



TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

12444 POWERSCOURT DR., SUITE 300 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63131 // FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222 // JULY 2025

NAME IT, LIVE IT

GUIDED BY CORE
VALUES, WE WIN A
\$4 MILLION VICTORY

I made a couple of promises in the last column — first, to share our core values with you, and second, to provide a report from our last trial. I am looking forward to doing both in this column. I am also looking forward to a vacation with family this July. As most of you may know, I love spending time on the shores of Lake Michigan in southwest Michigan.

Our Core Values

We previously had a list of values that were verbose, overly engineered, and quite frankly impossible to implement and follow. We threw them out. We now have just three:

1. Intelligent Effort
2. Honesty
3. Ownership

I find myself using these on a daily basis — in trial prep, in case prep, and in every aspect of our practice. I am trying to use them in interactions with team members. I truly want us to embrace and commit to these.

Intelligent Effort

Given our size, we need to be smart in our efforts. We will never be able to have more resources than the insurance industry. But we can be more intelligent and intentional in our efforts. This will set us apart.

Honesty

We talk about having some soft conflict at the office — holding each other accountable and being honest about our performance. We have to be honest about our own efforts and also about what we need from our team. This requires us to have direct communication. We are all adults here, and we can handle honesty with ourselves and from others. It takes effort. But the payoff is worth it.

Ownership

We talk about owning the outcomes, regardless of those involved. If one of us is responsible for something, we own the outcome. If it is less than desired, be honest about it, own it, and fix it. I trust everyone in our office to do this. Ownership over your work product is important.

The Trial Result

I am happy to report that we achieved a verdict of \$4,000,000 and 100% fault attributed to the defendant. The defense argued that the appropriate amount was \$125,000, to be reduced by 30% to reflect our client's share of the blame. The jurors didn't buy it. We completed the entire trial in 24 hours.

I couldn't be happier for our client. He deserved better throughout this process, and the jurors affirmed him and who he is. He fought to get his life back despite the odds being against him.

I also appreciate the team effort put forth. Everyone was involved and committed to the process of seeing this through. Trials are becoming less and less frequent these days — something I could talk about for days. We are committed to walking the walk and trying the cases that need to be tried. I believe we are following through.

Our next trial or two will be done when you get this. I have no idea how they will turn out, but we will thoughtfully deploy our best efforts, honestly assess our cases, and own the outcomes.

Meanwhile, enjoy the summer!

Ch.





Mountain biking is one of the nation's fastest-growing sports. Drawn by its physical and mental challenges and access to nature, more than 9.2 million people participated in the sport in 2023, up 4% from 2022.

Before setting out, it's essential to realize that off-road biking can take you far from your comfort zone. Riding on rugged terrain is considered an extreme sport with a high rate of injuries, and participants tend to overestimate their skill level. Keep these tips in mind to ensure your enjoyment as a novice in this exciting sport.

Be Weather-Wary

Familiarize yourself with seasonal weather patterns in your area. Prepare for the possibility of extreme heat and sudden midsummer storms. Check the forecast before each outing. Heat sickness can catch you off guard, causing nausea, dizziness, confusion, and clammy skin. If these symptoms set in, find shade, drink water, and try to cool down.

Know Your Level

Be realistic when choosing routes, and check out the mileage, trail conditions, and elevation of any path you choose. Helpful apps include Ride with GPS for route-finding and navigation and Strava for performance-tracking and networking. As you plan, note the trail surface. Riding on gravel or dirt takes far more energy than paved trails. If you want to test your limits, do it on terrain you have traveled before.

Gear Up

Carry more water than you expect to need, and bring a portable water filter. Poor hydration is one of the main reasons cyclists get in trouble. Also, bring ample high-protein food, a tire patch kit, and first-aid supplies. And don't neglect the basics: Be sure to wear a properly fitted, sturdy helmet.

Don't Go Alone

Let someone know your planned route. Leave a detailed itinerary and planned check-in times with a person you trust. Carry a fully charged phone and charging device, and bring maps as digital downloads or on paper. Also, practice basic navigation skills, such as tracking the sun's position in the sky and noting landmarks.

By cycling smart, you can reap the maximum benefits of one of the nation's most exciting sports!

Stay Afloat

Boating excursions are a popular way to have fun in Missouri. No one heading out for a day on one of the state's many beautiful lakes likes to think about the potential for accidents.

But boating accidents are on the rise. Mishaps among Missouri boaters increased by 4.6% to 159 between 2022 and 2023, and injuries rose 15% to 89, according to the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Some crashes have tragic effects. In 2019, two young adults died in Missouri while riding in a boat that hit a rock bluff head-on. Their families were awarded \$1.6 million in a settlement. And in 2020, a Missouri man riding on a rental pontoon boat during an office outing fell over the boat's front railing into the water and almost lost an arm to the propeller. All the passengers were inebriated at the time. Although surgeons saved the man's arm, he accused his employer of negligence and won a \$1 million settlement.

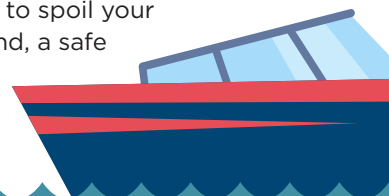
Operator errors are the most common cause of accidents, including reckless driving and drinking. Failing to take account of submerged rocks or navigational markers also leads to accidents.

DON'T LET A BOATING ACCIDENT SINK YOUR SUMMER

The highest number of drownings among boaters occurs in the month of July, and most victims aren't wearing life jackets. Boaters must carry life preservers for every passenger, and children under 7 years of age must wear life jackets at all times unless they're in a covered cabin area. Make sure your child's life jacket fits; a child wearing a life jacket that is too big may still be pulled underwater. And set a good example by wearing a life jacket yourself.

The operator of your boat should have safety training. Generally, motor boaters must cede the right of way to sailboats or vessels propelled solely by oars or paddles. Boaters also must learn the rules of navigation, including keeping right when passing oncoming motorized vessels. And avoid dangerous behavior on Jet Skis, such as jumping the wake of a passing boat.

Heeding safety rules doesn't have to spoil your fun. Just begin with the end in mind, a safe return to shore with all your family and friends!





Fireworks or Fractures?



SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

Fireworks are as much a part of Independence Day in America as hot dogs and parades. Sparklers, bottle rockets, and firecrackers are so familiar that many people make them an integral part of their holiday rituals.

You might want to think again about that, safety experts say. Nearly 10,000 people were treated in emergency rooms in 2023 for fireworks-related injuries, and eight died, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. In recognition of July as National Fireworks Safety Month, here are a few common missteps that cause fireworks injuries each year.

Those sparklers that delight children, for example, are a leading hazard. Although many adults assume sparklers are safe, they are actually handing those tots a wire that is less than a foot long and burns at 1,500–5,000 degrees Fahrenheit — as hot as a blowtorch! Severe injuries can result if a child grabs the end of a lit sparkler, walks into it, or tries to use it like a light saber.

Also, while home-fireworks fans may regard a “dud” that fails to ignite as a non-event, they are actually among the most dangerous threats of all. When amateur pyrotechnicians try

to relight bottle rockets or Roman candles that fail to ignite, they can easily be injured if the fireworks blow up belatedly. In other cases, people fail to back away quickly enough from a lit firework. If it goes off sooner than expected or simply explodes, serious injuries can result.

Among injuries, harm to hands and fingers is most common, federal data show, followed by injuries to the head, face, ears, and eyes, including the cornea, retina, or eyeball itself. Eyes are especially at risk because fireworks combine heat, chemicals, and sudden force. Most at risk of injury were teens ages 15–19, followed by children ages 5–9.

A few simple safety practices can prevent you or your loved ones from injury. Light fireworks one at a time and step back. Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy. If you encounter a dud, don't try to relight it! Instead, douse it with water and let it cool off before discarding it.

The safest way to enjoy dazzling fireworks displays, experts say, is simply to avoid bringing fireworks home at all. Instead, relax on your lawn or in a park and enjoy a professionally managed pyrotechnic show!

CHEESY TOMATO-BASIL STUFFED CHICKEN

Inspired by HalfBakedHarvest.com

INGREDIENTS

- 4–6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup basil pesto
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained, oil reserved
- 2–3 tbsp sun-dried tomato oil
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Chili flakes, to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Slice chicken down the middle horizontally (not cutting all the way through).
3. Spread pesto inside filleted chicken, then stuff with cheese and tomatoes before closing chicken, covering filling.
4. Place chicken in a large oven-safe skillet. Drizzle with oil.
5. Set the skillet over medium heat; cook 5 minutes.
6. Add 1 1/2 cups tomatoes, garlic, balsamic vinegar, and season with chili flakes. Cook 2–3 minutes, then remove from heat.
7. Bake in oven for 7–10 minutes until chicken is cooked through and tomatoes burst.
8. Toss remaining 1/2 cup tomatoes with basil, thyme, salt, and pepper.
9. Serve the chicken topped with fresh tomatoes.

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 call us at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.



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The choice of a lawyer is an important one and should not be based solely upon advertisements.



THE ISSUES WE FACE BEFORE THE VERDICT: WHAT IT TAKES TO PREPARE FOR TRIAL

It is hard to believe we are already midway through the summer. As I write this, Chris and I just completed a jury trial in St. Louis County. It had been one year since our firm tried a case. It felt good to be back. As Chris mentioned, the firm achieved a tremendous result for a wonderful human being. I want to add some perspective on how we prepare for a jury trial.

An almost unwritten rule at Finney Injury Law is, "We prepare every case as if it were to be jury tried." The work starts from day one, when the client engages us to represent them. We work tirelessly to leave no stone unturned in our investigations. We remember the Three I's: investigation, insurance, and injury. Together, they make this trial and its result possible.

In the days before the trial, a sense of calm prevails. There is no scrambling. There are no 18-hour days or working weekends. Instead, the focus is on connection — on spending time with the human being we are representing. Often, that means sharing a meal or visiting them at home. This builds an incredible attorney-client bond, but we never think about it in those terms. Instead, it

is two human beings getting to know each other. By the time the trial starts, we can talk about our client to the jury as if they were a good friend or family member. Genuine connection is the focus in our preparation, and it shows in the courtroom.

Beyond the human connection are the actual logistics of the trial. This means carefully crafting jury instructions. Organizing exhibit binders. Thinking, reflecting, and preparing for possible legal issues that may arise. Also, it means preparing jury presentation software, a program from LitSoftware called TrialPad. To say I am obsessed with it would be an understatement. It is a powerful tool.

Lastly, the support from the entire team is paramount. Some are making sure the office runs seamlessly for our other clients. Others are at the courthouse, providing support for us and our client. Without them, we would not be able to give each case our best effort.

Now, on to the next one!