THE WARREN REPORT

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April 2025

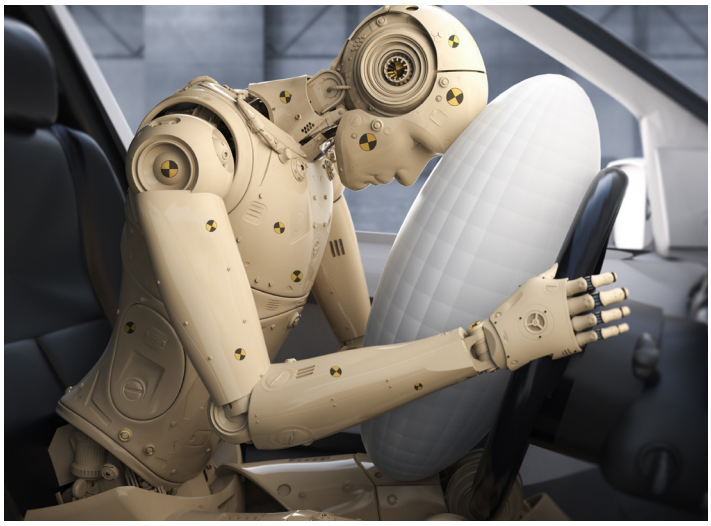
FROM DEFENDANT TO PLAINTIFF

Type of Case: Vehicle Injury
Place of incident: Roanoke County, VA
Verdict or settlement: Settlement
Amount: $89,000

Our client was driving on I-81 North near Roanoke. I-81 had been backed up and slow with traffic, so when she saw stopped traffic ahead, she slowed and stopped her vehicle. A vehicle directly behind our client's car failed to stop and rear-ended her vehicle, setting off the airbags.

Our client and her passengers were taken to Carilion Memorial Hospital after the accident, where she was diagnosed with contusions, arm and shoulder pain, and a left wrist injury which grew increasingly painful. She was released and wore a brace for over 10 weeks before her orthopedic surgeon diagnosed her with a peripheral triangular fibrocartilage complex (TFCC) tear in her left wrist. The TFCC tear required surgery, while her continued shoulder pain was diagnosed as a right rotator cuff strain. She was prescribed physical therapy for several weeks and steroid injections for her shoulder, which gradually improved, although her wrist injury continues to bother her on occasion.

The interesting part of this case came next, when our client was actually the defendant for a while. One of her passengers was also injured in the accident, and the passenger filed a separate injury suit. Because our client was the driver, the passenger had to file a civil suit against our client and the driver of the rearmost vehicle. In that lawsuit, the Virginia State Trooper who responded to the crash testified that our client was stopped behind traffic, and that the rearmost driver rear-ended her and pushed her car into the vehicle ahead. Ultimately, the Roanoke County Circuit Court jury found in our client's favor, that she was not responsible for the accident.



Once the passenger's lawsuit was resolved, we could pursue our client's own injury case. Because the passenger's lawsuit had already shown that our client was not at fault, we were able to settle her case and recover $89,000 for her.



ROOT BEER CAKE

Made in a Bundt pan, this cake is sturdy yet moist, with an optional poured-over ganache glaze that doesn't distract from the cake itself. The recipe was created by chef Carla Hall for the King Arthur Baking Company as a new twist on the southern-style "Coca-Cola cake," with cinnamon, nutmeg, and star anise to complement the root beer. It's perfect for bake sales, potlucks, and laid-back birthdays. And it freezes very well for later enjoyment.

Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar (light or dark)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground star anise
- 1 1/2 cups root beer (flat or fizzy)
- 16 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa (Dutch-process or natural)
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup buttermilk, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1/4 cup sliced basil
-

For the ganache glaze topping:

- 1/4 cup root beer
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon ground star anise

1/4 teaspoon salt

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a Bundt pan (10 cup size).
2. Whisk the flour, sugars, baking soda, salt, and spices together in a large bowl.
3. In a medium saucepan, bring the root beer, butter, and cocoa powder to a boil, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat, let cool for 5 minutes, then mix into the flour mixture.
4. Whisk together the eggs, buttermilk, and vanilla in a separate bowl. Stir the egg mixture into the flour mixture, then fold in the grated ginger.
5. Pour the batter to the prepared pan and bake for 50 minutes, until the cake begins to separate from the edges of the pan and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
6. Remove the cake from the oven and, if possible, gently loosen it from the edges of the pan. Place a cooling rack on top, then carefully flip the cake and rack over so that the cake (in its pan) is resting on the rack. Leave for 15 minutes, then jiggle the pan gently and lift it off the cake. Let the cake cool completely before serving or topping with the ganache.

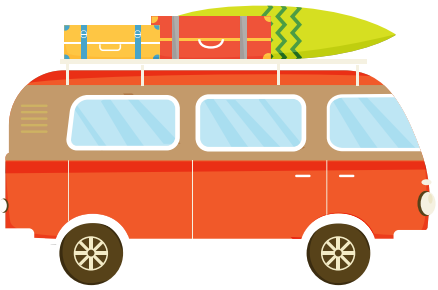
For the ganache topping:

1. Bring the root beer to a boil over medium heat in a small pan. Add the butter and cocoa powder and stir until smooth.
2. Pour the mixture into a large bowl, then whisk in the confectioners' sugar, spices, and salt until smooth and glossy.
3. Pour the mixture over the top of the cooled cake while the mixture is still warm.

Note: You can make this cake in a 9" x 13" sheet pan or two round 9" layer pans. If you do, keep the preparation and temperature the same, but shorten the baking time to 33-35 minutes.

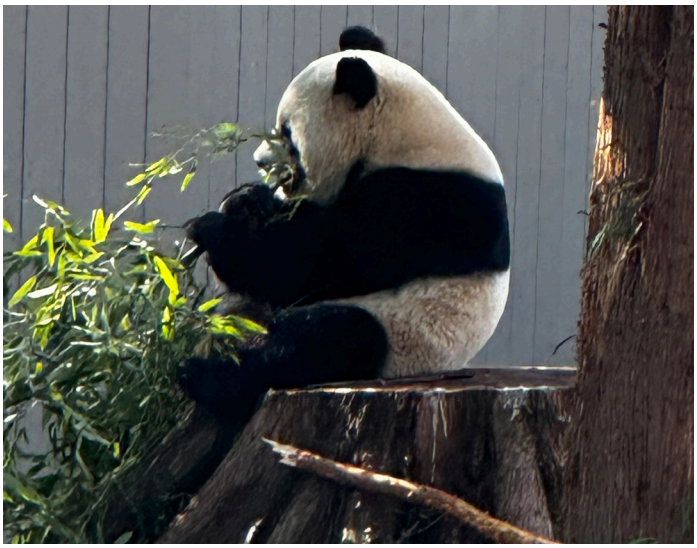


TRAVELS WITH VADEN



WASHINGTON, DC

Vaden spent some time in the nation's capital in March. He made two really cool discoveries, which he shares here in photographic form.





National Zoo

The new giant pandas at the Smithsonian's National Zoo arrived in January of 2025, more than a year after the previous pair and their youngest cub returned to China. The line for the Panda House was long, but Vaden managed to catch one of the pandas in their outdoor enclosure after a brief wait. Was it Qing Bao? Or her mate, Bao Li? Whoever it was, they were having a bamboo picnic in the lovely spring weather.

The O Street Museum

In Northwest DC, close to the Dupont Circle Metro station, there is a complex of five interconnected town houses that includes over 100 rooms and 80 secret doors. It's been called "the coolest place in DC" but is off the beaten tourist path of the National Mall.

The O Street Museum is a quirky and vibrant place. It hosts artists in residence, and it has an extensive, rotating permanent collection that includes autographed guitars, sketches by John Lennon, and an entire log cabin, as well as the original Tiffany & Co. stained glass windows.

One of the unique attractions of the O Street Museum is the room where Rosa Parks lived for ten years as "Hero in Residence." It's included as a historic site on The African American Heritage Trail by Cultural Tourism DC, and it hosts regular musical showcases and concerts, as well as arts events and symposiums.

Its other major attraction is the self-guided "Secret Door Tour" through the entire block-long complex. They provide no maps, and the 60-room layout changes every day, with "secret doors" that are either locked or unlocked. If you can find 3 secret doors, you're "above average", and you might end up in the same room Vaden did (pictured). All the items in the rooms on the Secret Door Tour are also for sale, to benefit the nonprofit museum.



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