



FINNEY INJURY LAW
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD.
SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144
FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222



PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 Keep It Simple: Spring-Cleaning for Success

2 Enjoy Spring Weather — Even From Work

2 How Traumatic Brain Injury Can Affect Vision

3 Someone Sued Michael Jordan?

3 Simple Bok Choy Chicken Soup

4 Celebrating St. Louis Native Josephine Baker



*Performer,
Activist, and Spy*

CELEBRATING ST. LOUIS
NATIVE JOSEPHINE BAKER

St. Louis boasts a long line of notable women, including writers Maya Angelou and Kate Chopin, actors Betty Grable and Agnes Moorehead, and musical superstar Tina Turner. But this Women's History Month, we want to celebrate the remarkable life of one specific trailblazer, Josephine Baker.

Born in St. Louis in 1906 as Freda Josephine McDonald, Baker grew up poor and worked from a young age to help support the family. Like her parents, however, she was an entertainer at heart. When work was unavailable, Baker would dance in the street for pocket change. She had talent, and soon she was doing theater, dancing, and comedic skits in front of audiences. Baker moved to New York and was a part of the Harlem Renaissance happening among Black artists in the 1920s.

After two failed marriages while she was still a teenager (one of which gave her the name Baker), she moved to Paris in 1925 and

became a highly successful performer. Her unique costumes and fast-paced dancing style endeared her to audiences, and she became most famous for dancing in a skirt made out of bananas.

When the Germans invaded France in World War II, Baker didn't take the occupation lying down. She began collecting intelligence, reasoning "nobody would think I'm a spy." She attended parties with Axis military officials and performed for Nazi soldiers. All the while, she took notes on what she heard, recorded them in invisible ink, and passed them along to the Allies. Decades later, she told Ebony magazine, "An overriding consideration, the thing that drove me as strongly as did patriotism, was my violent hatred of discrimination in any form."

Upon returning to the U.S. in 1951, Baker was shocked by a level of racism she hadn't endured in decades. She aimed to fight it just as fiercely as she had fought the Nazis, and she refused to play segregated shows. Her popularity resulted in many promoters relenting and integrating their audiences. Later, she participated in the 1963 March on Washington alongside Martin Luther King Jr. and was one of the only women to speak that day.

Baker eventually adopted 12 children and died in her sleep after a performance in 1975. Her legacy lives on as a pioneer for all women and Black Americans: an iconic performer, a French spy, a civil rights activist — and a St. Louis native.



TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD., SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144 // FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222 // MARCH 2022

'CLEAN THE DESK' FOR SUCCESS

Keeping It Simple for Us *and* Our Clients

I have been meaning to write this column for a few days. Melinda has been patiently reminding me to get it done. I just couldn't seem to find the time. So, I came in this morning to get it done. I walked into my office and immediately knew I couldn't even start.

My office was a mess. A couple weeks of significant expert depositions and preparation had really come to a head. I had been leaving each evening in a rush — practices abound for the kids. My desk was left in a mess, and I would pick up the next morning where I left off, sometimes not even removing my coat. Enough was enough.

So today, I started to organize my office. A well-organized workspace leads to a clear mind or something like that. Ninety minutes later, I was still on the job. Apparently, I had done more destruction than I realized. I was clearing out loads of pens, writing pads, office supplies, briefcases (four for some reason), fans, heaters, clothes (for the Zoom hearings), and other little things that had accumulated. Ninety-five percent of this was not needed. I wonder why I had kept it all? Was I really going to read all the notes all over the seven notepads? Of course not.

What is the solution? A resolve to keep it simple. Keep it pared down to the necessary items. No longer am I going to collect stuff for some other reason than to make me feel secure. If it is that important, I will know. And the same goes for our cases as well. We recently tried a case (and hopefully another by the time you get this) where we focused on stripping away all the unnecessary jargon that only served to make us feel good but did nothing to advance the cause of the case. That is a constant battle many trial lawyers face — that certain facts are absolutely necessary to win our case.



The truth is more nuanced than that. While it is true that we have to meet the elements of the law to make our case, not every single fact is required. Especially not the ones we lawyers think are great. I frequently talk with trial lawyers here and around the country. One of the best things about the job is unfettered collaboration by the plaintiff lawyers. Idea sharing is rampant, and nothing I've used is original to me. What I hear lawyers say a lot is "wait till you hear THIS fact — it's gonna blow your mind." I usually wait, and as soon as I hear it, I ask a question: "Why is that important?"

The response is something like, "It's gonna show what liars they are!" or some version of that. The truth is, no one cares about those facts. Or jurors will excuse the behavior. Or maybe the fact is important. But, more often than not, it doesn't make or break the case — it just eats up our attention from what really matters. Just like a messy desk.

What we try to do at our office is constantly "clean the desk." We want to make sure we focus on what really matters for our clients, not just what makes us feel good. Most of the time, what we really like doesn't matter and needs to be culled. Spending time deciding what is really important takes some self-exploration. But in our experience, it yields incredible results.

Spring-cleaning is in full effect at our office. We are looking forward to more great results.

Chi





Spring Fever

ENJOY WARM WEATHER WHILE STUCK INDOORS

The weather is warming up, the sun is out — and you’re trapped inside. Most of us have jobs that leave us stuck indoors during spring’s prime midday hours, and it’s easy to feel like you’re missing out on the season’s best parts.

Unfortunately, your boss probably won’t give you the day off just because of the gorgeous weather. So, we’ve compiled the next best thing — some tips to enjoy the season as much as you can while also getting your job done.

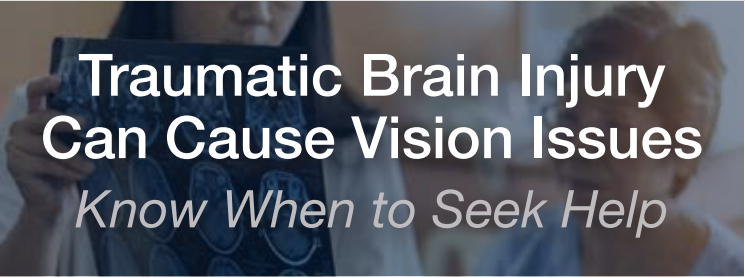
Bring the outdoors in. When the weather is nice, open as many curtains and blinds as possible. The natural light will warm up the room and brighten your mood. While you’re

at it, try opening the windows and positioning yourself near one. If you can’t be outside, the spring breeze on your face is the next best thing. Plants decrease stress, and having them on your desk might also trick your brain into feeling less cooped up.

Take a break. You’ve still got to work, but that doesn’t mean you can’t sneak in a few minutes outdoors. Use your break for an outdoor stroll; if possible, you can also walk or bike to work. At the very least, park farther away to give yourself time to enjoy the weather. Volunteer to do a coffee run, pick up lunch, or take out the mail — you’ll be an office hero while catching some rays at the same time.

Try working outside. If your boss will allow it, there’s probably some opportunity to do a bit of work outdoors. Meetings and conference calls might offer your best option. For in-person meetings, your coworkers will also likely relish a chance to take it outdoors. In the event of a conference call, you won’t need to convince anyone else — grab your laptop and go! It’s not the same as enjoying the weather while you’re off the clock, but it’s a lot better than being cooped up inside.

With any luck, these tips will help you make it to Friday with your sanity intact. And luckily, the weekend is always just around the corner.



Traumatic Brain Injury Can Cause Vision Issues

Know When to Seek Help

Our brains control everything we do. So, when a person suffers a traumatic brain injury (TBI), the consequences can be unpredictable and far-reaching. Not all impairments will be apparent immediately, so TBI sufferers need to watch for symptoms. This vigilance should include close attention to one’s vision and eye health.

Just as your brain lets you move your legs, it also interprets information from your eyes and turns it into sight. As a result, damage to your vision can result not only from injury to your cornea, retina, or optic nerve, but it can also stem from your brain’s visual cortex, located at the back of your head.

Because many people don’t think vision problems are connected to their TBI, they often don’t seek the appropriate help. Yes, someone with a TBI might need glasses due to the effects of aging. But according to the Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association, 90% of people who suffer a TBI encounter reduced

vision due to their injury. Sometimes, TBI can result in permanent vision loss. But more often, treatment is available.

Someone with a TBI can encounter a large number of different vision disorders. They may suffer from double vision or experience loss of their peripheral vision, both highly disorienting conditions. Other people experience tracking problems, which interrupts their ability to follow a moving object, or eye coordination disorders, where vision remains unfocused. Sometimes, a person with a TBI will see just fine but find themselves unable to interpret visual information in a way that makes sense.

Unfortunately, some people will never fully recover their original vision. But often, corrective or specialized eyeglasses can help, as can eye patches. In some cases, therapy techniques can retrain a TBI sufferer’s eyesight. And in cases where treatment is not possible, the injured person will need to learn how to adapt to a life with no or severely reduced vision.

If you or a loved one starts experiencing vision problems after a traumatic brain injury, don’t put off seeking help. When notified of the TBI, your eye doctor can run tests to diagnose the condition and create a treatment plan. If someone else’s negligence caused your injury, you may also be entitled to compensation. Finney Injury Law is well-versed in helping victims with these injuries, and we’d be glad to review your case.

I DON’T WANT TO BE LIKE MIKE

WHY ONE MAN SUED MICHAEL JORDAN FOR \$832 MILLION

Many people have been told they have a passing resemblance to a celebrity, and they usually have a funny story or two. To Allen Ray Heckard, his celebrity look-alike was no laughing matter. In 2006, he sued Michael Jordan for looking too much like him and ruining his life.

The amount of the lawsuit was \$832 million, and Heckard not only sued Jordan but also Nike, reasoning that the company helped Jordan achieve his incredible fame. The complaint argued that the resemblance to Jordan “has troubled Heckard’s nerves” and being stopped by fans caused him emotional distress for over 15 years. He requested damages for defamation, permanent injury, and pain and suffering.

For someone tired of being “recognized,” Heckard didn’t shy away from media coverage. When asked how he arrived at the astronomical \$832 million lawsuit figure, he gave this much-shared (yet difficult to parse) answer: “Well, you figure with my age, and you multiply that by seven and, ah, then I turn around and, ah, I figure that’s what it all boils down to.” When asked why he felt the resemblance to Jordan had affected his life so negatively, he could only

answer, “I want to be recognized as me, just like Michael’s recognized as Michael.”

Funnily enough, most people didn’t think Heckard and Jordan looked alike at all. While each had a bald head, mustache, and a gold earring, the similarities seemed to end there. Many news stories noted that, compared to Jordan, Heckard is 8 years older and 6 inches shorter.

One question reporters did not appear to ask was why Heckard felt that Jordan should be held personally liable for hundreds of millions of dollars simply for his natural appearance. Sadly, we will probably never know the answer because the case ended rather unceremoniously. After a few weeks, Heckard dropped the lawsuit. He never publicly shared why, but a Nike spokesperson was glad to speculate that Heckard “finally realized he would end up paying our court costs if the lawsuit went to trial.”

In the end, many ’90s kids would argue that Heckard was most guilty of looking a gift horse in the mouth. After all, there is no higher achievement than to “be like Mike.”

Simple Bok Choy Chicken Soup

Inspired by *TheSpruceEats.com*

Is the chill of winter lingering? A hot bowl of this Asian-inspired soup will warm you right up! Our recipe makes 4-5 servings.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 10 leaves bok choy, thinly sliced
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken



DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan, bring chicken broth to a boil.
2. Stir in red pepper flakes, soy sauce, sesame oil, and garlic.
3. Add bok choy leaves and rotisserie chicken. Simmer for 10 minutes or until the bok choy is dark green and tender.
4. Enjoy with slices of your favorite whole-wheat bread!

YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.