



CASE BARNETT
— LAW —



THE SCARIEST THING I'VE EVER DONE

AND HOW I'VE LEARNED TO CHANNEL MY FEAR

October prompts many people to think about what scares them. While I have a few fears, just like everyone else, what comes to mind when I think about fear is one of my most terrifying experiences: my first jury trial.

As many of you may know, before I became a public defender, I worked in corporate law as insurance defense — for the bad guys — for one year in San Francisco. Then, when I moved down to Orange County, I joined the public defender's office. Within three weeks, I was doing my first jury trial. It was a first-offense DUI trial, and I was up against a seasoned deputy district attorney, who I remain very good friends with to this day. At the time, he'd been a defense attorney for more than a decade, so it was all old hat for him. But for me, it was another story.

I remember being so scared that I could barely understand anything that was being said. I'd ask a question to one of the potential jury members or witnesses, and I was so nervous, I couldn't understand what they were saying. Their responses sounded very similar to the adults in the TV series, "Peanuts." I don't even remember how I responded to them.

It wasn't that I was scared to get in front of people, though that's always a little nerve-wracking. When I get in front of an audience to, say, give a speech, I have a script and go through it, and that's that. A jury trial, however, requires that I ask questions and then respond to those questions. Since I'd only been an attorney for one year, and a public defender for only three weeks, this was entirely new to me. Yet, despite the almost paralyzing fear I felt during that first trial, I wasn't deterred.

By my fifth trial, I could start hearing what people were saying. By the 10th, I could actually respond to answers, as opposed to just hearing



them. And by my 15th trial, I was experiencing each one as a beautiful and wonderful event.

What started to help me was learning to harness the adrenaline and fear and turn it into a kind of superpower that allows me to focus keenly on the task at hand. It's not that my nerves have just gone away as I grew more accustomed to trials. I still get that fear every day and before every trial, but focusing those feelings heightens and sharpens my skills. Every time I'm about to start a trial, I remind myself that this is actually one of my superpowers, and when I channel it, it's like magic.

I started my career as a public defender terrified of jury trials. Now, I love them and have so much fun doing them. At the end of the day, I feel excited and invigorated, as many often do during a new experience. Even though I was so scared in that first trial, and still am at times, I can go into each trial knowing that I'll use this superpower for good.

—Case Barnett



'WONDER WOMAN 1984' IS FINALLY HERE

5 Release Dates Later, Gadot Returns to the Screen

When the first "Wonder Woman" movie hit theaters in 2017, it was a box office smash, making more than \$821 million. People all over the world fell in love with Gal Gadot's portrayal of the famous comic book superhero and Chris Pine's performance as her sidekick Steve Trevor. Globally, they waited with bated breath for the release of the sequel: "Wonder Woman 1984."

Despite the hype, that film has been a long time coming. Incredibly, it has blown through four different release dates: Dec. 13, 2019; Nov. 1, 2019 (yes, they moved it *up*); June 5, 2020; and Aug. 14, 2020. First, pre- and post-production issues wreaked havoc with the film's schedule, then the COVID-19 pandemic arrived and slammed movie theater doors shut. When the fifth and (hopefully) final release date of Oct. 2, 2020, was announced, it seemed almost too good to be true. Even star Gal Gadot sounded surprised.

"Wow, it's finally happening, & I couldn't be more excited!" she tweeted, adding that she appreciated her fans' patience and was



excited for everyone to see the film. "... It will be worth the wait," she said.

Award-winning director Patty Jenkins joined in the Twitterfest on Aug. 15, saying, "Wish we were sharing our film yesterday, but there are more important things going on in our world we'd rather you focus on for now. Thank you to our fans for being so great, by our sides. Can't WAIT for you to see it! Sending love and healing to the world. See you October 2nd!!"

Critics and fans are crossing their fingers *and* their toes that the prophetic October release date comes true and they get to see Wonder Woman battle her nemesis, Cheetah, this fall. The postponements have been a roller coaster ride, but at least consumers can console themselves with "Wonder Woman 1984" merchandise, which rolled out far in advance of the film. Some favorites are the "Wonder Woman 1984: Meet Wonder Woman" children's book (which includes sneak-peek photos) and the Wonder Woman vs. Cheetah LEGO model complete with a secret bunker, both of which can be found (appropriately) on Amazon.

OUR CLIENTS SAY IT BEST

"I highly recommend Case and his staff for any personal injury lawsuit. Case understands that the insurance companies use delay tactics to frustrate the client into settling for less than their case is worth. Case will fight as long as it takes so you get a fair settlement."

-Anthony G.



Team Member Spotlight:

DENA WEISS



Fitting Together Hand in Glove

One thing that separates us from many other law firms is that we are humans before we're lawyers. This helps us relate to jurors and tell our clients' human stories rather than approaching mediation, trial, or arbitration by arguing technicalities. These legal loopholes rarely get us where we need to get to. What works is telling stories that people can relate to.

Dena Weiss, who we are spotlighting this month, uses this approach very effectively. Dena is an incredible individual and a wonderful attorney who understands the power of story. She is caring and compassionate, which, as Case Barnett says, is "what makes her one of the best lawyers I've ever seen." Throughout her life, she has done so much to help the people, both in the firm and outside of it.

Despite her busy schedule, Dena spends a lot of time volunteering. For some time, she was president of the Los Angeles Trial Lawyers' Charities (LATLC), where she and fellow volunteers worked to positively impact the lives of people throughout LA. LATLC focuses its efforts on abuse survivors, children, those experiencing homelessness, and people with disabilities. Dena brings this same level of passion and care to our clients and their cases.

She truly understands what it means to help other people, and she often does so in ways big and small. For example, we had a client who was in juvenile hall because of an injury he sustained, which affected his cognition and impacted his decision-making. Dena wrote him letters while he was in juvenile hall to stay in touch and provide encouragement.

Outside of work, Dena has three adult children, two boys and one girl. One of her kids is in law school and another is studying for the LSAT. While it probably won't surprise you to learn that Dena is an incredible storyteller, you might be surprised to learn that she is also a black belt in mixed martial arts (MMA).

Every client wants to get appropriate compensation, but they also want to feel heard, loved, and cared for, and that is what Dena does for each one of our clients. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful individual working at our side. We fit together hand in glove and wouldn't have it any other way.



These adorable chocolate-dipped strawberry ghosts will be the stars of your Halloween party!

Ingredients

- 16 oz white chocolate, chopped
- 24 strawberries
- 1 package mini dark chocolate chips

Directions

1. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat the white chocolate at 50% power for 30 seconds. Remove it and stir, then repeat the process until melted.
2. Lay out a sheet of parchment paper.
3. One by one, dip the strawberries into the melted white chocolate and set them on the parchment. Allow the extra chocolate to pool to form a "tail" effect.
4. Before the chocolate coating fully cools, add three mini chocolate chips to each berry to form two eyes and a mouth.
5. Let chocolate set, then serve your spooky snacks!

This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury and elder abuse. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different.



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When 'Star Wars' Invaded Halloween



THE SPOOKY 'STAR WARS' SHORTAGE OF 1977

A long time ago ... in October of 1977 to be exact, Halloween was fast approaching and many parents faced a major dilemma. That year, kids didn't want to go trick-or-treating dressed as vampires, witches, or ghosts. The classic costumes simply wouldn't do. That Halloween, almost every child in the United States wanted to dress as their favorite character from the new hit movie, "Star Wars."

Today, you can walk into a Halloween City on Oct. 30 and easily pick up a costume for Rey, Darth Vader, or Princess Leia. But in 1977, less than five months after the release of the first movie in the popular franchise, getting your hands on "Star Wars" merchandise was a bit more difficult. Ben Cooper, a costume company in Brooklyn, had the foresight to license "Star Wars" for costumes right after the movie came out. Unfortunately, they didn't foresee how great the demand for these costumes would be.

Retailers across the country were selling out of "Star Wars" costumes as fast as they came in. Some stores reported selling more "Star Wars" costumes than pumpkins. Kids who got their hands on an authentic Han Solo or C-3PO costume were considered lucky. But kids who arrived at the store to find the costume shelves



empty didn't throw in the towel. Instead, they went and found some brown towels to make their own Chewbacca costumes.

In the current age of cosplay, homemade costumes based on movie characters are commonplace, but in 1977, this was uncharted territory. Kids searched for white dresses to be Princess Leia and bathrobes they could cut short to mimic Luke Skywalker. Moms everywhere broke out their sewing machines and created costumes using only action figures for reference. It was grueling work, but it showed how much kids wanted to spend Halloween in a galaxy far, far away.

The "Star Wars" costume shortage marked a new era for Halloween — one where making your own costume was just as cool, if not better, than buying it.

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