn C. (who is "no bigger than a minute," as my mother used to say) went to work at Olan Mills in Springfield as a portrait finisher after graduating high school. She worked there for 16 years, 6-7 days per week. This position involves a lot of repetitive airbrush work, and she developed bilateral upper extremity pain as well as trouble with her neck, chest, and upper back. Though she continued working through

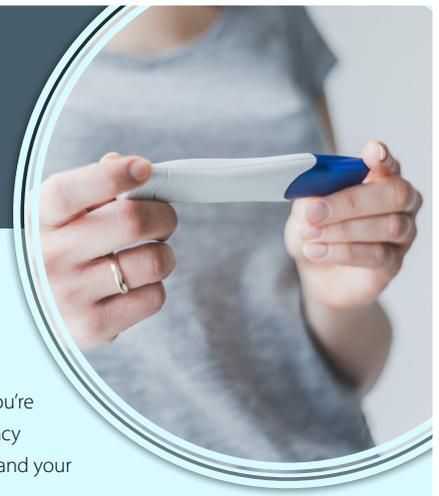


her discomfort, her condition worsened as she developed bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome, requiring surgery on both wrists. She also required a resection of her left first rib because of thoracic outlet syndrome. Her doctors further diagnosed her with myofascial pain syndrome in her arms and shoulders, repetitive stress syndrome, bilateral medial epicondylitis, and fibromyalgia.

Given her strong work ethic and youth, the limitations she experienced because of her occupational disease (that's what repetitive strain injuries are often called) were very depressing. Even daily activities we all take for granted (cooking, cleaning, going to the grocery store, and just spending time with family) became hard, if not impossible. Fibromyalgia can cause such debilitating pain and fatigue that a person is nearly nonfunctional.

Though she can no longer work, her financial future is not in jeopardy. I helped Dawn obtain permanent total disability benefits, including access to medical treatment, for her lifetime. I think of her whenever I see a portrait with that familiar Olan Mills script in the bottom right hand corner — she's such a delightful person!

# Pregnancy Shouldn't Affect Your Workers' Comp Benefits



First off, if you're reading this because you're pregnant: Congratulations! Impending parenthood is such a joy. Whether this is your first baby or your fourth, if you're on workers' compensation when you become pregnant, you may be worried about how your pregnancy could affect your benefits.

We'll look at a few scenarios but, generally, you should have nothing to worry about.

## Obviously, pregnancy is a natural condition, not a disease or disability.

However, it is possible your doctor will order you to alter your work tasks or even go on bedrest at some point to keep you and your baby healthy. You'll have to follow the guidelines of your employer for those job-related adjustments.

Remember that while your employer is prohibited from discriminating against you because of your pregnancy, your condition isn't a work-related illness or injury. Therefore, you can't apply for further workers' compensation benefits if you're unable to do your job because of it.

**People are always asking me whether someone collecting benefits will lose them if they become pregnant.** The answer is no; you won't lose benefits.

However, any medical care benefits you're receiving for a work injury won't be extended to include prenatal care or delivery, and you won't be entitled to

additional benefits because of the pregnancy. If you're collecting temporary total disability, it shouldn't affect your benefits if your work injury alone prohibits you from working. If you're on permanent total disability, pregnancy will have no bearing on your benefits and your eligibility to continue collecting them.

If your pregnancy is making your original work injury worse or delaying your recovery and return to work, you *may* have a legitimate claim to extend your benefits. But you'll probably need the help of a workers' compensation attorney to make this claim because employers are typically unsympathetic to this situation.

Whatever you do, let your workers' comp doctor know about the pregnancy immediately so it's included in your medical record. And if you're on TT or PTD and are told by an employer that pregnancy could affect your benefits, **call my office right away at 614-515-2595 to discuss your case.** Your pregnancy should be a positive, life-changing experience for you, not a time of additional worry and stress. Contact my office for help with your claim! At the very least, we should be able to put your mind at ease.

# SUDOKU



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ANSWER

## NIBBLES WITH NUG OPENING DAY HAMBURGERS

*With no fancy sauces, no frills, and no cheese, these All-American burgers are perfect for the start of baseball season.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound ground chuck, 80 percent lean
- 4 soft, white hamburger buns, split
- 4 1/4-inch thick tomato slices
- 12-16 pickle rounds
- 4 small leaves iceberg lettuce
- 4 1/4-inch thick yellow onion slices
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Condiments of your choice

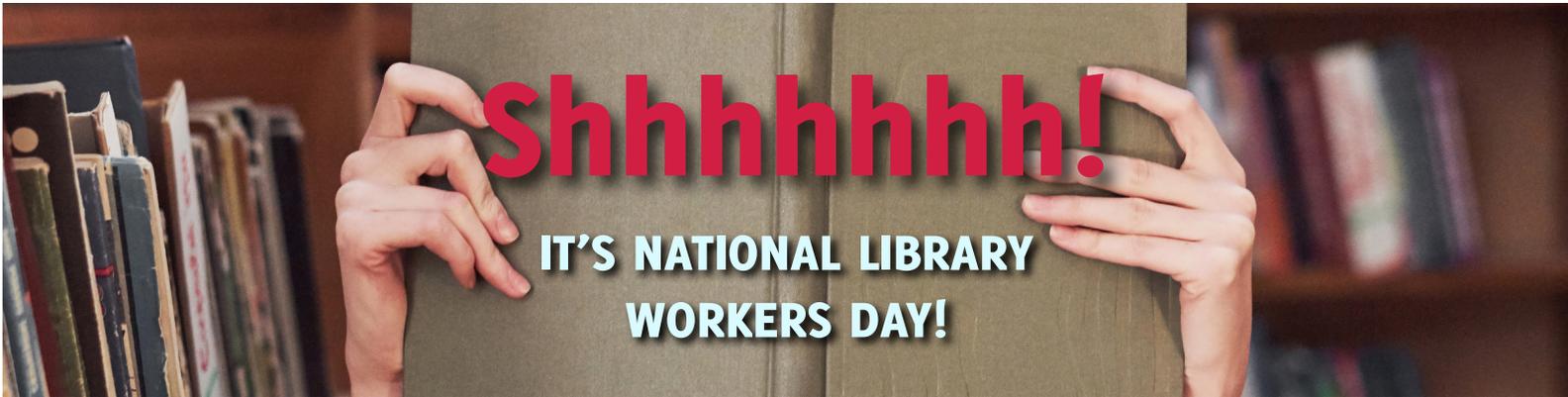
### DIRECTIONS

1. Lightly grease a small nonstick skillet with oil. Heat over medium-high.
2. While heating, gently shape meat into four patties 3 1/2 inches in diameter. Be careful to handle the meat as little as possible to prevent tough burgers. Season liberally with salt and pepper.
3. Sear patties on each side, about 1 minute per side. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue cooking until desired doneness, about 1 more minute per side for medium-rare, 2 more per side for medium-well.
4. Let meat rest for a minimum of 3 minutes.
5. To assemble, place patty on bottom bun and top with tomato, pickles, lettuce, and onion (in that order). Spread condiments on top half of bun and place on top of onion. Serve.

*Inspired by Saveur Magazine*

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Whether you have a card or not, libraries are an important part of our community. They serve as meeting places, research stations, employment centers, and local historical archives. They help kids and adults alike explore vast literary worlds and immense databases of knowledge — all for free! Behind every library is a dedicated staff of librarians, catalogers, assistants, and administrators who keep the system running smoothly.

While it may not be the most well-known holiday, April 9 is National Library Workers Day (NLWD). As part of National Library Week, NLWD recognizes and celebrates the vital work performed by library staff. Librarians and their team do far more than simply place books on the shelf and shush noisy teenagers, after all.

Library science is a multidisciplinary field that takes years of study to master. Today's librarians have the skills of managers, IT specialists, documentarians, archivists, and

educators — equipping them to help anyone from elementary students to doctoral researchers. These professionals can be an invaluable resource for anyone looking to delve into a particular topic, even if they don't know where to begin. Just tell your local library worker what subject you're interested in, and they can help you track down books, databases, magazine articles, and more.

How should you celebrate National Library Workers Day? Some groups, such as the students at the University of Arizona, go above and beyond by delivering balloons and signs to library branches across Tucson. More commonly, however, library branches ask their community members to vote for a "star" staffer. If a library worker has made a difference in your life, you can submit their name to the American Library Association by visiting [Ala-Apa.org](http://Ala-Apa.org) and clicking "Submit A Star!" Lastly, you can show your appreciation by visiting your local library and thanking these professionals. These important community centers only work because they do!