

The PACKARD PRESS

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

EVERYDAY HEROISM

How My Wife Turned a Messy Situation Into a Lesson in Love

"Mommy! You're my hero! Because you clean up my frow-up!"

I'll never forget when my son said those words. This is a story that's become a classic in the Packard household. Noah was only 6 years old, and he was feeling pretty sick. After he vomited all over the floor, he sat there looking at the huge mess he would never be able to clean up on his own. That's when Mommy came in to save the day, cleaning up this big disaster and helping poor Noah find a way through the impossible situation he put himself in.

That phrase has become a term of endearment among my family now. Anytime someone shows up in a big way or helps out with an icky problem in our lives (especially if it is a problem we created ourselves), we'll say, "You're my hero! Because you clean up my frow-up!"

When we think of heroes, we often envision grand gestures or epic battles. But sometimes, heroism shows up in the most unexpected and humble forms. National Heroes Day is this month, and I wanted to acknowledge the everyday, unsung heroes in our lives. Sometimes, small acts — like cleaning up a big, scary mess or helping with a tough homework assignment — make the most significant impact.

My wife is definitely my hero. From the sweet way she saved our little boy from his mess to the many times she stood by my side,



she always does heroic things for us. A classic example happened early in our marriage while I was in law school. We were pregnant with our first child, living in this teeny-tiny basement apartment. We had just gotten our first credit card, and after some bills and a parking ticket, I ended up racking up some credit card debt. My beautiful wife was already doing so much. (She was also still in school, and she was dealing with morning sickness on top of it all.) I was doing everything possible to be the hero, so I decided that I would take care of the financial stuff so she wouldn't have to worry about it. The late notices started coming in the mail, and I was overwhelmed and embarrassed. I was afraid that she would think less of me, and as I tried to hide the problem, it worsened.

Finally, as I sat on the floor surrounded by notices, tickets, and credit card debt, I confessed it all to her. I didn't have a clue how to handle it all. And my sweet wife saw my state of distress, my embarrassment, and my shame, and sat down next to me. She said, "Michael, we are going to get through this. Let's figure this out." We went through every envelope one by one and took care of it. She held my hand through the daunting stack of papers and showed me I didn't have to be a hero all by myself.

My wife has saved me many other times, like handling a particularly sensitive conversation with one of our kids that could have easily turned disastrous if I had handled it on my own. I'm thankful I stopped and recognized that Amy could work her magic in the situation. She also happens to be the Master Coordinator and somehow manages the family calendar with everyone's crazy schedules!

Sometimes, I get to be the hero sidekick and let my wife sleep in after she stays up late working on Halloween costumes. But even then, she's usually up and at it.

National Heroes Day is a reminder to celebrate not just the grand gestures but also the tiny, selfless acts that make life a little brighter and a lot more manageable. So, to my incredible wife and all the unsung heroes out there, thank you for cleaning up our frow-up!

—Michael Packard

Coney Island's Cutthroat Carnival



In the early 20th century, Coney Island was the beating heart of America's burgeoning amusement park industry. Three rival theme parks — Steeplechase Park, Luna Park, and Dreamland — engaged in fierce, cutthroat competition that dramatically reshaped this iconic destination.

A Tawdry Reputation Transformed

Coney Island's reputation was once far from wholesome. Known as "Sodom by the Sea," it was considered a tawdry, vice-filled destination. That began to change in 1897 when Steeplechase Park opened. Its founder, George Tilyou, sought to bring clean fun to the masses, creating a lighthearted atmosphere exemplified by his iconic "Funny Face" caricature.

Stealing Ideas and Underhanded Tactics

Tilyou's success soon drew the attention of rival park operators. In 1902, he lured away the founders of the popular "A Trip to the Moon" attraction from the upcoming Luna Park. These underhanded tactics were common, as the parks constantly copied each other's rides and acts to one-up the competition.

Rapid Innovation Drives Change

This competitive spirit drove rapid innovation at Coney Island. Over just a few years, the parks introduced groundbreaking new attractions like the Rotating Barrel, Thunderbolt roller coaster, and the world's largest Ferris wheel. They transformed the public's perception of amusement parks, elevating them from sideshows to immersive, technologically advanced experiences.

The Birth of the Modern Amusement Park

The era of Coney Island's dueling theme parks was short-lived, lasting only from 1904 to 1911, but its impact can still be felt today. The parks' relentless one-upmanship drove the rapid evolution of the amusement park industry, laying the foundation for the iconic destination Coney Island has become. What began as a vulgar locale became a glittering symbol of American ingenuity and the pursuit of wholesome fun.

While the tactics of these rival parks may have been underhanded, the lasting legacy of their fierce competition is undeniable. The rapid innovations, technological advancements, and shifts in public perception from this crucible of competition continue to shape the amusement park experience today.

HURT ON THE JOB?

What You Need to Know About Workers' Comp and Personal Injury Claims

Getting hurt on the job can be a stressful and often confusing experience as you get on the road to recovery. Two types of legal systems can be an avenue for compensation for your injuries and damages: workers' compensation and personal injury claims. While both are designed to help you recover after an accident, they work very differently. This month, let's explore how these options differ and what the right choice is for you.

Legal Standards

The main difference is that worker's comp is a no-fault system. In cases where you are injured on the job, you only have to prove your injury happened on a job site or was the direct result of what you do as an employee. Personal injury claims, however, require you to prove another party's negligence caused your injuries. The scope of personal injuries is also far broader, covering a wide range of accidents.

Solutions

Each option has different standards for what you can claim. Workers' comp typically covers medical care, disability benefits, lost wages, job displacement benefits, and death benefits. It doesn't allow you to sue for pain, suffering, or losses that are more difficult to quantify. In personal injury claims, you can fight for all the harm you have suffered due to someone else's negligence. Personal injury claims can be worth much more, but they take longer and are more difficult to prove.

Processes

Workers' comp is an administrative process. After your workplace injury, you will have limited time to file a report and claim with your company. Employees have to document the nature of their injury, where it happened, and how. Once the company submits the claim to its insurance, you can dispute a denial by a formal appeal or a request for the insurance to reconsider. In a personal injury claim, the process involves gathering evidence, assessing your injuries, determining needed medical care, and negotiating compensation. If an insurance company refuses a fair settlement, you litigate in court.

Understanding the differences between workers' compensation and personal injury claims can help you make the best decision for your recovery, and the good news is that you don't have to choose between the two. You can pursue which ever you are entitled to. This can all get complicated quickly, so if you were hurt on the job, contact Packard Law Firm today!



—Michael Packard

Fall Comfort in a Bowl

A Family Tradition of Pumpkin Soup and Gumbo

One of my favorite fall traditions with my family is cooking hearty soups and stews to enjoy as the weather cools down. Even though here in Texas, the chill doesn't set in until January, we still love getting into the fall spirit with our "pumpkin" soup and my favorite gumbo. It's just one of the many family activities we look forward to this time of year. Fall is the perfect time to slow down, enjoy good food, and make lasting memories with loved ones. So, grab your spoon and gather around the table because there's no better way to celebrate the season than with a warm, homemade soup.

Pumpkin Soup

I'm not looking for the fun-sized candy bars when Halloween starts creeping around the corner. For me, the spooky season is synonymous with our pumpkin soup. Funnily enough, this tasty meal doesn't include

any pumpkins. It's a comfy and warm mix of chicken, potatoes and celery. What makes this soup so unique is the hollowed-out pumpkin we serve it in. Nothing quite says fall like a comforting soup in a natural pumpkin serving dish. My wife makes this one, but it's a great dish to prepare with the whole family. You can make it extra fun by going to a local pumpkin patch and having your kids pick the lucky pumpkin together.

Gumbo

Every year, I make my family-famous chicken and sausage gumbo. This savory dish has become a staple in our autumn celebrations, and it's the perfect mix of flavors and spices to enjoy on cool evenings. As we eat around the table, this gumbo warms our bellies and brings us together. Gumbo is super hearty, and you can make it in several ways. Though Andouille sausage is the most popular meat for this stew, you can also throw in seafood like shrimp and crab. It will make the whole house smell fragrant and delicious.



This fall, no matter the weather, I encourage you and your family to get in the kitchen to make new soups and new traditions together. From the crowd-pleasing pumpkin soup to our classic gumbo, the autumn stews we make in my household are more than just nourishing; they're opportunities to bond and create beautiful memories.

—Michael Packard

TAKE A BREAK



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|--------|---------|-----------|
| Autumn | Foliage | Spooky |
| Boo | Ghost | Soup |
| Candy | Gourd | Tailgate |
| Coffee | Moon | Touchdown |



Baked Tofu Nuggets

Crispy on the outside and tender on the inside, these nuggets are packed with flavor and perfect for dipping. They're great for kids or the whole family to enjoy!

Ingredients

- 1 block (14 oz) extra firm tofu, drained and pressed
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Cut tofu into small nugget-size pieces.
3. In a shallow bowl, combine breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, olive oil, garlic powder, oregano, salt, and pepper. Gently toss to combine.
4. Add tofu nuggets to the bowl and toss to coat.
5. Arrange tofu nuggets on the prepared baking sheet in a single layer.
6. Bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping halfway through, until golden and crispy.

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Choosing the Right Legal Path After a Work Injury
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Baked Tofu Nuggets
4. Wide Receivers Ready to Make History

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MEET THE GAME-CHANGERS

Top Wide Receivers to Watch This NFL Season

Quarterbacks are often the most popular and well-known players on their respective football teams, but they couldn't do what they do without the help of their teammates. Wide receivers are valuable assets to any team, as they run routes, shake their defenders, and give the quarterback a target to throw to. While no wide receiver has ever won the Most Valuable Player award, receivers like Jerry Rice, Cooper Kupp, and Randy Moss have been invaluable to their team's success.

Since the NFL season is underway, now is the best time to familiarize yourself with a few wide receivers poised for breakout performances.

CeeDee Lamb, Dallas Cowboys: Lamb led the league in receptions last year and was in the top three for receiving yards and touchdowns. This is a make-or-break year for the Cowboys, so expect another all-star showing from Lamb.

Puka Nacua, Los Angeles Rams: Not many people had heard of Nacua before the 2023 season, but he proved he belonged in the spotlight. Last season, Nacua set the rookie record for receptions and receiving yards as a fifth-round selection, and he could repeat those numbers this year.

Tyreek Hill, Miami Dolphins: Hill has been impressing football fans since he first took the field for Kansas City in 2016 and remains one of the fastest players in the league. He led the league in receiving yards last year, and he could do the same this year if he stays healthy.

Amon-Ra St. Brown, Detroit Lions: Did *anyone* expect the Lions to make the NFC championship last season? St. Brown was a big reason for their success, and he's entering the 2024 season with a new contract, more confidence, and better chemistry with quarterback Jared Goff.

Marvin Harrison Jr., Arizona Cardinals: Harrison Jr. was a standout player at Ohio State University last year and will surely come into his rookie season strong after the Cardinals drafted him fourth overall. He'll have his work cut out for him with the lackluster Cardinals' offense, but he's still worth keeping an eye on as the season progresses.



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(Background removed)