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HANDLE WITH CARE

HOW MY JOB LETS ME
BE THERE FOR PEOPLE



to entering retirement that they just need a little extra help before they can start claiming social security.

Whatever the need, our job is to help get that settlement, and it's a privilege to work with these people and help them find some comfort and know their situation can still improve. We want to prove legal council to achieve the best settlement, as well as emotional support and comfort to help our clients make it through a difficult time.

Recently, we've been seeing more and more clients suffering from truly terrible injuries, and this month, I just want to remind everyone to just be careful out there. Accidents are bound to happen, but a little caution can go so far to protecting yourself. We are always going to be here to help our clients get through the worst situations, but if I woke up tomorrow and nobody needed a workers' comp lawyer because people stopped getting hurt at work, I'd be a happy guy.

- Joseph Miller

Workers' comp and personal injury can be a pretty broad field, considering how likely someone is to get injured on the job. There are many cases available, but early on, I knew I wanted to be where I could do the most good. I want to be here to help those people whose injuries are going to drastically change their lives. As a result, the cases we take on to help the clients who need us the most are the ones where people have suffered a great deal.

This is an unfortunate reality of manual labor jobs where guys are handling heavy construction equipment, climbing up onto high places, or working with wood chippers. The smallest accident can have terrible consequences and completely change a person's life forever. We regularly work with clients who are suffering from some form of paralysis, who are amputees in need of prosthetics, or who have suffered some other injury that would make even the most hardened soul cringe. A person's life was

altered in an instant, and the aftermath is heartbreaking.

It's situations like this where you can truly see the power of the human spirit. I have watched clients overcome so much, adapting to a new disability or prosthetic and are so excited to get back out there. Of course, everybody is different, and when your life feels like it's been destroyed, when your job was your identity and you aren't sure how you're going to take care of your family now, that's what we're here for.

Workers' comp is meant to help provide some financial stability until a client is ready to move on to the next stage of their life. For some clients, this means covering costs until they can go back to work, but more often than not, their injuries are so severe that a client can't possibly return to their former job and need three to four years of retraining until they are ready to enter a new field. Other clients are so close

THE TOWN DOG | Meet Longville's Town Ambassador

Just about every day, on Highway 84, you'll find Bruno trotting along. He's either headed into town or headed home after a long day of treats, pats on the head, and the occasional "good boy!" Bruno is the town dog, as proclaimed by the carved wooden statue you'll find in the Longville, Minnesota, town park. It's a role he was born for.

About 12 years ago, a man approached the home of Longville residents Larry and Debbie LaVallee. A puppy rested in his hands, no more than a couple months old. The man spotted the puppy at the end of their driveway and assumed it belonged to the couple. The LaVallee's had never seen the pup before, but they quickly fell in love.

The couple took him in, named him Bruno, and soon realized he wasn't an ordinary dog. Bruno had no interest in being penned in or tied up. He wanted to see the world. One day, Larry decided to let Bruno wander. Larry figured, since his nearest neighbors were a ways down the road, Bruno could quench his wanderlust without getting into trouble.

It wasn't long until Bruno discovered Highway 84.

He followed his nose, and 4 miles later, he was in downtown Longville. Before he knew it, he was friends with just about everyone in town — which wasn't hard, considering Longville is home to 156 people.

Every day, Bruno made the rounds: City Hall, the library, the ice cream shop, and his favorite, the grocery store. Or, more specifically, the back entrance to the grocery store, which happened to lead right into the deli department. Licking his chops, Bruno patiently waited for delicious deli scraps.

These days, Bruno is a regular senior citizen. At 12 years old, his joints aren't what they used to be. But that hasn't stopped him from making the trek into town to see all of his buddies and get a few well-earned scratches behind the ear.



WHAT IF ...

PROBLEM: My PT/
MRI/CT Scan hasn't
been approved by the
Workers' Comp Adjuster.

**SEE PAGE 2 FOR
THE ANSWER.**

Stay on Your Feet

PREVENT FALLS AT HOME THIS YEAR

It might have been Johnny Carson (or was it Yogi Berra?) who said, “100 percent of all household accidents happen in the home.” Whomever it was, their joke had a point: Every year, millions of Americans are treated for household injuries. And among the elderly, a lot of those injuries come from slips, trips, and falls. Concerned about your own home? There’s a lot you can do to make it safer — and the beginning of the new year is the perfect time to start.

The easiest step is to tidy up. You may not have banana peels lying about, but anything on the floor can serve as a slip or trip hazard. According to the CDC, even throw rugs can prove hazardous. A little TLC will go a long way — for example, fixing a broken step

or throwing out an unstable stool or chair. And don’t forget to change out lightbulbs or add light sources; this will make it easier to see potential trip and slip hazards.

Many choose to take extensive action, such as installing railing on both sides of the stairs and grab bars in the bathroom. A bar in the shower and near the toilet will not only provide a safeguard against falls, it will also make normal bathroom use easier. And while railing on one side of the stairs is helpful, railing on both sides is even better.

Much of fall prevention is about thinking ahead. As tempting as it is to climb ladders by yourself or clean out the gutters, it’s worth taking time to get

someone to help or spot you. Even standing on a stool or chair to reach the top shelf of the cupboard is risking it; instead, reorganize the kitchen so everything is easy to access while standing on solid ground. Plan out potentially hazardous activities. Later, you’ll be grateful that you did.

If you have concerns about fall safety, your doctor is always a good person to talk to. This is especially true if you suffer from dizziness or have balance issues, or are taking medication with those side effects. Regular exercise will strengthen your body and keep you upright. And eye exams ensure you can see obstacles ahead of time. This year, stay on top of your health and your home — and stay on your feet.

DO NOT QUIT OR RESIGN YOUR JOB!

BY JOE MILLER, ESQ.

As a firm that focuses on workers’ compensation, we receive many, many calls each and every day from injured workers, many of whom are injured severely. As explained on our website, in order to best serve our family of clients, we are very selective about the cases we take.

Some folks want to know why we do not take their case. I can tell you that one of the biggest reasons is because the injured worker has quit or resigned his or her job, usually out of frustration.

Unfortunately, especially in Virginia, this action will most likely end or severely damage your case. I can understand why you might do this. You are legitimately injured and cannot seem to get any satisfaction. Sometimes the employer and the insurance carrier will stonewall you and you just cannot seem to get any answers. You are being told you need to come into work, but the injuries are so bad, you can’t work. So you quit.

I don’t know how many ways to say this: DO NOT DO THIS! You can be as frustrated as you want to be, but quitting or resigning will kill your case. Why?

Your entitlement to ongoing workers’ compensation checks is based on your ability to return to work if you are able to get under an award — whether you get payments under that award is based on your ability to return to your pre-injury job. But if you have already resigned from your pre-injury job, how do we know what is preventing you from working? Maybe the employer will say that they were going to accommodate your doctor’s restrictions? They will argue that the only thing holding you out of work is the fact that ... you quit!

Because you quit, you have now given the employer the advantage. All they have to do is say that if you had not quit, you would have a job to come back to. Maybe it’s not true, but now that you quit, there is no way to prove otherwise.

Now for a while, if your doctor holds you completely out of all work, you may be able to prove you are entitled to compensation during that time. But once you are released to light duty, that is over. All the employer has to do is say they would have accommodated your restrictions, and you will not get another penny.

The way to handle things after you are hurt and

you come up against a “stone wall” is to do your best to get to any doctor after your accident. Visit a family doctor or an emergency room to give you treatment and some written excuse to be out of work that you can present to your employer. If you cannot do that, and you are truly injured or laid up in a hospital, then that is what you tell your employer. But under no circumstances should you ever say that you “quit” or “resign” or make any such statement, because that will end your case.

If the employer wants to fire you because they cannot accommodate you being out due to your injury, then guess what? They have just proven part of your case! As long as you can prove that you were unable to return to work during that time frame due to your work injuries, then you should be able to get benefits.

The main thing is you have not just handed over your case to the employer and insurance company by quitting or resigning.

If you’ve been severely injured at work and have questions about your case, please do not hesitate to call us at 888-694-7994 or visit us online at www.TheWorkInjuryCenter.com.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Mark was a client who had a mobile job that put him in North Carolina at the time of his work injury, and after receiving initial treatment and surgery there, he returned home to Mississippi to recuperate. Despite the employer’s attempts to have him drive tremendous distances and return to work when he was not ready, we were able to utilize his doctor’s opinions to protect him and eventually get him a decent settlement. This is what Mark had to say about Joe

Miller and his staff at the Work Injury Center:

“Joe is a great person and a great lawyer. I was over a thousand miles away, and he helped me. He handled my case with dignity and respect! Lisa called and checked on me and my family every day and continues to do so. They are great people and a great team! They are my friends, and I greatly appreciate everything they’ve done for me.”

We really appreciate Mark’s kind words. This also highlights the fact that we represent people throughout the entire state of North Carolina and the commonwealth of Virginia, and if you are forced to move elsewhere, we can still represent you effectively! This is because when you become part of our family, you stay part of our family — no matter how far away you are.

ANSWER: If your doctor has ordered testing or treatment for you that the comp carrier has not approved yet, you should call your doctor’s office and ask them the status of approval. Your doctor’s office will either tell you that they are still awaiting approval or if the orders were DENIED. If the orders were DENIED, please ask your doctor’s office to fax us the orders ASAP so we can effectively communicate with your

adjuster or defense counsel and take legal action if necessary.

PLEASE NOTE: Any time your doctor orders testing or treatment, your doctor’s office electronically submits the orders **directly to the adjuster for approval.** Our office is not involved in this process, and we do not get any type of notification whatsoever regarding approval of your doctor’s orders.

Joe’s Monthly ‘SOUL SNACKS’

“The entire purpose of our existence is to overcome our negative habits.”

— Vilna Goan

“Your fellow is your mirror. If your own face is clean, so will be the image you perceive. But should you look upon your fellow and see a blemish, it is your own imperfection that you are encountering — you are being shown what it is that you must correct within yourself.” — Bal Shem Tov

Recipe GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CHICKEN SOUP



What You’ll Need ...

- ¼ cup coconut oil or ghee
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cups potatoes, diced
- 1 ½ cups carrots, sliced
- 2 cups boneless, skinless chicken breast, chopped into 1-inch pieces

Step by Step ...

1. In a large pot, heat oil and sauté onions until tender.
2. Add tomatoes, broth, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil.
3. Add potatoes, carrots, and chicken.
4. Simmer until vegetables are cooked through, about 30 minutes.

Recipe inspired by countryliving.com.