

O'CONNOR INJURY LAW

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Check Us Out!

Learning to Let Go ...

One Mile at a Time





My oldest son, Owen, is now 16 and has his learner's permit. He has completed a driver's education course at his high school and six hours of instruction at a professional driving school. Now, it's my turn to spend 50 hours in the passenger seat while he takes the wheel.

I was definitely nervous about the idea. For 16 years, I have been the one driving him around. Suddenly, I was going to be sitting beside him, watching him make decisions that could affect our safety and that of everyone else on the road.

To my surprise, I've handled it better than I expected. That's not to say I've had some anxious moments. When Owen gets a little too close to the curb or suddenly slows to a crawl while turning at a busy intersection, I can feel myself tense up. But I have also enjoyed explaining things an experienced driver learns to anticipate.

For example, we were at an intersection when a car on our left approached with its turn signal on. I could sense Owen ready to move, but I told him to let the car go first, as it may not actually make the turn. Never assume other drivers will do what you anticipate. It's a small lesson in defensive driving, but also a life lesson: Don't make important decisions based solely on what you assume someone else will do. Pay attention, exercise good judgment, and leave yourself room to respond when things don't go as expected.

I've also tried to be mindful of how I teach him. When he does something well, I offer encouragement. When he needs to improve, I give him a tip. More than a few times, I've bitten my lip to avoid nitpicking or offering a constant stream of critiques. For the most part, I'm trying to let him figure things out. I remind him that he will get better with experience.

That may be the hardest part of parenting as our children get older. We still want to protect them, but we also have to give them opportunities to develop their own judgment, make mistakes, and learn from experience.

My hope is that Owen carries these lessons beyond the road. I want him to have the confidence to make good decisions, the humility to recognize when he needs help, and the judgment to understand how his choices affect others.

Of course, I'm still getting used to another part of this experience. It doesn't seem that long ago that I was teaching Owen how to ride a bike, and now I'm sitting beside him as he learns to drive a car. Before long, he will have his license, and I will no longer be needed in the passenger seat. I know that's exactly how it is supposed to work, but that doesn't make it any easier to watch the years go by.

For now, I'm grateful for these 50 hours together. What initially felt like another obligation has become an opportunity to spend time with my son during a stage of life that won't last forever. I hope he remembers some of the lessons I teach him along the way. And I hope I remember to enjoy the ride, even when he gets a little too close to the curb.

After all, the goal of parenting is not to keep our children in the passenger seat forever. It is to give them the confidence and judgment to take the wheel, and to know that, no matter where life takes them, we will always be there when they need us.

-Brian O'Connor

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BAGLEY'S BATTLE

One of the Strangest Lawsuits Ever Filed



We all make mistakes from time to time, but few of us would ever consider taking *ourselves* to court over a transgression.

That's exactly what Utah resident Barbara Bagley did following a 2011 automobile accident that resulted in the death of her passenger and common-law husband, Bradley Vom Baur. While behind the wheel in the Nevada desert, Bagley lost control of her Range Rover after hitting a patch of sagebrush. Vom Baur, who was thrown from the vehicle, died 10 days later after sustaining extensive injuries.

In addition to the heartbreak of losing her partner, Bagley had to contend with the legal and financial aftermath of the tragedy. As the sole heir and personal representative of Vom Baur's estate, she was obliged to pursue damages for the incident. There was just one problem: The insurer, State Farm, refused to pay out due to Bagley's negligence, which meant she had to attempt to recover damages by suing *herself*. Thus began the odd case of *Bagley and the Estate of Vom Baur v. Bagley*.

Naturally, the twists and turns of this particular litigation are too lengthy to fit in a simple summary, but State Farm's actions during the proceedings were a clear (and surreal) highlight. The insurer provided Bagley's attorneys, who then argued against her for bringing the action *against herself* as their client. Her own legal counsel went as far as to argue that her actions were "contrary to … basic notions of fairness and decency."

Initially dismissed by the district court, the case found new life in the Court of Appeals, which held that Bagley was entirely within her rights to pursue such an action. The Utah Supreme Court agreed, leading the way for the case to move forward. Ultimately, Bagley's long legal journey resulted in a payout.

While the bizarre circumstances surrounding this case almost guarantee we'll likely never see another one of its kind, the tale of Barbara Bagley's legal proceedings against *Barbara Bagley* demonstrates that virtually anything is possible in the legal world.

WHEN EVERYTHING FEELS DIFFERENT, YOUR CHILD NEEDS YOU MORE THAN EVER

One day, your child is laughing, playing, and following their usual routine. The next, they're facing a new school, a family move, or another major life change that turns their world upside down. These transitions are a normal part of growing up, but they can feel overwhelming for kids. The way parents respond can make all the difference, helping children feel safe, supported, and ready to adjust with confidence.

Keep communication open.
Children often have questions they don't know how to ask. Create opportunities for honest conversations about what's changing and what they can expect. Use age-appropriate language, encourage questions, and listen without rushing to fix every emotion. It's amazing how much just feeling heard can help a child.

Stick to familiar routines.
Major life changes can make children feel like everything is out of their control. Keeping regular routines for meals, bedtime, homework, or family activities provides a sense of stability. Even when schedules change, establishing new routines quickly helps kids adjust and feel grounded.

Validate their feelings.
Every child reacts differently to change. Some become emotional, while others withdraw or grow frustrated. Avoid telling them how they should feel. Instead, acknowledge their emotions and let them know it's okay to feel sad, nervous, excited, or even confused. Validation builds trust and encourages children to share their feelings rather than bottle them up.

Spend quality time together.
During periods of transition, children often need extra reassurance that they're loved and supported. Tiny moments of connection can make a larger difference than you may imagine. Reading together, playing a game, taking a walk, or simply talking about the day reminds kids they aren't facing change alone.

Model healthy coping skills.
Children pay close attention to how adults respond to challenges. Demonstrating healthy ways to manage stress, such as staying calm, talking through problems, and practicing self-care, helps children develop coping skills they can use throughout life. Seeing resilience in action reminds kids that change, while difficult, is something they can handle.

Be patient with the process.
Adapting to change takes time, and every child moves at their own pace. Celebrate small victories, offer encouragement, and remember that setbacks are a normal part of the process. With consistent love, understanding, and support, children can and will build the confidence and resilience they'll carry into future life changes.

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TAKE A *BREAK*





ORANGE-GLAZED SALMON



Ingredients

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 lb salmon fillets
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp cornstarch mixed with 1 tsp water (optional)

Directions

1. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter.
2. Season salmon with salt and pepper, then place skin-side up in the skillet.
3. Cook 3–5 minutes until golden.
4. Flip and cook 3–4 minutes more, until the salmon reaches 145 F.
5. Transfer to a plate and tent with foil.
6. Return skillet to stove and reduce heat to medium.
7. In a small bowl, whisk together orange juice, honey, soy sauce, garlic, and cornstarch (if using).
8. Pour into the skillet and cook until hot and slightly thickened.
9. Return salmon to the pan and spoon glaze over the top before serving.

The AI Gold Rush

Opportunity or Overhype?

Over the last few months, you've likely heard someone talk about the "AI bubble" and how it is on the brink of collapsing. Some experts theorize that there was massive overinvestment in AI properties and companies, inflating stock valuations well above their proven profitability or current revenue, and that it will all come crashing down sooner rather than later. It's a scary thought, as an AI bubble pop could have lasting consequences for our economy, but it's important to remember that this isn't the first time we've experienced something like this.

In the '90s, investors started throwing money at every internet-related stock. Dot-com and other tech stocks saw huge value increases, and investors thought the good times would just keep rolling. But they didn't. When the bubble burst, many investors faced significant losses as countless dot-com and technology companies collapsed. As we approach the possibility of another market correction, we can look back on lessons from the dot-com era to make more informed decisions.

Diversify.
If you play the investing game, one of the biggest mistakes you can make is keeping your portfolio exclusive to similar products, industries, and markets. You have to spread your money around. If you invest entirely in the AI industry and the bubble pops, you'll be in a tough position.

Stick to strategy.
Those who invest often follow a philosophy that drives their investment decisions. It's easy to get caught up in the emotional side, especially if you're experiencing big gains or losses, and throw your strategy to the side. Do your homework on each stock, explore all your options, and stick to the basics.

Don't get caught off guard.
Longtime investors know that people always say the market is going to crash. Eventually, someone will be right, but we hear a lot of noise until that moment. Prepare for market uncertainty and establish a backup plan, whether that's keeping some cash on hand or pulling back when things look less predictable.



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Believe It or Not, Sasquatch Has Legal Protection

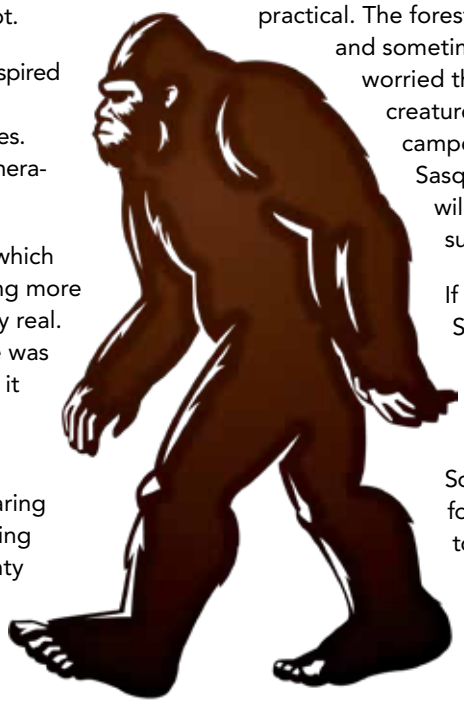
IF YOU SEE BIGFOOT, DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT

Every state has a few quirky laws hiding in its history, but this one might just take the prize. In southern Washington's Skamania County, it's illegal to harm Bigfoot. Yes, that Bigfoot.

The legendary, oversized, furry forest dweller has inspired campfire stories, documentaries, blurry photos, and countless "I swear I saw something" tales for decades. Whether you believe Sasquatch is real or simply camera-shy, Skamania County isn't taking any chances.

The law was originally adopted on April 1, 1969, which naturally led many people to assume it was nothing more than an elaborate April Fools' joke, but it's entirely real. Local officials repeatedly confirmed the ordinance was genuine, and newspapers continued reporting on it to clear up any confusion.

Then, in 1984, things got even more interesting. The county updated the ordinance, officially declaring Sasquatch an endangered species and even creating a Sasquatch Refuge. Neighboring Whatcom County eventually followed suit by establishing its own Sasquatch protection and refuge area.



Now, before you imagine lawmakers passionately debating Bigfoot conservation, the real reason behind the law is actually much more practical. The forests of Washington have long attracted enthusiastic and sometimes heavily armed Bigfoot hunters. Officials worried that someone determined to bag the legendary creature might accidentally mistake another hiker, camper, or even a prankster in a furry costume for Sasquatch. And yes, plenty of Bigfoot enthusiasts are willing to dress the part, making mistaken identity a surprisingly reasonable concern.

If someone were to violate the ordinance in Skamania County, the consequences aren't exactly mythical. Harming a Sasquatch (or what someone believes is one) can carry a penalty of up to one year in jail and a $1,000 fine.

So, if your next hiking trip through Washington's forests includes an unexpected encounter with a towering, hairy figure, the safest bet is to admire from a distance. Whether it's Bigfoot, another hiker, or your friend wearing an incredibly convincing costume, everyone will appreciate the decision.

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