



# Andrew M. Ayers

AndrewMAyers.com

877-262-9377

January 2024

## Winter Flashbacks

### Memories of January and the Snowy Seasons in My Life

As one year ends and the next calendar year begins, there is definitely a change in the air. But in this neck of the woods, that is always the case. We Minnesotans know that the thermometer readings can drop significantly. It's the coldest month of the year after all.

The frigid air isn't our imagination. The average low temperature at night in the Twin Cities during January is 4.3 degrees Fahrenheit, with the average daily high temperature getting only to about 22 degrees Fahrenheit.

This brings to mind memories of past winters. I grew up in Connecticut and will readily acknowledge that the winters were never as bad in New England as in Minnesota. We did have our share of snow, though. That had its advantages. The first house I remember was at the top of a big hill and when we got up on weekdays to get to the school bus stop, all we needed to do on winter mornings was just slide down the hill. There were many mornings that the ground was so slippery that we could make it all the way to the bottom of the hill with one slide.

It wasn't always fun using that method to reach the pickup point, though. One day that comes to mind is when I was



sliding down on my feet. I hit a bump on the way down the hill, went flying, hit the ground face first, and knocked out a front tooth.

As I got older, my family and I moved to the Twin Cities, where I finished high school, then I went on to college at St. John's University. It didn't take long for me to experience just how frigid Minnesota winters could be (although we did avoid the infamous Halloween blizzard of 1991 — if you live in Minnesota, perhaps you've heard of it?). While I was a student at St. John's, I remember several days when the temperature and the wind chill would get so low that the state of Minnesota would cancel classes for all students statewide, since being outside for only a few seconds could freeze your skin.

These days, I don't spend a ton of time outside in the winter. The kids, of course, love to go sledding and skiing, so I'm often along for the ride and coping with fogged up glasses every time I warm up or go back out into the cold. If it were up to me, I'd stay inside in the warmth and read one of the books in the mountainous stack next to my bed.

At the end of the day, the cold of January in Minnesota literally comes with the territory. We have a short driveway that doesn't require a lot of time to clear it of snow. Plus, I appreciate the way the snow looks here. When it snowed in NYC, it was nice and white coming down, but it didn't take long when it was on the ground for it to become dirty. Here, the snow keeps that clean look much longer, and it stays pretty.

I take comfort in knowing that as surely as winter comes, it eventually gives way to the warmth of spring and summer. In the meantime, I wish you a happy start to the year with wishes for an early spring.

*- Andrew M. Ayers*

# UNPLUGGED FUN

## Ignite Your Child's Imagination Beyond Screens

In today's world of video games and streaming for entertainment, one of the most powerful — and rewarding — steps you can take is engaging your child's imagination without electronic devices.

### A Make-Believe Store

One great way to do that is by putting your child in charge of a make-believe ice cream store. It's easy and only takes a few common household items, starting with a few bowls.

First, squirt a generous helping of shaving cream into each bowl, then add different colors of food coloring to each. After stirring with a spoon, your child will suddenly have a variety of make-believe "flavors" to offer to their customer — you.

They'll have fun scooping up the flavors you want from each bowl into a plastic cup. You can even have other small household items in other bowls (such as buttons and small craft items) that can serve as the ice cream "toppings."

### Balloon Sports

You can also engage your child's hand-eye coordination skills with a fun game of balloon tennis or volleyball.



To start, simply blow up a few balloons of different sizes. Then find a chair or other items around your house that can double as a "net" between you and your child.

The fun comes in batting the "ball" (a balloon) back and forth across the net. When your child bats the balloon to your side and you hit it back without it passing back over the net, the point goes to your child, just like in real tennis or volleyball. You can keep score if you'd like.

You can also make up your own rules, like players can hit the balloon two times before returning it to the player on the other side of the net. Or, if you want to really challenge your hand-eye coordination, you can use two balloons and try to keep both in play at the same time.

At the end of the day, with fun activities like these, you can engage your child's imagination with a true brand of homemade fun!

## Bumbling Burglars Prove Crime Doesn't Pay

Committing a crime will never be a get-rich-quick scheme or a successful career path, but we've had plenty of would-be criminals who had to learn that lesson the hard way!

One example is James Sorby, a Scottish man who decided he wanted to cash in on the rising price of copper. As he thought about how to get his hands on the metal prized for its ability to conduct electricity, he decided it would be a good idea to go right to the source, so he targeted a local power plant in Leeds, West Yorkshire, England.

As he started to carry out his mission, he forgot he was in a truly electric environment. He ignored the signs warning of the dangerous high-voltage lines in the plant. But as he collected coils of copper and prepared to make off with them, he was instantly jolted with an estimated 22,000 volts of electricity, and around 400 homes were left without

power. He miraculously managed to survive, though with severe burns and a damaged skull, and was given 12 months of community service.

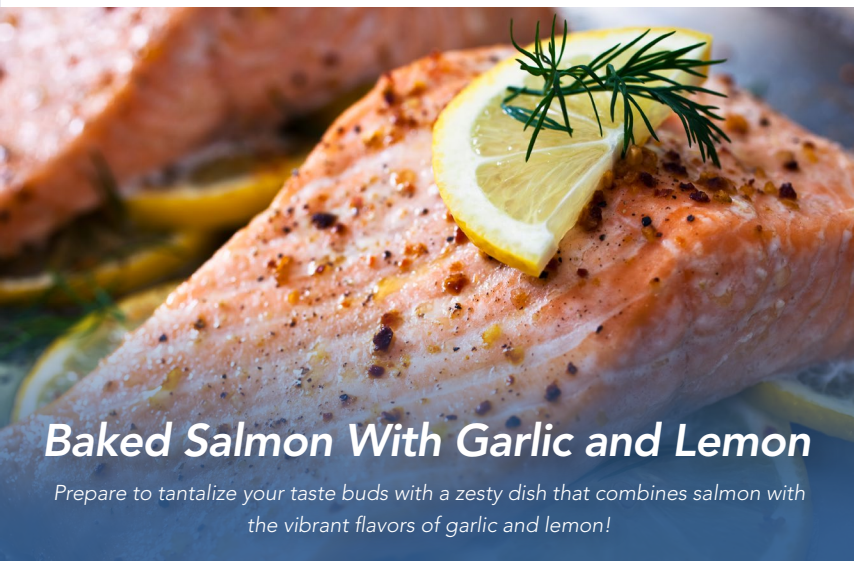
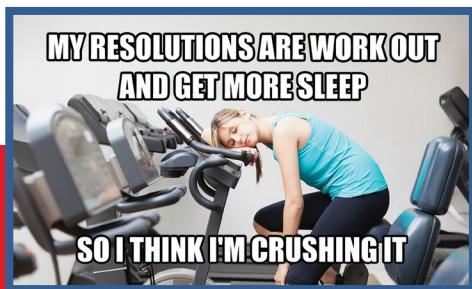
Another man, Nicholas Mark, entered a Pennsylvania pizzeria looking for work, but



he found something else instead. A tip jar containing over \$200 caught his eye, so after filling out the application, Mark left. A few hours later, he returned, snatched the tip jar, and ran out of the restaurant. However, his getaway was short-lived, as his completed application had provided his real name and address. Plus, he left behind a backpack that verified his identity, so he was eventually caught by police.

Finally, Alberto Saavedra Lopez demonstrated why you can't go back home to the scene of your crime. While living in Cottonwood, Arizona, he stole \$5,000 from the bank where he worked. For two years, he got away with it by moving to Phoenix. In time, however, he moved back to Cottonwood and applied for a new job — at the local police station. But, as he applied to become a dispatcher, officials did a background check, discovering he was an at-large suspect in the theft. So, when he showed up for his job interview, they greeted him with handcuffs.

# TAKE A *BREAK*



## Baked Salmon With Garlic and Lemon

Prepare to tantalize your taste buds with a zesty dish that combines salmon with the vibrant flavors of garlic and lemon!

### Ingredients

- 2 lbs salmon fillets
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
2. Line a baking dish with parchment paper. Place the salmon fillets on the baking dish.
3. In a small bowl, mix together the garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper. Pour the mixture over the salmon.
4. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until the salmon is cooked through. Serve and enjoy!

## The Gruesome History of Surgery Without Anesthesia

The introduction of anesthesia in the mid-19th century revolutionized the field of surgery, allowing for more complex and precise procedures to be performed while minimizing the agony patients had to endure. However, the era of surgery before anesthesia meant patients had to suffer unimaginable pain. They had to endure procedures that would be considered inhumane today, and the mortality rate for surgeries was alarmingly high. Here are some of the challenges doctors and patients had to face.

### Speed

In the absence of anesthesia, surgeons had to prioritize speed above all else. One of the most harrowing experiences was amputation. During wars and battles, soldiers often had limbs amputated without anesthesia. Surgeons had to operate swiftly, with little regard for the patient's pain. Many soldiers died from the shock and pain of the sudden amputation rather than any other wound they received.

### Alcohol and Opiates to Dull Pain

While these substances provided some relief, they also carried their own risks, including addiction and overdosing. Patients would often have to be restrained during the procedure due to their erratic behavior under the influence of these substances.

### Unclean Tools

Surgical procedures in the pre-anesthesia era were fraught with the risk of infection. Without modern sterile techniques, post-operative infections were common, and many patients did not survive surgery due to complications. In fact, before Louis Pasteur developed modern germ theory in the 1860s, doctors did not wash their hands before operating, unintentionally causing the deaths of many patients post-surgery due to secondary infections.

### Surgeons Characterized as Dispassionate and Cruel

No doubt, performing an agonizing surgical procedure on a suffering patient was difficult for any doctor to endure. So, they had to detach themselves emotionally to get through it quickly and as safely as possible — sometimes in front of many onlookers in an operating theatre. Unfortunately, because of this, surgeons were thought of as coolly dispassionate or even brusque.

Because of modern anesthesia and other developments, doctors today are able to show compassion toward their patients, and it allows for a more careful and safe procedure for all involved.





6800 France Ave., Ste. 190  
Edina, MN 55435

Small Business & Personal Planning Attorney

See what my clients say about me on [MyGoogleReviews.com!](#)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Winters to Remember
- 2 Engage Kids in Creative Play Without Electronics  
3 Not-So-Bright Burglars
- 3 Baked Salmon With Garlic and Lemon  
Evolution of Anesthesia in Surgery
- 4 From Tragedy to Outrage: Ethan Couch's Sentencing and 'Affluenza'

## WHEN PRIVILEGE KILLS

### A Look Back at the Case of 'Affluenza' Teen Ethan Couch

It was a case that enraged the nation: A teenager named Ethan Couch combined alcohol, arrogance, reckless behavior, and manslaughter in what became known as the "affluenza" case.

On June 15, 2013, the 16-year-old and a group of friends stole beer from a store and had a party at his parents' house before going for a drive. As Couch was



careening down the road at 70 mph in a 40-mph zone, he barreled into the town of Burleson, Texas.

Speeding along the rural two-lane street, Couch plowed through an SUV that had stopped with car trouble on the side of the road, then slammed into another car that was stopped near the SUV. In the process, he killed four people and seriously injured two others.

Upon his arrest shortly after the terrible crash, Couch's blood alcohol level was reported as 0.24 — three times the legal limit for drunk driving in Texas.

Two years later, Couch stood trial for the devastation he had caused. He pleaded guilty to four counts of manslaughter, but his attorneys put forth what came to be known as the "affluenza" defense. A psychologist testified for the defense that Couch was a product of wealthy, privileged

parents who never set limits for him, so he didn't fully understand what it meant to have consequences for his actions.

Prosecutors had sought 20 years in prison, but Couch received no prison time. Judge Jean Hudson Boyd gave Couch 10 years of probation, along with an order to undergo long-term therapy. The decision by the juvenile court judge outraged the victims' families, drunk driving activists, and most of the country.

Over the past decade, Couch has cycled through bouts of disappearing and continuing alcohol abuse. In 2016, he fled with his mother to Mexico to avoid being arrested for a parole violation but was arrested soon after. The judge in that case sentenced Couch to two years in prison. After his release in 2018, he was again arrested in 2020 for allegedly violating his parole, but the charges were later dismissed. His probation is due to end in 2024.