

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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WHAT'S IN A BOOK?

AN UNEXPECTED PASSION

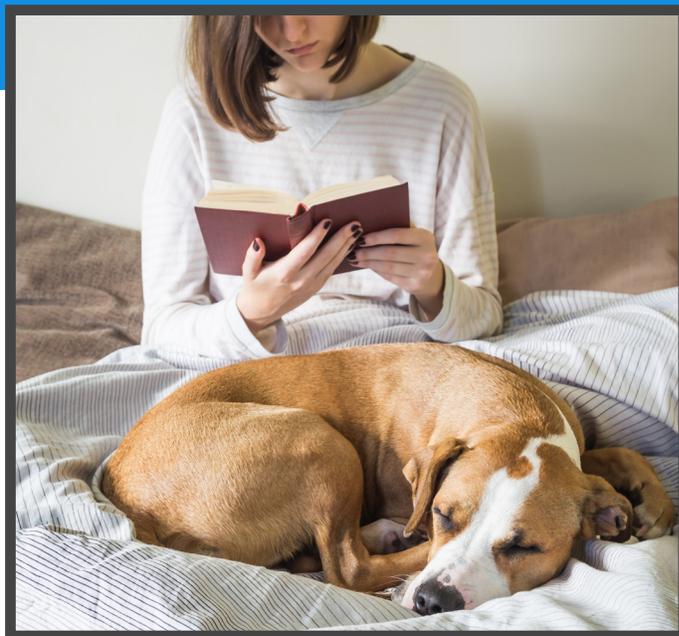
Did you ever struggle with assigned reading in school? I sure did. I never felt interested in the topics, and I would do just enough to get by in my classes. School was really hard for me, and grades were a means to an end. I had to attend tutoring, so I always assumed I was a poor student and just couldn't read well. I'll admit I looked at quite a few CliffsNotes in those days.

It wasn't until I got to law school that I realized it was the topics that had been the problem, not my learning ability. I discovered that I love reading law books. It was a complete turnaround for me, as I'd always struggled to finish a book in high school. Reading a work of fiction? I found it very challenging. But learning about the law and what I needed to know to become a lawyer? That was awesome.

Law was — and still is — my passion. It's a subject I can lose myself in and always want to know more about. As a student, you have to know the rules of the law, forward and backward. I reveled in the opportunity to learn a subject so thoroughly. I had finally found my passion, and it's led me to discover something in me I never thought possible: a love of reading.

These days, I still read law books to keep my mind in shape. I also love reading other people's personal, true-life stories. My favorite books are biographies, self-help books, and law books. Believe it or not, I hardly ever read fiction. I enjoy reading about true people who've had universal experiences, those who've struggled through hardships and still keep working to pursue their passion.

Right now, I'm reading a few new books and rereading some old favorites. One of my favorites is "Courtroom Cowboy: The Life of Legal Trailblazer Jim Beasley." When I stumbled upon this book, the story of the way he became a lawyer really resonated with me. It's a fantastic read. Beasley came from a humble background and was a bus driver until, one day, he decided to turn his future around. He went to law school and became an advocate for the voiceless. Throughout his career, Beasley stood up for the underdog and fought ceaselessly to win their cases.



I love reading books like this because it gives me insight on how someone goes all-in. There's no halfway. When you are pursuing a passion, you're either all-in or not in at all. Law is my passion, and I put everything I have into it.

The next book up on my list? "Start With Why" by Simon Sinek. It's all about how leaders inspire others to take action and find purpose behind what they do. I'm looking forward to diving in. If you've read it, let me know what you think!

Reading, like any activity, takes practice. If you're under the impression that reading is not for you, think again. Maybe you just haven't found the right fit yet. With so many great books in the world, it's worth it to find one that sparks your passion.

If you're looking for some recommendations, I'm always happy to talk about books. I'd wager there's one out there for you.

Until next time,

-Russell Button

HOW YOUNG MINDS ABSORB A SECOND LANGUAGE



If you speak a second language, you have the unique ability to set your child up for a lifetime of advantages. Not only does a second language benefit your child in adulthood, but learning another language also strengthens multiple parts of their developing brain, according to Michigan State University. You may not want to overload your kids with two lexicons, but this is really not the case. Children quickly adapt to dual languages. The brain is a muscle, and like any other muscle in our body, the more it's exercised, the stronger it becomes.

With all the research floating around about how beneficial it is to teach your child a second language, you might wonder why youngsters pick up languages so easily. According to NBC News, the answer lies in their flexible minds. Children's brains develop in response to external stimulants. Did you know that babies are born with the ability to distinguish the sounds of all languages? As they get older, even before their first birthday, they lose that ability.

Kids are able to take in sounds, intonation, and language structure more easily than adults who have to painstakingly memorize verb structures and grammar. Children under 8 are especially primed to pick up a new language thanks to flexible ear and speech muscles. As they take in new

And the Benefits of Learning Early

words, it increases their ability to focus on one thing or change their responses, a skill called cognitive flexibility. The more you can expose your little one to different sounds in their first year, the more they'll pick up those sounds as their brain creates new neural circuits.

If you speak a second language and have a child at home, now is a great time to share it with them. Your child is especially ready to pick up new sounds and words, with the added benefit of learning their heritage. If you're ready to teach your child a second language, here are a few ways to incorporate new words.

1. [Take time to talk with your child in a second language during playtime. Research shows babies need personal interaction to learn, so switching on the TV in another language won't suffice.](#)
2. [Increase vocabulary by giving options in a second language. Try questions like "Do you want juice or milk?" or "Do you want to play on the swings or by the tree?"](#)
3. [Find a language exchange group or bilingual daycare to increase your child's exposure to a second language.](#)

If you don't know a second language but want to give your child a head start, you can begin by learning new words together. How fun would it be if you become bilingual as a family?

KNOW WHAT TO ASK YOUR DAY CARE PROVIDER

Not far away in Fort Worth, an 8-month-old baby died in the hands of a day care provider. The mother had interviewed the provider, visited her home, and believed her child would be safe there — until her baby was found lifeless in its baby carrier, shut in a walk-in closet of the day care. It turned out the facility was not licensed, and it cost a child's life. How could this happen?

You've read before that some day care centers will claim they are licensed when, in reality, they are not. How can you determine which ones truly are? To answer this question, it's important to know the difference between a licensed, registered, and listed day care facility and to know what Texas law says about these levels of certification.

WHO HAS TO BE LICENSED?

It may be shocking, but Texas does not require all day care facilities or individuals who care for children to be licensed.

Any center-based care facility that provides care for seven or more children for less than 24 hours in a day at a location other than the caregiver's home must be licensed.

For a home-based care facility, if it provides care for more than 12 children, including the caregiver's own children, it must be licensed.

WHO HAS TO BE REGISTERED?

Home-based care facilities that provide care for four to six children, plus six additional school-aged children, must be registered.

Facilities that have fewer children to look after usually fit the criteria for registration, while facilities that have higher numbers must apply for a license. A licensed facility will usually also undergo more state regulation, while registration relies on self-monitoring and parental monitoring.

WHO HAS TO BE LISTED?

Finally, some facilities will fit the requirement for being "listed." A home-based provider that cares for three or fewer children at a time has to "list" themselves with the state of Texas and cannot have more than 12 children under their care total. They will not undergo regular inspections and are not required to have any specific education or training. The listed provider must be over 18 and will go through background checks.

Make sure your children are safe by knowing these requirements. To quickly find a list of licensed day care centers, go to the Department of Family and Protective Services Licensing Division, where they have a quick search feature. If you have more questions, talk to The Button Law Firm. Let's keep our kids safe together.

THE HISTORY OF FEBRUARY'S MOST CHARMING CANDIES

It's Valentine's Day, and love is in the air. The birds are singing in a manic frenzy, doting romantics are plucking red roses by the fistful, and Cupid is practically blotting out the sun with a flurry of arrows.

Or, at the very least, there's a lot of candy flying off the shelves. Approximately \$448 million worth of it, according to History.com. Chocolate may lead the pack in sheer poundage — 58 million pounds over the course of V-Day week, to be exact — but there's no more iconic candy than Necco's signature Sweethearts candies. The chalky, cheeky little buggers have been helping shy romantics articulate their aspirations for 151 years, and they're a bona fide force of nature. These days, a staggering 8 billion Sweethearts are produced annually, at a rate of about 100,000 pounds a day. But how did these flavorless, yet eternally charming, treats come to be?

In the mid-19th century, people were going crazy for apothecary lozenges called troches, small tablets made by hand with a smidgen of a medicinal substance and a dried, sugary paste. To capitalize on this trend, Boston pharmacist Oliver Chase spent hours devising a primitive machine that could cut down on the manual labor involved in manufacturing troches, expertly rolling the "dough" into tubes and chopping it into perfect wafers. Within a year or two, he'd abandoned his pharmaceutical leanings for a much more profitable enterprise: candymaking. Over the next 60 years, the popularity of these little candies exploded, forming the basis for the New England Confectionary Company, otherwise known as Necco.

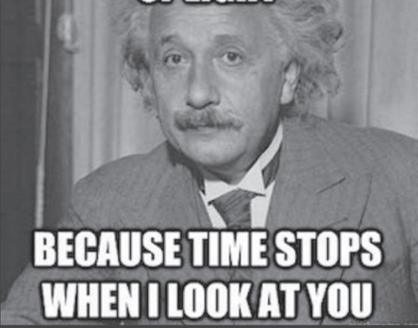
As Chase's company grew alongside his riches, his brother began to wonder how he could get in on the action. Not to be outdone, he invented his own machine in 1866, designed to print red vegetable dye onto the Necco dough and cut the candies into shapes. They were an immediate hit. People loved their witty mottos. In 1902, Necco began to manufacture the candies in their signature heart shape, and over time, the sayings were condensed to match their small size.



Now, the hearts contain dozens of phrases, and they're updated with new ones every year. Gone are the wafers reading "FAX ME." They've been replaced by "TXT ME," "#LOVE," and "TWEET ME." Whether you love or hate the sandy, goofy Sweethearts, it's clear they're not going anywhere anytime soon.

MEMES

YOU MUST BE THE SPEED
OF LIGHT



BECAUSE TIME STOPS
WHEN I LOOK AT YOU

I can't wait for February 15th!
Otherwise-known-as 50%
off Chocolate Day!



someecards
user card

BACON-WRAPPED TATER TOT BOMBS



Sure, your showoff pal can wrap a tater tot with a piece of bacon and call it "The Daniel," but you can take it a step further. Prepare a couple batches of these savory snacks for your Super Bowl party or the next family get-together. Snag a few for yourself before they disappear!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups frozen tater tots, defrosted
- 4 slices bacon, quartered
- 1 ounce sharp cheddar, cut into ¼-inch squares
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

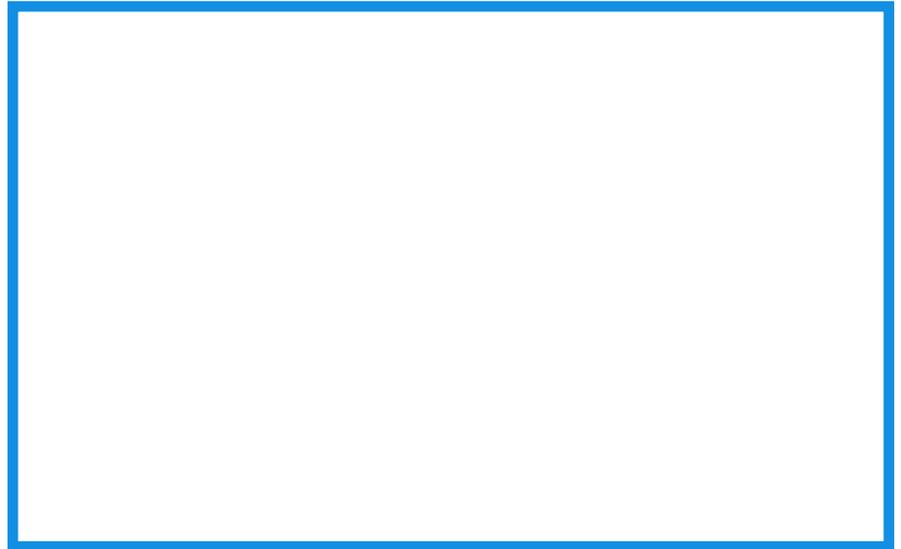
DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Press a cheese square into each tot, then wrap with a piece of bacon. Dredge each tot in brown sugar.
3. Place tots seam side down on baking sheet. Bake for 20–25 minutes, using metal tongs to turn halfway through.
4. Garnish with parsley, if desired, and serve immediately.

(Recipe inspired by ThisGrandmamsFun.com.)

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NEED A LITTLE SPICE IN YOUR LIFE?

Spices and herbs add much more than flavor and aroma to your favorite beverages and treats. They also offer many health benefits. When properly deployed, these spice rack staples can ease a variety of symptoms. Ready to find your new holistic health kick? Read on.

NUTMEG

This spice, known for its earthy, nutty flavor, has anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties. Want to calm nagging pain? This spice has been used to treat joint pain and arthritis. It can even be used to remedy bad breath! Nutmeg is most potent when it's freshly grated, so it's recommended you purchase whole nutmeg seed, found in most specialty food stores. You can incorporate nutmeg into your diet by taking it as a supplement in capsule form or simply sprinkling it into your next chai tea. Your achy joints will thank you.



GINGER

This root is an essential natural anti-inflammatory. It can help ease an upset stomach and finally tame your nausea. You can safely eat it raw, candied, as a supplement, in tea, or in baked goods. Ginger is most effective when it's ingested raw or in capsule form. If you have morning sickness, raw ginger might do the trick. Just ask the people of ancient China. Like many spices, ginger's use as a supplement goes back centuries. Southeast Asian countries used it to ease their own common ailments. Call it tried and true.

PEPPERMINT

You can use peppermint as an essential oil, steep the leaves for tea, or take a supplement capsule. Each form comes with its own benefits. As an essential oil, peppermint is great for treating colds. It's a mild decongestant, and it helps with coughs and stuffed-up noses. It also soothes sore throats and headaches. Rub one or two drops under your nose, on your temples, or over your sinuses and feel the relief wash over you! Even further, a study published by The BMJ found that when administered as a capsule, peppermint helped reduce the symptoms of IBS in a majority of patients.