

# The PACKARD PRESS

A collection of thoughts and stories to educate, entertain and inspire.

## A Miracle in the Peruvian Jungle

### How One Lucky Question Led Me to a New Friend

A few months ago, something amazing happened to me high in the mountains on the edge of the Peruvian jungle. I was there with my family to see Machu Picchu, but I also had another mission: to find the family of an old friend I hadn't seen since 2001. This is a crazy story, and it started way back in 1999. I was 19 years old when I embarked on a two-year church mission in Peru.

There, I met a guy who would eventually become one of the best friends I've ever had. His name was Fernando Andia, and we were assigned to be missionary companions for six months. That meant we spent pretty much every waking second together preaching, teaching, and doing good works in a very poor section of Lima.

Fernando was a smart fellow, with a unique, quirky personality and a wholesome innocence to him. He didn't always understand social norms or pick up on social cues, but no one else could make me laugh like he could. I'll never forget the day he fell out of his bunk bed. He was totally baffled to find himself on the floor!

We came up with a little game that we'd play on the narrow sidewalk leading back to our apartment each night. It went like this: The person walking in the back would carry the keys. Then, when we got close to home, he'd toss them over the shoulder of the person in front, who would catch the keys (without looking) and unlock the door. I don't know how we came up with this idea, but catching the keys was quite difficult. Yet, we were determined. So, we practiced with small pebbles as we walked through the city.

Fernando being Fernando, he didn't always remember the details. One day, I was walking along the sidewalk when a huge brick flew

out of nowhere and hit me in the shoulder! When I turned around, there was Fernando grinning sheepishly. "Whoops!" He said innocently, "that almost hit your head!" It had never crossed his mind that his "big pebble" could have hurt me. "Little rocks, man!" I reminded him, and we both cracked up as he dusted off my shirt.

By the end of our time together, Fernando and I were dear friends. Over the years, I've told many stories of Fernando to my kids, along with a promise that we'd visit him. Five years ago, I found out that Fernando had died in a car crash while on a mountain road near his hometown of Cusco, Peru. He left behind a widow and five small children, with his youngest being only 8 months old.

In my heart, I knew I wanted to help Fernando's family somehow. But I didn't know where they lived or how to reach them. I didn't even know his widow's name! Still, when I finally got the opportunity to take my family to Peru in October 2021, I tucked an envelope of money in my suitcase.

"How in the world are you going to find this lady?" my wife asked me. "It's been five years since he passed, and we're only spending one day in Cusco!" I had no idea how I would do it, but I had faith.

My family arrived in Peru and our itinerary took us to the village of Urubamba, the perfect launchpad to the Peruvian ruins. But my real mission never left my mind. I stopped by the church there in Urubamba and found the leader of the congregation there.

"Do you happen to know the Andia family from Cusco?" I asked. It was a long shot — Cusco is an hour and a half away — but his eyes lit up! He knew the family and had



heard about Fernando's death. He even knew the name of his widow — Isabel.

"Do you know how to find her?" I asked, holding my breath. "Of course," he said. "Let me get you her phone number!"

Incredibly, a few days later my family and I sat down to lunch with Isabel and her five children in Cusco. I told them stories about their dad and showed them pictures they had never seen. When I told the story of how Fernando fell out of the bunk bed, they started laughing and all looked towards one of the boys. With that familiar sheepish grin, he said, "I guess it's hereditary."

"I promised myself five years ago that I'd find you and offer you help," I said as we parted. I handed her the envelope I'd tucked into my suitcase. "It's the least I can do for Fernando." Her eyes teared up, and she gave me a big hug.

We did a lot of amazing things in Peru (check out Page 3 to read more), but for me, the time spent with Fernando's family was even better than Machu Picchu.

—Michael Packard



## EMBRACE YOUR INNER BOOKWORM

### 4 Secrets to Finding Time to Read as a Busy Parent

When you think of reading, you might conjure up an image of yourself curled up next to a cozy fireplace, sipping on coffee, and reading the day away. However, with the hustle and bustle of daily life and raising kids, it's tough to find the time to truly dive into a good book. We know it's important to read to our children, but we forget how valuable it is for them to see us reading, too.

So, how can you fit it into your schedule?

#### **Don't leave the house without a book.**

Whether you are waiting in the pickup line at school, at the dentist's office, for your order at the coffee shop, or at your kid's soccer practice, this downtime could be spent reading a chapter of your book.

#### **Schedule reading time.**

This one sounds quite silly, but as parents know, if you don't make time for something, it won't get done. Plan out 30 minutes of reading time each day to allow yourself to get comfortable and read without distractions. The trick here is to make sure you don't cancel on yourself!

#### **Make it a family affair.**

Sometimes parents feel guilty when they take time for themselves that could be spent with their children. If this sounds like you, make time to read together — the kids read their books, and you read yours! Some days, this may last 10 minutes, but other times, they may stay captivated longer. Either way, you are creating healthy habits for your kids while getting in a chapter for yourself, too!

#### **Swap out the movies for books.**

Once the kids are tucked in after a long day, it sounds so nice to park yourself in front of the television with a cozy blanket and mindlessly watch a good movie or an episode of your favorite show. However, instead of watching TV for an hour, dedicate some or all of that time to reading. This way, you're still making progress in your book.

No matter how you make the time to read, you will be glad you did. Good luck and happy reading!

# A HARD ROAD TO VICTORY

## We Won Compensation for a Client With Preexisting Conditions!

Car crash cases are always tricky, but it's even harder to win justice if the person injured in the crash has preexisting conditions. Retired teacher Tara Jarrell discovered this firsthand when she and her daughter were involved in a traumatic accident on Valentine's Day.

Tara and her 20-year-old daughter, Shelby, were driving home to Hondo after a "mother-daughter" Valentine's Day date. They'd gone to see a friend of Shelby's play music at a restaurant in D'Hanis. Shelby was behind the wheel, Tara was in the passenger seat, and a friend of Shelby's was in the back.

"While we were leaving the restaurant and on the way home, this woman decided to just barrel out onto the highway, and she totaled our F-250!" Tara remembers.

The other driver collided hard with Tara's passenger door. Immediately, Shelby threw out her arm to try and protect her mother. Tara had been injured in several car accidents before and even had serious surgery to replace damaged disks in her neck with plates and screws. The moment the other driver hit the truck, Tara felt something in her neck break.

"Instantly, I broke a screw in my neck. I had a lot of pain, tingling, and numbness down my left arm," Tara says. Tara survived the accident with a bulging disk and compressed nerves. Shelby had a serious concussion that forced her to take time off of work and school, and her friend developed low back pain that required injections.

Luckily, Tara knew exactly who to call for help: our team at Packard Law Firm. We were already working on a Social Security disability claim for her related to her fibromyalgia, stress, and anxiety, so she knew she could trust us to do good work.

"The team at Packard tried to make the case quick and painless for us, which I do appreciate. It took all of the worry off my shoulders," Tara says.

Getting justice for Tara was an uphill battle, but we did it! We proved that the Valentine's Day crash worsened Tara's existing injuries and secured a favorable settlement. We were also able to get the maximum insurance payout for Shelby. It won't erase the trauma they suffered, but it will certainly help.





# 8 INCREDIBLE DAYS IN PERU

## I'll Never Forget Our Family Vacation!

My family spent eight days in Peru last fall, and it was incredible! I'd been to the country before (as you read on Page 1), but this was my first time doing a lot of the touristy things, like hiking through Machu Picchu. My wife, kids, and I were totally awestruck by the experience.

During our visit, we stayed in the village of Urubamba, which is located in the high-jungle, mountainous area of the Sacred Valley. It is closer to the equator than Hawaii but is just as green. And it's twice the altitude of Denver, so it was chilly! The Sacred Valley is a really special place for the Incas. For them, the gods live in the sky and mortals live on Earth. This high valley in the Andes mountains — where people can literally walk among the clouds — is a holy place.

It was amazing to see clouds drifting at eye level and meet the villagers of Urubamba. In the valley, some grow quinoa and others

raise llamas and alpacas. They wear brightly colored traditional clothing made from llama and alpaca wool. The dye that makes the vibrant colors comes from the guts of a certain cactus parasite called the cochineal. The villagers speak a mix of Quechua, Spanish, and English. They told us that each village in the region has its own traditional clothing, and locals can recognize each other in the nearby city of Cusco by their hats alone. Pretty cool, right?

I could talk for hours about Peru and our visit, but the photos tell a better story than I can. I hope you enjoy this little peek into a special place in South America. I definitely recommend adding Peru to your bucket list!

—*Michael Packard*



## TAKE A BREAK

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G	F	E	A	U	S	U	X	N	M	P	C	T	X	X
G	A	R	N	E	T	W	D	N	M	F	X	S	C	G
A	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	S	E	R	K	G	U	X
B	E	H	X	G	K	Y	A	N	J	U	T	H	X	X
Z	V	B	C	P	Y	A	B	I	S	L	O	K	J	L

Blanket	Football	Parade
Carnation	Garnet	Resolution
Cold	Janus	Snow
Emmys	Mittens	Workout

## CHICKEN AND LEEK FILO PIE



### Ingredients

*Inspired by GoodHousekeeping.com*

- 3 oz unsalted butter, divided
- 2 large leeks, finely sliced
- 2 large carrots, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp flour
- 14 oz chicken stock, warmed
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 3 tbsp heavy cream
- 12 oz cooked chicken, cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 12 sheets frozen fillo pastry, thawed

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a pan over low heat, melt 1 oz butter.
3. Add leeks and carrots and cook for 15 minutes, until softened but not colored.
4. Stir in flour and cook for 1 minute.
5. Gradually add chicken stock, stirring until sauce is smooth, then let simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Stir in mustard and heavy cream, then add cooked chicken and parsley. Transfer to a large ovenproof dish.
7. In a pan, melt remaining butter.
8. Put a single fillo sheet on a board and brush with melted butter. Scrunch up pastry sheet and place on top of chicken mixture. Continue until pie is covered.
9. Bake for 20–25 minutes, until the fillo is golden and chicken mixture is bubbling.

## The Packard Family Is Here to Help Your Family

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- 1 Michael's Miracle Trip to Peru
- 2 Make More Time for Reading  
Success! Packard Wins Justice in a Difficult Case
- 3 Experience Peru Like a Local  
Chicken and Leek Filo Pie
- 4 Stick to Your Resolutions —For Real, This Time

## HOW TO KEEP NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

### FOR REAL, THIS TIME

New Year's Eve has come and gone, and now that the champagne is finished and the decorations are put away, it's time to buckle down and work on those New Year's resolutions. The only problem is ... your resolutions for this year and last year are the same.

Change is tough, so you're not alone in being unable to stick to your resolutions. This year can be different, if you want it to be. Here are some tips to keep you on track.

**Have a specific goal.** Many resolutions are vague — along the lines of "exercise more" or "eat healthier." That's too ambiguous to inspire motivation, and vagueness leaves room for excuses. Make your goal more concrete, so you can measure your success. Specific goals could include going to the gym three times a week, being able to bench a certain number of pounds, or only indulging in fast food once a month. Make your goal realistic — if it's too drastic or difficult, it's easier to give up.

**Have a plan.** Bad habits are hard to break, so change won't come about naturally. It's important to consider how you'll structure your day around your resolution and what obstacles you might face. When will you go to the gym, and what will you do if that time gets interrupted? How will you plan meals to avoid spontaneous drive-thru visits? Write down what you want to accomplish and all the

things that might stand in your way. Then, figure out how you'll deal with them before they happen.

**Start small.** On Jan. 1, you're probably enthusiastic about your resolution and ready to hit the ground running. Not so fast — doing too much too soon is a classic mistake. It's okay to be excited, but working out until you're sore all over or constantly eating salads you hate will turn your resolution into a chore that you'll want to avoid. Start with light workouts or replacing some of your carbs with veggies. Once you get the hang of that, you'll be ready to scale up slowly.

Using these guidelines, you'll make lasting changes that extend beyond February. Get 2022 started off on the right foot, and next year you'll be ready to make a whole new resolution — and keep it.

