

Feel Good February



By Lauren Hill



TikTok Video Raises Over \$100,000 for 82-Year-Old Walmart Employee to Retire

What happens when an extermination business owner with a large TikTok following (and a great heart) sparks up a conversation with an 82-year-old Walmart employee that checks him out at the register? A life-changing story for both of them. Rory, the owner of Bug Boys in Maryland, had gained over 250k followers on TikTok by posting the creepy crawlers that he deals with on a daily basis (the internet can be weird). When he realized that Butch, a Navy veteran, was still working full 8–9-hour shifts as a cashier, he wanted to use his social media following for good. A few viral videos later, the GoFundMe for Butch has raised over \$165,000 (the internet can be wonderful). Butch was able to give his two-week notice at Walmart and plans to travel to see his kids in Florida and enjoy the retirement he never thought he'd have. To see more of Rory and Butch's beautiful friendship, look at @BugBoys on TikTok.

Blizzard Baby Delivered Through Help of Facebook Video Chat

A Buffalo, NY, couple were due to have their first child on Christmas day at a local hospital. As we all know, the 'blizzard of the century' was hitting Buffalo at this same time. On Christmas Eve, the soon-to-be mother, Erica, went into labor. Finding it impossible to travel to the hospital themselves, they called 911 numerous times and were told by the dispatchers that they could not send anyone because of the storm. Erica's husband, Davon, posted on a local Facebook group asking for help and the community came through. He was soon on a Facebook video call with two doulas (one also a registered nurse) that coached him through the entire birth for almost two hours. A healthy girl, Devynn, was born that afternoon thanks to the help of two online strangers over a video call (and a very brave mom and dad).

Woman Wins \$175,000 Lottery Jackpot in Her Office's Holiday Gift Exchange

A Kentucky dentist office was having a team holiday party with a casual work-day lunch and gift exchange. The office manager, Lori, was excited about the \$50 TJ Maxx gift card she had opened in the exchange, but it was quickly 'stolen' on a coworker's turn. Lori then 'stole' five lottery tickets that had been picked by another coworker. Since the rules were the tickets were now 'dead' and belonged to Lori after being stolen twice, she started scratching away to reveal what she was expecting to be nothing. She won on every. single. one. The first four totaled up to be less than \$60 in winnings, and when she scratched away at the fifth, it was the \$175,000 jackpot. ■



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"We help people make great decisions about their legal issues."



It may sound simple, but the truth is that not everyone operates like we do. Even when we can't help someone directly, we consider it important to make sure that they are matched up with a potential answer to their question or problem. We never "send people on their way." We are committed to being a positive, useful resource for anyone who has a legal issue.

If you know of someone who might need an attorney or has a legal question, especially if they've been injured in an auto accident or their long-term disability claim has been denied, hand them this newsletter.

BGL's Best Bites:

STROMBOLI TO SHARE

By: The BGL Team

If you're celebrating the big game, Galentines, or just looking for a good go-to to have as finger food for guests, try this tasty Stromboli recipe for the table.

Ingredients:

- 1 T. Olive oil
- 1 loaf from a 3-pound package frozen bread dough, thawed OR 1 tube refrigerated pizza dough
- 8 slices hard salami
- 8 slices provolone
- 8 slices pepperoni or capocollo
- 1 ½ t. Dijon mustard
- ¼ c. Parmesan cheese
- ½ t. garlic powder
- ½ t. oregano
- ½ t. seasoned salt
- ¾ c. shredded mozzarella

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°
2. Brush an 11 x 17 baking sheet with olive oil
3. Roll dough out and transfer to prepared baking sheet, stretching out to the edges
4. Arrange salami slices in a row, down the center of dough (long ways) leaving ½ inch at ends
5. Top w/ provolone then pepperoni
6. Spread mustard on top row and then sprinkle with Parmesan, garlic powder, oregano and seasoned salt
7. Cover with mozzarella
8. Bring long sides of dough together at top and brush with water, and then pinch closed
9. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown ■



EMBRACING CHANGE



By: Autumn Haag

This time last year, I was a D1 athlete and starting the last season of my track and field career.

This would end up being the greatest goal-hitting season of my career. I finally hit the personal record I was working towards since day one, I won the women's pole vault at The Penn Relays (the largest track and field carnival in the world) and I placed in the conference championships more times than I ever had before. All the while, I was writing my thesis, earning my master's degree in Criminal Justice, and working at BenGlassLaw. To say it was 'difficult' to leave all of that is an understatement.

This year will mark a massive change in my life. I am still working at BenGlassLaw, but I have moved back home where I now manage our new Lynchburg office. Instead of being a track and field athlete, I now coach at the University of Lynchburg (my husband's alma mater) and my old high school, Jefferson Forest High School. While I don't compete in track and field anymore, I have recently gotten into rock climbing and have already been a part of climbing competitions. The last year has taught me that sometimes you don't realize how impactful the change will be for you while you're in the process of it, it's only until later when you look back at your life that you can really appreciate where it has taken you. It's a beautiful thing to learn to embrace change. ■



INSIDE THE MIND OF

LISA DERCO



A Sleepover with Coworkers?

I know this isn't the first time the Annual BGL Leadership Retreat has made the newsletter, but I had to write about my first-year attending. Unlike Lauren (our Marketing Director) who had her very first day of work take place at the retreat last year, I joined our Leadership Team after a year-and-a-half with BGL so by the time the retreat rolled around, I had been here for over two-years. That didn't matter though. I was still so nervous!

Two full days with the four other members of our Leadership Team in a house together? I didn't know what to expect. I'm just happy that Lauren didn't end up in a twin bunk bed again!

We all packed up and headed to Lake Anna with our EOS Implementer (we run our business on EOS - *The Entrepreneurial Operating System*) for the 2-days of planning the future of BGL. We had a great dinner the first night at Callie Oppie's Orchard (highly recommend if you are ever in the area – great food and super nice owner). We relaxed at the house that night and got ready for the full days of meetings ahead.

Our time together was beyond productive, and we set out an exciting plan for what we want the firm to look like in 1 year, 3 years and 10 years. It's safe to say that after each day full of exercises, we were ready to order food in and have some wine!

For me, the best part of the retreat was not just sitting down and setting huge business goals together, but the bond that our team made. Although I've known Brian for more than a decade, there is something to be said about having your entire leadership team spend a full 48-hours together in a vacation

home. We were open, honest, and vulnerable with each other in ways I haven't been with many people in my life. We also had many episodes of laughing until we were in tears.

I have never been a part of something so rewarding professionally. I spent nine-years at a large insurance company with people I loved working with, but there was no vision for the future. You were just a number. It was a steady job and was a difficult decision when I decided to leave.

Looking back now, it was the best decision I could have ever made. It feels great to be at this stage in my life and have a career that I love, with people I love working with, and in an environment that promotes everyone living their best lives.

I left the retreat feeling appreciated, energized, excited and really damn lucky that I get to work with these people. The best part is that all of that energy trickles down to the firm as a whole and impacts our handling of every client's case. ■

Reminder About Our Firm's Communication Policy

Our promise to you is that while we are working on your case, we don't take inbound phone calls, faxes or emails. Ben Glass takes no inbound unscheduled phone calls whatsoever. It makes him much more productive and helps get your case resolved faster. You can always call the office at (703) 544-7876 and schedule an in-person or phone appointment, usually within 24-48 hours. This is a lot better than the endless game of "phone tag" played by most businesses today. Remember, too, that email is "quick," but is checked no more than twice a day. Replies are then scheduled into the calendar. So if it's really important, don't email – call the office instead.

This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, ERISA disability, and small business issues. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.

INSIDE THE MIND OF

BEN GLASS



OVER ONE OF “THOSE” BIRTHDAY YEARS — WHAT’S THE LEARNING?

It’s a milestone birthday month for me. I don’t feel 65 (or anywhere near it) but my *mail directed at old people* keeps growing and growing. How many trees does it take to explain Medicare? No, I don’t need a cell phone for seniors!

At our law firm planning retreat in December, we were working on our 5-year plan and one of our leadership team members asked, “how old will you be when we get there?” Ahh... 70 does start to *sound old*.

Years ago, I adopted the moniker to “Live Life Big.” What does it mean to Live Life Big?

Since the day I walked out of my old firm to start BenGlassLaw in October 1995, we’ve not only more than doubled the size of our family (in part by the gift of international adoption) and grown one of the top personal injury and disability law firms in the region, but I’ve also built a highly successful company that coaches other small firm lawyers how to grow meaningful law practices that serve their families, their clients and their communities.

What I’ve discovered is that most adults stop at *just living*. They get *through* life but often do so with a sense that they are *missing out* on something greater – something important that they were born to do. Problem is that while they have that *feeling*, most do nothing to explore it, finding themselves inhibited by social norms, the opinions of others and their own self-limiting beliefs.

Here’s the deal:

Life is a one-way journey—from birth to death—there are no do-overs.

You start.

You come to a (sometimes unexpected and

untimely) end and ***there’s a whole lot of activity between the two.***

I asked myself:

What sense does it make to come to the end, have a chance to look back and reflect and wish I had taken a different path? Wondering “what if?” or saying to myself “I wish I had...”.

When I left my first firm to start my own adventure, I began to seriously explore these questions for myself. I read and I read, and I read some more. I talked to people and attended seminars and conferences where people were not talking about how to be a better lawyer, but how to discover and live out your life’s purpose with action.

I began to keep a journal of ideas, thoughts and to do lists. I began to discover what it is that people who were living *that* kind of life thought about, how they accomplished the things that they did and who they hung out with. I *wrote them down in my journal*, thought about how these ideas would fit into my life and I took action.

I began to build for myself a life that was much different from that of the traditional lawyer, a life that is filled with a number of different realms that are interesting and fulfilling for me and which have had an impact, I believe, on many who have come into contact with me.

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Inside The Mind of Ben Glass

In addition to running his own practice AND a separate business that teaches lawyers how to grow great businesses, Ben also coaches other small biz owners on how to start and grow a business that leads to your perfect life. Ben has a limited number of slots available for coaching non-lawyers in 2022. If interested, reach out to Ben at ben@benglasslaw.com. If you are a lawyer, check out GreatLegalMarketing.com

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Over One Of “Those” Birthday Years – What’s the Learning?

What I’ve built for myself is not likely the same thing you would build for yourself, but the learning has been this: you get to build what you want; not what society wants for you; not what any family members want for you. **It’s your life. Live it.**

By the way, I talk a lot about this at my Renegade Lawyer Podcast. **Give it a listen!** ■



WHAT WOULD BEN SAY

EXPECT ANOTHER MASSIVE ROUND OF REFEREE AND UMPIRE SHORTAGES for youth sports in 2023. Sports officials typically recertify for each year in December. For soccer, as of mid-January, Virginia needs over 6,000 registered referees for youth soccer in order to get games covered, and they only have about one-third of that number registered. The technology for the online recertification is somewhat challenging and time consuming. I do it because I’m interested and it adds to my life, but many teen referees apparently abandon the process.



HEY, I DID GET THOSE STADIUM SEATS FROM THE OLD (AND SOON TO BE DESTROYED) RFK STADIUM FOR CHRISTMAS. All my kids pitched. I have to say this was a very emotional gift for me because it truly brought back memories of the many, many days and evenings I spent with my dad attending DC baseball and soccer games.

VIRGINIA’S MINIMUM WAGE INCREASED ON JANUARY 1, 2023. This is bad for unskilled workers because an increase in wages (either by employer choice or government mandate) does not guarantee that you will be paid more. You might find yourself out of a job entirely, replaced by (1) automation or (2) a more highly skilled worker.

MY FAMILY AND I VISITED THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY. It’s just down the road from our house in Northern Virginia. A real hidden gem that opened just one and a half years ago. Free, but you need to get tickets online. Highly recommend. Of note: when we visited, we noticed that the pretty robust snack bar was 100% automated! It didn’t matter what minimum wage was, no one was earning it selling candy bars and drinks that afternoon!

AS I PEN THIS, I AM ON DAY 56 OF A TOTAL SELF-IMPOSED BAN ON READING NEWSPAPERS, WATCHING TV NEWS OR TALK SHOWS, AND ALL NEWS WEBSITES. Wow. I used to spend at least 45-60 minutes a day on that stuff, often even more! This was not a hard habit to break and writing “I’m on day XX of being free from *news* that won’t change my life one bit” every day in my journal helps a lot. Next up: vastly reducing the dopamine hit from visiting social media sites. (Book recommendation on that: *Dopamine Nation*, by Bethany McLean.) As one person said to me: *welcome to the space of peace.* ■



Want An Hour of Free Coaching?

START A PODCAST.

I've been running *Time Freedom for Lawyers* podcast since October, and I've interviewed about 20 highly successful entrepreneurs so far. My target audience is professionals in small firms (law, medicine, finance, otherwise) who are trying to grow their practices in a way that is consistent with having a fun and active lifestyle.

Success leaves clues and I've learned a lot during these interviews. **Here are eight common threads from the first set of interviews with highly successful entrepreneurs** (along with the episode I think best represents the principle):

- 1 They invest heavily in coaching and masterminds.** It is not uncommon for a guest to say they spend high five-to-six figures a year on this. **Jerome Myers**, who I interviewed early on, recently told me that he's on track to spend \$300,000 on coaching for 2023!
- 2 They believe the world is abundant.** It doesn't matter that they are often sharing their best ideas on a podcast. Because they are great at execution (most people aren't) and because they believe that there is no monopoly on good ideas. **Sam Mollaei** will give you his whole playbook for building seven law firms!
- 3 They speak very highly of their team.** None of them complain publicly about their employees. Instead, they all overinvest in their employees and focus on building great work cultures. **Michael Sonbert**.
- 4 They don't believe the world owes them anything.** Check out my episode with Mexican lawyer **Joe Bravo**.
- 5 Most have a journaling practice** – somewhere to set goals, trap thoughts, and reflect on what they're grateful for. **Kari Schwear** and I dive deep on her daily gratitude practice.
- 6 Speaking of goals. They set BIG ones.** I'm talking "I want to build something you can see from space" (**Omni Casey**) or "I want to move to Costa Rica and manage my team from there" (**Justin Ledford**) or "I want to be the #1 [pick the field]."

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Inside The Mind of Brian Glass

- 7 They radiate authenticity.** Not much bluster in the first set of interviews I've conducted. **Ryan McKeen** won a \$100,000,000 verdict and was ready to go back to the office a few days later.
- 8 They question the way things have "always been done".** Most of the entrepreneurs worked somewhere else, tried (and failed) to change the culture, and then set out to build their own thing. My friend **Matt McClellan** straight up built his own chat application when the company he was working for wouldn't implement his ideas. He's now working with legendary start-up incubator Y Combinator.



Have you listened? What common threads do you notice? ■ 

Parkinson's Law of Triviality

Have you heard of Parkinson's Law of Triviality? Because it prevents organizations from making large decisions well.

Parkinson's Law of Triviality is that organizations typically give disproportionate weight to trivial issues. Give a team an hour to make three decisions – approve/decline the design of a \$10M nuclear reactor, approve/decline design of a \$4,000 bike shed, and approve/decline the snacks for the nuclear reactor's employees – and watch them spend nearly all of their time on the second two items.

Why? Because the reactor project is so vast, expensive, and complicated that the average person can't comprehend it. Instead, they assume that whoever worked on the plans in the first place DID understand it. But then why does the bike shed get debated? After all, the person who drafted the original plan ALSO understood it. The bike shed gets debated because everyone has some sense of how a project like that could be improved. And everyone in the room wants to feel as though they should have been in the

room... so they all voice their opinion.

The snacks? Forget it. Everyone has an opinion on snacks.

So how do we use this to run better meetings?

- (1) Don't mix important topics with trivial topics.** When we do, the trivial topics tend to get decided first because the group feels like they've done something. How often have you heard "OK – let's start here because that part's easy"?
- (2) Don't have people in the meeting who aren't stakeholders or subject matter experts.** When in doubt, cut out some stakeholders.

I've found that this applies to individuals as well as organizations. I often agonize over \$40 purchases when I can easily make the decision to purchase a \$1,000 item. It's counter-intuitive (and counter-productive). But it's just how my mind works. ■

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The Story behind Black History Month!

Carter G. Woodson was born in West Virginia as a sharecropper in 1875 and went on to become a teacher and the second African American to earn a doctorate from Harvard. He founded the *Association for the Study of African American Life and History* in 1915 and was eventually known as the "father of Black history."

On February 7, 1926, Woodson announced the creation of "Negro History Week" to encourage and expand the teaching of Black history in schools. He selected February because the month marks the birthday of the two most famous abolitionists of the time - Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. February 1 is also National Freedom Day, a celebration of the ratification of the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery in the US.

By the 1940s, schools in Woodson's home state of WV had begun expanding the celebration to a month, and by the 1960s, demands for proper Black history education spread across the country. Kent State's *Black United Students* proposed the idea of a Black History month in 1969 and celebrated the first event in February 1970. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976 during the US bicentennial. ■