

'THE BAJA' AND SUMMER BREAK

MEMORIES OF A SCHOOL-FREE SEASON

Growing up in Joplin, Missouri, there was nothing better than summer break. Though we had baseball practice and whatever activities we were doing through the Boys' Club and the YMCA, we spent every other moment during those hot months in blissful, total freedom. From dawn until dinnertime, my pals and I would amble around the neighborhood, on the hunt for new kinds of trouble to get ourselves into. Of course, this is when playgrounds still had jungle gyms and kids were told to "go out and play and don't come back until dinner!"

Most of that trouble was bike-based. If you've ever seen the movie or read the book "IT" by Stephen King, you can picture it: a band of rambunctious, sarcastic boys zooming around town on these old Schwinn Stingray bikes, constantly on the lookout for new adventures — except, you know, without the supernatural, evil clown looming in the darkness. But we had a place like what the kids in the story call "The Barrens" down the street, a sprawling, 150-plus acres of undeveloped land that served as paradise for our gang of rowdy kids.

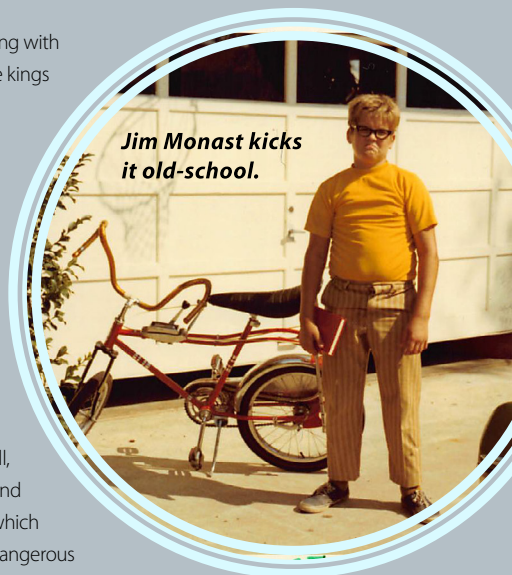
"We'd come flying over these curated slopes and launch into the air, coming down to Earth just before a sheer 15- to 20-foot drop down to the roadway."

The best part of this spot was what we dubbed "The Baja," a bike track we spent hours shaping out of the dirt. We'd come flying over these curated slopes and launch into the air, coming down to Earth just before a sheer 15- to 20-foot drop down to the roadway. Over the years, the track became more elaborate, incorporating wooden ramps and more twists and turns than ever. And when the rain would pour down and flood the land, it turned into a full Tom Sawyer experience, hunting down fat bullfrogs and box turtles, examining the guts of run-over snakes on the side of the road, and cruising at top speed through the

mud, muck, and woodlands, howling with glee while we got soaked. We were kings of our world.

Of course, it's all fun and games for kids until someone gets hurt. I remember one day when my sister Kathy, nine years older than me, had the "thrill" of babysitting me while my mom was at work. She had her good friend Pam over, and they walked out to the local McDonald's about a mile away. Well, while they were gone, my buddy and I played two-man hide-and-seek, which you wouldn't think would be too dangerous — that is, until my friend got stuck in my parents' shower and we couldn't get the door open to save our lives. To escape, he accidentally smashed his arm all the way through the glass door, slicing his arm open big-time. It looked like an abattoir in there until my sister got home and hollered for the adults to take my friend to the hospital. Thankfully, he was fine after they stitched him up, but ended up with a really cool scar.

Frankly, it's hard to imagine the level of freedom that summer vacation afforded us kids. Obviously, we took it all for granted, though I'm pretty sure we never wasted a second anyway. Instead, we wrung fun out of every spare moment, racing the clock to do as much as possible before we were herded back into the classroom.



— Jim Monast



LAY SOME SHADE ON ME

THE BEST VEGETABLES TO PLANT IN SHADY SPOTS

There's nothing quite like growing your own vegetables, but if your home doesn't get the best sunlight, what can you do? It's a problem many gardeners face. Even if you live in a sunny area, you may have a shady corner of the garden or side of the house going to waste. Fortunately, there are plenty of plants that do well in partial and full shade.

As a general rule, leafy greens do better in shade and milder temperatures than other vegetables. Flowering plants and vines, such as cucumbers, peppers, and tomatoes, need more hours of sunlight per day in order to thrive — about six hours or more.

Herbs While many herbs, such as basil, are better suited for sunnier conditions, there are a few that will do great in shade. These

include chives, cilantro, golden marjoram, mint, oregano, and parsley. (Hours of sun per day: 3)

Kale Typically, kale does well in partial shade. When kale is grown in full shade, the leaves tend to be slightly smaller, but this can be offset by growing additional plants. (Hours of sun per day: 3–4)

Peas Like kale, when grown in shade, peas and beans won't grow quite as full, and plants may take longer to mature, but with proper planning, you'll still reap a plentiful harvest. Bush and dwarf varieties are recommended over their pole counterparts. (Hours of sun per day: 4–5)

Potatoes Root vegetables, such as potatoes, carrots, and beets, will grow in partial shade, but they may take a few more weeks to mature, and they may produce fewer vegetables. However, as most gardeners agree, the results are still worth the effort. (Hours of sun per day: 4–5)

Spinach Like most leafy greens, spinach does very well in shade, particularly baby spinach. The plant will continue to produce leaves for an extended period of time if you regularly harvest the outer leaves. (Hours of sun per day: 3–4)

JAMES S.

James S. from Marion, Ohio, had been working on the railroad (all the live-long day) when he injured his back pulling steam hoses out of a tank car. One of the hoses, each weighing more than 100 pounds, got hung up. In pulling up the hose, he was driven forward onto his knees. After a trip to the emergency room, he returned to light duty, but developed increased pain while mopping a floor. An MRI suggested an L4–5 disc herniation.

He ultimately underwent three extensive lower back surgeries, involving laminectomies, discectomies with threaded cage interbody fusions from L3–S1, and placement of a lumbar epidural catheter for ongoing pain. His pain became so debilitating, he also now requires prescriptions of Fentanyl and Lyrica. Post-surgically, he developed paralysis in both lower limbs to the point where he developed complete foot drops on both sides. (This was later determined to have resulted from a sponge that hadn't been removed following surgery.) He continues to wear bilateral middle-ankle/foot orthotics (foot braces) in order to walk with two canes when not using his wheelchair.

He was awarded 100 percent permanent partial disability in his claim. Also, because of the foot drop, he was found to have lost essential use of his feet. In addition to an award for loss of use of his feet, he also qualified, after eight years of treatment and a special petition to the Industrial Commission, for statutory permanent total disability. Under Ohio law, if certain stringent statutory requirements are met, an injured worker may be deemed, by operation of law, to be permanently and totally disabled. In such cases, the IW

is actually permitted to work AND receive permanent total disability benefits. This can occur if an injury results in the loss of both hands or arms, both feet or legs, both eyes or any combination of two of these. This loss may be by severance (i.e., amputation) or loss of use.

To date, James' medical and compensation payments have totaled nearly a million dollars.





THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ACCURATE FROI

WHY THE FIRST REPORT IS ALSO THE MOST IMPORTANT

If you've been hurt at work in Ohio, you need to know how to start a workers' compensation claim. Whether your employer pays into the state workers' compensation system or is self-insured, your claim will begin the same way: by reporting your injury or illness to your employer and filing a First Report of Injury (FROI) form with the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC). You have one year only from your injury to file your claim, or two years for occupational diseases, so prompt action is vital.

Information You Need to Include

You, your employer, a medical provider, or your employer's managed-care organization can file your workers' compensation claim. If you have been treated for a work-related injury, the claim may have been filed for you. Check with the BWC; if a claim has not yet been filed on your behalf, file the FROI yourself soon.

Filling out the FROI form initiates your claim for workers' compensation, so it's very important that you fill it out accurately and completely. Detailed instructions are included on the form, so read it and follow them carefully. The form asks for some basic identifying information, along with details about what led to your injury or illness, including the following:

- The date you were injured, or the date an occupational disease was diagnosed/ treated by a medical provider or forced you to quit working, whichever happened most recently
- The last day you worked before the injury/illness
- A description of the events that caused the injury/illness
- Treatment information, to be completed by your medical provider, indicating that the injury or illness is work-related
- Your employer's signature, certifying that the application is correct and valid

The BWC has 28 days to investigate your claim, during which they may ask for additional information from you, your employer, or your medical providers. Comply with BWC requests promptly and to the letter, keep your appointments, and accurately report your symptoms to doctors. If your claim is denied, **give the experts at Monast Law Office a call at 614-334-4649** to discuss the appeals process.

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ANSWER



ABBY'S APPETIZERS

FATHER'S DAY CHILI LIME CHICKEN WINGS

This Father's Day, spice up your wings with this zesty recipe that's sure to please the whole family.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 pounds chicken wings
- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
- 1 1/4 tablespoons Thai red curry paste
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 lime, halved
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Chopped cilantro for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 425 F.
2. Rinse wings under cold water and pat dry. Season liberally with salt and pepper, and drizzle with olive oil. Roast on a baking sheet for 25 minutes or until skin becomes crisp and brown.
3. Blend butter, red curry paste, honey, and soy sauce in a large mixing bowl.
4. Toss wings in butter mixture. Squeeze lime juice on top, transfer to serving plate, and garnish with cilantro.

Inspired by foodnetwork.com

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A NOSE FOR TROUBLE

RINGO THE TABBY SAVES HIS FAMILY



Ray and Carol Steiner found Ringo, a red tabby Manx, living in a shed when he was 10 days old. Despite already having three cats, the couple decided to open their hearts to the friendly feline — a decision that would one day save their lives.

Years after adopting Ringo, Ray and Carol began to oversleep and experience high blood pressure, dizziness, and headaches. The couple attributed these troubling symptoms to their recent health problems — Ray had just undergone heart surgery, and Carol was recovering from a car accident with her leg in a cast. But Ringo realized something was amiss.

One blistering day in August, the usually mellow cat caused a ruckus. He meowed loudly and banged his body against the front door. Carol let him dart outside, but the moment she closed the door, Ringo began to aggressively meow again. This was unusual behavior, and Carol realized Ringo wanted her to follow him. The red tabby brought Carol around to the side of the house, where large bushes hid the air conditioner and gas and water meters. Ringo started to dig in the jagged lava-rock landscaping, cutting his paws on the sharp stones. When Carol leaned over to get a better look, she was nearly overwhelmed by the smell of natural gas.

The gas company discovered an old steel coupler had broken open, leaking dangerous levels of gas into the Steiners' house. A single spark outdoors could have set off an explosion that would have consumed six other houses, potentially killing 22 people. Ray and Carol's doctor told them that even if they avoided an explosion, they would have died from methane poisoning if they'd been exposed much longer. The gas meter did not register the leak, but Ringo did.

Once they aired out their home, the Steiners' health improved immensely. Because of his dedication to his family, Ringo became the 11th cat in history to be awarded the American Humane Association's national William O. Stillman Award for bravery.