

FACTS ABOUT LAWYERS

THAT ARE ONLY TRUE ON OPPOSITE DAY

With TV show after TV show depicting the thrilling lives of lawyers and the exciting cases they take on, would you believe there are widespread misconceptions about who lawyers are and what they do? Jan. 25 is the official date of Opposite Day — and that's the only day of the year that the following "facts" about lawyers are actually true. So, for this edition of my newsletter, I thought I would share them so you wouldn't be tempted to believe them on the other 364 days of the year.

"You should be intimidated by lawyers."

I've noticed over the years that many people are anxious about speaking with or otherwise interacting with lawyers. Many people see lawyers as "kind of a big deal," and while some may act as though that's the case, more often than not, we're just regular people with a job we're (hopefully) good at. The same could be said for an auto

mechanic, a carpenter, a truck driver, or anyone else who has dedicated time and effort to be good at a certain job. As the old saying goes, we put our pants on one leg at a time, just like anyone else.

"All lawyers are pretty much the same person."

We may not lead the exciting lives that TV lawyers get to have, but we're also far more than just a suit

and an office. We have good days and bad days, families and friends, and favorite foods and hobbies. Some of us ride motorcycles, go mountain biking on the weekends, participate in chili cookoffs, or do several other things in our spare time. In short, we're more than the work we do — which is to say, we're normal people.

"Lawyers can advise you on any area of the law."

This is a common misconception that people make with doctors and lawyers. Most health care professionals specialize in a certain field of health care and would be remiss to advise someone on another area in which they don't have any expertise. Similarly, no lawyer knows 100% of the law. We usually specialize in one or a few areas of law so we can advise our clients with more certainty. That's why our firm specializes in workers' compensation and ERISA, as opposed to something like divorce law, real estate disputes, or criminal law. The days of generalists are long gone, and the best advice will usually come from someone specializing in a certain niche.

"Lawyers are all good businesspeople."

While a lawyer can become a good businessperson, law school does not teach you how to immediately go out and start your own law firm. You don't even learn law in law school — you learn how to think critically. All that is to say that any lawyer with an independent law office has worked hard to learn how to successfully run a business as well as be a good lawyer. It also means they have a passion for helping individuals and filling certain needs in their communities.

So, the next time you come to our office, or go to another lawyer for help in another area of law, be confident and explain your goals for your case. Remember, we're working for you, and we're here to help however we can. If we can't handle your situation, we'll try to connect you with someone who can.

-Jim Monast

*This cheesy guy is
NOT Jim!*



HOW HABIT TRACKING AND DAILY RESOLUTIONS COULD TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE

Yearly resolutions are so last year ... if they're your only resolutions, that is.

Having long-term goals isn't a bad thing, but do you have a daily plan to reach them? The huge boost of motivation in January isn't always enough to sustain you all year long. That's why there are major benefits to starting new healthy habits, whether you increase your weekly exercise time, eat healthier foods, or work on getting better or more sleep.

Luckily, sticking with these habits might be as easy as making daily resolutions to complement your yearly goals.

B.J. Fogg, a Stanford University professor and author of "Tiny Habits: The Small Changes That

Change Everything," notes that tiny habits can make a new habit easy to implement into your daily ritual. For example, taking a short daily walk could lead to an exercise habit, or keeping an apple in your bag every day could encourage healthier snacking.

It's important that you stick with it because habits take a long time to create. One study published by the European Journal of Social Psychology asked people about a simple habit they wanted to form, like drinking water at lunch or taking a walk before dinner. They found that the average amount of time it took before the action became automatic was 66 days! Don't be too hard on yourself if you miss a day, but know that sticking to a new habit is serious work, so starting small might help you out.

Another important aspect of forming new daily habits is rewarding yourself. Bad habits, like smoking, have an inherent reward. However, healthy habits can have rewards too! Try consuming a bit of dark chocolate after a workout or treating yourself to a fresh beverage or relaxing to a podcast after tackling an important task. Find ways to reward yourself, and you'll be more likely to stick to your new habit.

Certain daily resolutions don't have to be related to exercise or diet to majorly improve your life. For example, having a gratitude journal might boost your long-term happiness by 10% and improve your blood pressure. Don't hesitate to improve your quality of life! Just start small, and you'll be amazed by how far you'll go.

CLIENT STORY SHAWN MURNAHAN

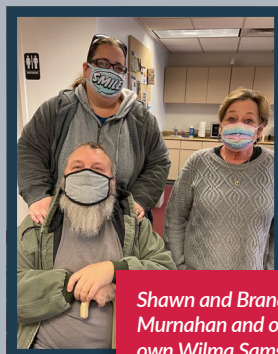
Shawn Murnahan, our client and friend, got hurt nearly 20 years ago at age 26. He was working at KTH Parts Industry in Saint Paris, putting parts in a basket, when he herniated two discs in his back.

Over the years, he'd have surgeries and go back to work, followed by more extensive surgeries and another return to work. Meanwhile, he'd actively get treatment when we could get it approved, but the treatment was so delayed by litigation that it probably never worked as well as it could have had he been able to get it when his doctors requested it. We've attended more hearings together than either of us can remember, as certain employers spend much more on fighting their employees and paying their lawyers than agreeing to permit treatment that would help him, and them, by keeping him working.

Shawn and his wife, Brandi, had their two

daughters since his injury. They'd bring the girls to hearings as infants, and I've watched them grow into lovely young women since this all started.

After his most recent operation in early 2018, performed by the head of surgery at Riverside in Columbus, Shawn was actively participating in physical therapy when his disc herniation recurred. This is not uncommon and sometimes happens months or years after surgery. Ohio courts have recognized that subsequent herniations or meniscal tears, etc., stemming from the previously weakened back or knee, can be part of the original injury, even if the subsequent event doesn't happen at work. His employer fought the recurrence and the depression that frequently accompanies a debilitating injury.



Shawn and Brandi Murnahan and our own Wilma Sams!

Shawn's situation is one of those proving that even the best supported case, legally and factually, may fall on deaf ears at the Industrial Commission. There are factors that make this more likely, but the bottom line is that life happens. After a half-dozen hearings and all sorts of procedural snafus during the hearing process,

we found ourselves pursuing the matter into Common Pleas Court. Ultimately, we suggested mediation and resolved the issues to Shawn's satisfaction. Still, some situations just gnaw at me and his is one. Things just didn't work out as they should have in my vision of a perfect world!



Wilma presenting Shawn with his razor!

Shawn and Brandi stopped by the office recently. Shawn and Wilma (and Brandi) have teased each other a lot over the years, and one topic has been Shawn's ever-lengthening beard. Wilma has told him for months she was gonna get him a razor and shave that thing off! When he and Brandi came in, Wilma

presented him with a razor (supplied by our own Todd). Shawn laughed and said, "I think I need a weed whacker!" Indeed, he would!

We are grateful for the Murnahans. Having been through so much together in 20 years, they are more than clients to us. Shawn says when the weather warms up and he feels better, he wants to go with me to hearings and carry my files. I told him I could tell the hearing officers, "This man is exhibit A!" Ha!

Shawn has remained upbeat and grateful despite his injuries and the frustration of dealing with employers' attorneys and hearings. Our lives are better for knowing them.

This Single Dad Adopted 5 Siblings

SO THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO GROW UP APART

Sometimes we can choose our family — and we can also choose to keep family together. That's what 29-year-old Ohio foster father Robert Carter proved when he adopted a group of five siblings to keep them from going to separate homes.

Carter knew firsthand how hard it was to grow up separated from your siblings. He himself had entered the foster care system when he was just 12 years old, and it wasn't until years later that he reunited with his younger sister and brother.

The siblings' names are Marionna, Makayla, Robert, Giovanni, and Kiontae — three brothers and two sisters. Before adopting them all, Carter was already fostering the three brothers. The two sisters were living in two separate foster homes. Wanting for the siblings to not lose touch with one another, Carter contacted the two sisters' foster mothers to arrange a time for all of them to meet up.

After the siblings' time together was over, Carter noticed how distressed they were to be separated again. That was when he knew the only right thing to do was adopt them all and ensure that they stayed together.



Carter was the only foster parent willing to adopt all five of the siblings — and he did so knowing that the road ahead would not be easy. A single father taking care of five children is no easy task, not to mention that just because the adoption papers were signed doesn't mean they would all immediately feel like family. But ultimately, Carter knew that taking on the responsibility would be worth it.

"Every night I talk to them and let them know 'I'm your dad forever. I know what it's like, and I'm always here for you,'" Carter told Hamilton County TV station WCVB.

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ANSWER

NIBBLES WITH NUG



BIRTHDAY CAKE BAKED OATMEAL FOR ONE (YES, REALLY)

Inspired by [ItsTaylerMarie.org](https://www.ItsTaylerMarie.org)

Did you know that January is National Oatmeal Month? If you tend to think of oatmeal as boring, this fun dessert-themed recipe just might change your mind. To go all out, top with a candle and a dollop of whipped cream.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 browning banana, mashed
- Splash of vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp brown sugar, honey, or maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp sprinkles

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 350 F and prepare a small oven-safe dish.
2. In a small bowl, combine all of the ingredients except the sprinkles.
3. Pour the oatmeal mixture into the prepared baking dish.
4. Bake for 25 minutes or until the oatmeal is golden brown.
5. Let the oatmeal cool slightly, top with sprinkles, and dig in!

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Don't Get Lost in the Sauce

THE 4 BEST COOKING AND TRAVEL SHOWS

Streaming services are booming right now, and there's no shortage of entertainment between HBO Max, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, Disney+, and more. But the important question is this: What are the best binge-worthy cooking shows? Here are four streamable culinary shows you'll love.

'The Chef Show'

Get cozy at home and turn on Netflix to watch Chef Roy Choi, the man responsible for bringing the food from the movie "Chef" to life, on "The Chef Show." You'll get incredible home-cooking tips while enjoying appearances from your favorite celebrities, like Tom Holland trying oysters for the first time. This show travels all over the world to explore recipes and honor the tradition of sharing good food. Four seasons are out now!

'Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown'

If you're not familiar with the late Anthony Bourdain, you're missing out on one of the most influential, internationally lauded chefs of the past few decades. "Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown," one of his longest-running TV shows, filmed 12 seasons over seven years, and all 12 seasons are streaming on HBO Max. The show follows Bourdain as he travels and discovers little-known places in order to celebrate diverse cultures by exploring their food and dining rituals.

'Gordon Ramsey: Uncharted'

Want something a little more recent? Hop on Disney+ to watch Chef Gordon Ramsey of "Hell's Kitchen," who has seven Michelin stars, leap out of helicopters to take some of the most epic adventures you can imagine — ranging from the icy waters of Alaska to the plains of New Zealand — all while learning to cook local food along the way. The latest two seasons are available right now!

'Great Chefs of New Orleans'

Whatever your favorite cooking show may be, it was likely influenced by this classic. One of the oldest cooking shows in the U.S., "Great Chefs" has aged like a fine wine. In this series, you'll meet some of the best chefs in New Orleans and learn how they create and prepare an appetizer, entree, and dessert. Two seasons are available to Amazon Prime members!

