

THE BUTTON LAW FIRM

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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WHEREVER WE ARE,
WE'RE TOGETHER

Although I have a big family, most of our relatives don't live locally, so it's usually just my parents and my younger sister celebrating the holidays together. And that's fine by me, because we were rarely home for the holidays during our childhood.

My sister and I grew up playing basketball, and both of us continued to play through college. Because basketball is a winter sport, Christmas was almost always spent on the road. We traveled all season long, going from one school to the next. Pretty much every weekend in the winter was spent driving to a game or tournament, so we were never at a consistent location for Thanksgiving or Christmas. It could've felt lonely, but my parents made sure we were always together, and that's the tradition we've held onto.

It wasn't until a few years ago that we had a holiday that wasn't connected to sports, so we truly appreciate celebrating at home these days. My parents helped us understand what's really important. Instead of exchanging a bunch of gifts, we would each pick a family member and get that one person a small, special gift with a handmade card. We tried to give handmade or experience-based gifts — movie tickets, a spa day, even a cruise, as we got older and had spending money of our own. On the day after Christmas, we would go shopping as a family and buy one additional gift for our chosen person. Our parents didn't want us to expect a bunch of gifts on Christmas morning, and it worked — we wanted to spend Christmas hanging out together, rather than unwrapping presents.

When it comes to the new year, I also tend to make my own traditions. I have to admit, I actually hate New Year's resolutions. I've told you how big I am on reflecting. Rather than making resolutions in January, I start thinking about the changes I want to make in December, and make them. The problem I've found with traditional New Year's resolutions is that it encourages you to wait to implement them. You already know you want to change something, so why not start now?



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It's been quite a year for our practice. It's kind of crazy to think that this time last year, we were changing offices. We've added an amazing team to The Button Law Firm, and they've made our practice stronger. I'm grateful to both our clients who've been with us since the beginning and those of you who've joined us recently. It's an honor to serve all of you, and I'm already planning to make next year our best one yet.

Wherever you find yourself on Christmas, enjoy a happy holiday season with your loved ones.

Merry Christmas, and until next time,

-Russell Button

THE UNCLEAR ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS TREES



When you brought home this year's Christmas tree, you and the family most likely spent an evening decorating it with lights, store-bought and homemade ornaments, a star or angel topper, and maybe even tinsel. If you're more traditional, you may have even included a popcorn string. But have you ever wondered why we started decorating our Christmas trees in the first place?

While the origins of the Christmas tree are uncertain, we've used the evergreen fir to celebrate winter festivals, both pagan and Christian, for thousands of years. The tree has represented many things, including the winter solstice, Saturnalia, and everlasting life with God.

During the 1500s in Germany, people brought full pine trees, called paradise trees, into

their homes to celebrate the Name Day of Adam and Eve on Dec. 24. The families decorated the tree with apples and gingerbread. Before long, glassmakers began crafting small ornaments to hang on the trees. In Victorian times, trees were even decorated with candles!

Over time, paradise trees evolved into Christmas trees. In the 18th and 19th centuries, when many Germans immigrated to the United States, they brought the tradition with them. However, the practice of decorating a pine tree with apples didn't quite catch on.

Then, in the winter of 1841, Queen Victoria of England requested a Christmas tree at Windsor Castle for her husband, Prince Albert, who was of German descent. The Queen thought the tree would be a nice gesture, and the London News published a story about the royal Christmas tree in 1848. The tradition quickly spread throughout Europe and North America.

When Christmas trees first rose to prominence in the United States, they were often decorated with homemade ornaments, while many German-Americans continued to use apples, nuts, and marzipan cookies. Popcorn joined later, dyed bright colors and interlaced with berries and nuts. Electricity brought lights, making it possible for Christmas trees to glow for days on end. And with that, Christmas trees quickly became an American tradition.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Hear From a Client

"It was very comfortable with Russell. I didn't know Russell before the initial attorney brought him onto the case as it got close to trial. When I was able to meet with Russell, it was easy and he made all the nerve I had about the case go away instantly. I felt very relaxed and cared for. He trusted that I wasn't looking to scam and make a whole bunch of money like a lottery. I just wanted reconciliation and closure. My thought of lawyers before Russell was that they want to get all the money they can for themselves, and that was not the case with Russell. It was so great that our objectives were the same. I felt safe knowing that we matched in that. I felt comfortable moving forward from that point. What I liked most was his patience with me, and making sure that I was prepared for my deposition. The way he did that was to continually remind me to be myself. That made things easy. His preparation of me for my deposition was amazing. He went over things as much as we needed to go over until I felt comfortable. He never let time be an issue while we were working together on my case. What I personally liked about Russell is that, even though he is a very well-educated man, he made me feel like a friend. What would normally feel like a stuffy environment was made so comfortable. He just honestly cares. It was more than him just being my attorney. In fact, we've kept in touch since. He didn't forget about me once it was over. The expectations were laid out right from the beginning. He said,

'We're here to help you get the treatment you need and make sure you try to recover from this accident.' That felt good to know. It was not just about the money. It was honesty. When I walked in, he was honest. He said, 'Here's what I am trying to do,' and he stuck to what he would say he would do. The communication was outstanding. I felt cared for — that was the most important thing. They did everything they could to get me in a better position. The words 'I care for you' go a long way — especially from an attorney. I would recommend the firm without a question. He's my attorney for life. They are absolutely a friendly and comforting firm. Russell was a big reason for that. My overall experience with Russell and his team at the Button Law Firm was outstanding. It was a really good experience. Obviously, I don't wish a car accident on anyone, but if they were to go through something like that, I would recommend Russell Button and the experience that the Button Law Firm brings."



—Jeremy D.

Car wreck client from Little Elm, Texas



KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE IN DAY CARE

demand and keep their services affordable, some day care centers cut corners and create unsafe environments for the children they are supposed to be protecting. Injuries in day care settings are often caused by inadequate staffing or unqualified workers.

Any time you leave your kids with someone else, you are trusting them with your children's lives. When your child is injured while in someone else's care, that trust is shattered. If you're going to trust a person to care for your child again, you're going to have to take action, holding the negligent day care facility responsible for the harm done to your child.

Our children are the most vulnerable members of our society. The Button Law Firm has a passion for keeping kids safe and holding caregivers accountable for every child they harm directly or through negligence or incompetence. Not only are we committed to making sure the injured child is compensated for their suffering, but we also want to send a message to the childcare provider that we will not accept dangerous, harmful conditions. When your child is injured or neglected in a day care facility, call us for the legal help you need to seek justice for your child and to make our community safer for all children.

When you and your spouse both work, you look to someone else to care for your kids. Fortunately, we have credible services and certified adults who are qualified to look after our kids when we can't. As you considered where your kids would spend each day, you did your research and found the day care center that looked like it had the best qualifications. Unfortunately, even a facility that looks good on paper can create an environment where your child is at risk of getting hurt.

Even if a day care center is in compliance with the requirements on paper, it's still possible that, at any given moment, workers are supervising more children than they legally should. To meet the

HAVE A LAUGH

DACHSHUND



THROUGH THE SNOW



HOLIDAY STAR COOKIES

Looking for something a little lighter to eat during the holiday season?

Try these paleo-friendly star cookies!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ cups blanched almond flour (not almond meal)
- ½ teaspoon Celtic sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup coconut oil, melted
- 5 tablespoons agave nectar or honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine almond flour, salt, baking soda, and cinnamon.
2. In a small bowl, mix coconut oil, agave, and vanilla.
3. Mix wet ingredients into dry.
4. Roll out dough between 2 pieces of parchment paper until ¼ inch thick.
5. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
6. Remove top piece of parchment paper and dust dough with almond flour.
7. Cut out cookies with a small star cutter.
8. Using a metal spatula, place stars on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
9. Bake at 350 F until edges are lightly browned, 5-8 minutes.

Recipe inspired by elanaspantry.com/star-cookies.

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GIVE UP THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS ... and Look for Meaning Instead



How many books have you seen with the word “happiness” in the title? A lot, right? It’s such a popular topic because the pursuit, journey, and, ultimately, achievement of happiness is supposed to be the key to a fulfilling life. Happiness is the ultimate human condition; reaching it is our purpose and will bring us contentment.

But before you pick up that guide to happiness, there’s some new data you need to pay attention to. Turns out, we’ve been focusing on the wrong goal. More and more research is supporting the benefit of pursuing a meaningful life over a happy one.

Viktor Frankl could be called a leading expert on the topic. Frankl lived through the Holocaust in a concentration camp and saw firsthand how humans deal with unhappy circumstances. As a respected psychiatrist, his observations became the basis for his book, “Man’s Search for Meaning.” Frankl found that the people who stood the best chance of surviving the horrific experience were those who saw some sort of meaning in their lives, even under the bleakest circumstances. For Frankl, this meant providing therapy to others in the camp. As Frankl puts it, once a person finds meaning, they know the “why” of their existence, and they will be able to bear almost any “how.”

In the years since “Man’s Search for Meaning” was written, it seems we’ve forgotten a lot of its advice. The Centers for Disease Control found that four out of every 10 Americans do not have a satisfying life purpose, and yet, 60 percent of Americans say they are happy. What gives?

It comes down to the pursuit of happiness versus pursuing meaning in life. It’s the difference between “I’m going to buy this dress because it will make me happy” and “I’m going to volunteer at a shelter because it will be meaningful.” Happiness involves satisfying an immediate need, whereas finding meaning focuses on making choices that give us a sense of purpose. Even more telling, the Journal of Positive Psychology found that meaningful acts usually involve giving, but reaching happiness often means taking. Because of this, leading a meaningful life, while often more challenging, is also more satisfying.

Is it possible that the pursuit of a meaningful life will lead us to happiness? Absolutely. Just don’t expect it to be an everlasting condition. Think of happiness the way psychologist Frank T. McAndrew does: “Recognizing that happiness exists — and that it’s a delightful visitor that never overstays its welcome — may help us appreciate it more when it arrives.”