

On The Horizon...



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Fun Facts About America's Favorite Summertime Treat

Special points of interest:

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July is National Hot Dog Month

Call it a dog, sausage or frankfurter, it's been around since before the 9th century BC. Homer's Odyssey refers to a man by a roaring fire waiting impatiently for his sausage to cook.

In the centuries that followed, many references to the sausage are recorded throughout history.

In the 19th century, German immigrants came here and brought their sausages and their dachshund dogs with them.

In 1867, a German butcher opened a stand in Coney Island in New York and sold 3,684

"dachhund" sausages in milk rolls.

A cartoon was drawn featuring the sausages, but the cartoonist didn't know how to spell dachshund, so he called them hot dogs. The name stuck.

A study done a few years ago indicated that Americans eat more than 16 billion hot dogs each year. They eat 150 million on the 4th of July alone.

We now know that, health wise, the hot dog has a bad reputation. It contains 14 to 16 grams of fat.

Nutritionists at the Mayo Clinic recommend choosing a fat-free dog or one that has 2 grams of fat or less. They taste pretty

good, especially with the toppings, and have only about 50 calories each,

The reduced-fat dog is their second choice. It contains 7 to 10 grams of fat and 100 to 120 calories. They are made with beef, chicken or turkey, but their taste isn't necessarily better than that of a fat-free hot dog.

If you are a vegetarian, or someone who is limiting red meat, try the meatless hot dog. They are soy based with 0 to 6 grams of fat and no cholesterol. Condiments are needed to liven up the flavor. (All hot dogs contain 200 to 400 milligrams of sodium.)

Time To Talk To Parents About Their Will?

It can be a touchy subject, but there's no time like the present to have a talk with your parents about whether or not they have made a will.

If your parent has no will and lives in one of 16 states that pass everything on to a spouse (or second or third spouse), you won't get anything.

If your father or mother lives in many other states, the surviving spouse gets half of everything.

In most states, the surviving spouse can't be disinherited and will get a third or half of the estate in spite of any will, but not all of it.

Verbal agreements in a late-life marriage aren't worth anything. The stepmom or stepdad might agree to do something for the adult kids, but unless it's specified in the will, he or she can just walk away.

Because people are living longer, they are more likely to

move into second marriages.

One of the worst arrangements a parent can make involves leaving everything to the second spouse with kids getting what's left over after the stepparent dies.

Ideally, communicating about a will is best done before the parent remarries. After that, especially in May-December unions, the new spouse may have too much influence.

News From Our Office....



During the last two months we have welcomed a wonderful new staff member to the office.

Catherine joined us at the beginning of June. She is originally from New Orleans and she is very, very happy to be back in her hometown after living and working in the Lake Charles, La. and then Houston, Texas areas for the last several years. She has previously handled cases involving sophisticated aviation claims on behalf of injured individuals as well as serious injury cases on behalf of the injured.

She also worked with a retired Judge in Houston before joining our office. We are very lucky to have her with our office and she brings a lot of experience and knowledge to the office!

At the end of July we will be mailing out our Fall Football schedule magnets. This year we are sending out the schedules for the Saints and LSU. Look for yours in the mail in the next few weeks.

Finally, our hometown of New Orleans is a really great place to

visit during the summer months of July and August. Sure, it is very hot and humid, but lots of hotels have really great deals (\$99 a night rooms!) and the Aquarium, the restaurants, the bars and all local shops are air-conditioned anyway!

As always, if anyone you know needs help with a maritime or other legal issue, please keep our office in mind!

Nontraditional Ideas In Baseball Could Work

The game of baseball does evolve over time. Some new ideas aren't so hot, but others are working out.

* Tall catchers: One of the newer things is the hiring of a catcher who is 6 feet 4 inches tall or taller.

Conventional wisdom indicates that the guy who spends so much time next to the ground should be somewhat shorter than the average player. But the Minnesota Twins' Joe Mauer has been an exceptional catcher and a two-time batting champion.

At 6 feet 5 inches, Baltimore Orioles catcher, Matt Wieters, does a great job

and is also a good hitter, according to Orioles general manager Andy McPhail.

* The pinch runner: In about the 7th inning of a close game, managers more often name their fastest runner to sub for a slower runner who is on base.

Though they are desperate to get that one run that will win the game, the question is whether the risk is worth sending in their best player to work the 7th inning rather than bat in the 8th and 9th.

* The relief pitcher: Calling in

their best relief pitcher when a team is already three runs ahead may not be wise. At Baseball Info Solutions, a data company, they say it would be better to call in their number two reliever and save their best relief pitcher to act as the closer if needed, or save him to pitch in the next game.

* Baseball rules say managers have to wear the team uniform, but some would rather not.

Oh, Oh! Bar Wrestling Is Officially Named A Sport In Washington State

A group called Seattle Semi-Pro Wrestling (SSP) has brought crowds into many city bars in recent years.

Their events are a humorous take on professional wrestling with colorful characters the audiences love to cheer or boo. They perform on foam pads placed on a stage instead of in a ring.

Officials at World Wrestling Entertainment concede that their matches are scripted and have a predetermined winner as well.

In spite of this, bureaucrats in Washington

have recently ruled that all wrestling, including SSP events, are real forms of sport. They say it's true even if the wrestlers are people in funny suits performing fake kung-fu moves in a tavern.

Washington state's Department of Licensing still concludes that it's sports entertainment. That means the spoofers must meet safety regulations and be licensed. The league will be forced to post a \$10,000 bond, station medical personnel at events and buy a regulation wrestling ring.

David Osgood, the attorney for SSP, says he will appeal the decision. Its costs could break the league's budget and their "cabaret wrestling" is theater, not sport. It's a bunch of grown men and women in costumes pretending to be professional wrestlers.

Still, they imitate some of the choreographed moves of pro wrestlers. They bang each other with folding chairs, hop from ladders onto opponents' necks and drive them headfirst into the floor.

Singles Qualify For Full \$8,000 Tax Credit

It's good news for people who are single, divorced or widowed: They get the same income tax credit when buying a home as married couples do.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 authorizes a tax credit for up to \$8,000 when you purchase a home before December 1 of 2009. Whether the buyer is an individual or a married couple, they qualify for the same amount.

One exception: If the buyer is married and buying a home as an individual, that person only

gets a \$4,000 tax deduction.

Couples qualify for the tax credit if they have income of \$150,000 or less. A single buyer has to have income of \$75,000 or less. (If their income is higher, they get only a percentage of the \$8,000 tax credit.)

Other provisions of the Act: First, you have to be a first-time buyer. If you haven't owned a home in three years, you qualify as a first-time buyer.

Second, the amount of your credit depends on the price you

pay for the home. The credit is 10 percent of the price up to \$80,000. If you buy a place for \$50,000, for example, you would get a tax credit of \$5,000.

If you buy a house for more than \$80,000, you will get the \$8,000 tax credit rather than 10 percent of the purchase price.



For Greater Success, Decide What To Do And What Not To Do

When Jim Collins makes a plan for the new year, before designating new projects, he identifies three things he wants to stop doing.

Collins, author of *Good to Great*, says having a not-to-do list is as important for achieving your goals as a to-do list.

First, the to-dos as recommended by Gary Bencivenga, author of *Success Bullets*.

* Apply the famous 80/20 rule to your work. About 20 percent of your activities are responsible for 80 percent of your success. Give those activities a high priority. Review your to-do list every day.

* Rise an hour earlier and give your highest-payoff activities your attention. Earl Nightingale claimed that if you spend this hour in study of your field, you will be an expert in five years.

* Slow down. Everything is not urgent or important. Define matters that will improve your work and life. Do those things well, though you sometimes have to ignore other things.

* Don't multitask. Doing two things at once brings a poor result for both.

"...having a not-to-do list is as important for achieving your goals as a to-do list."

Kids Korner

Truck stop

A trucker went into a diner and said, "I want three flat tires, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards."

The new waitress asked the cook, "What does he think this place is, an auto parts store?"

"No," the cook said, "Three flat tires are pancakes, a pair of headlights is two eggs sunny side up, and running boards are two slices of crisp bacon."

She thought for a moment, then scooped up

a bowl of beans and gave them to the trucker, who asked, "What are the beans for?"

She replied, "I thought while you were waiting for the flat tires, headlights and running boards, you might as well gas up!"

Traffic Court

A woman was found guilty in traffic court and when asked her occupation, she said she was a schoolteacher. The judge rose from the bench. "Madam, I have waited years for a schoolteacher to appear before this court."

He smiled with delight. "Now sit down at that table and write 'I will not run a red light' five hundred times."

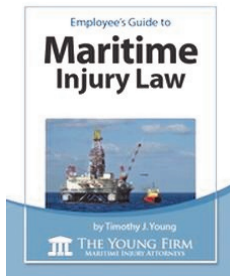


"Brick is overrated. Let me show you something in sticks or straw."

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July Horoscope

ARIES: It's time to let your hair down, relax, and be your sociable self. You will find interesting people at Fourth of July and other summer parties. This is your chance to be seen in a way you never were seen before.

TAURUS: At work, things might be going at a slower pace this month, but it's an ideal time to show that you are willing to compete for a new project. If you go for it now, others will be less likely to cut in.

GEMINI: Be thankful for those everyday experiences. The way you interact with loved ones can bring joy to both you and them and especially to your partner. Work together in the yard or on a decorating plan.

CANCER: Lucky for you, it's summer time and conditions are ideal for outdoor sports and exercise. Don't wait to focus on your health. When you get in shape, your whole world will move forward.

LEO: The stars are predicting travel in your not-too-distant future. The opportunity for fun and relaxation will soon present itself. Whether the trip is to the next county or another state, it will do you good.

VIRGO: You might be feeling clueless about how to get ahead at work, but that feeling will pass. Stay positive, draw on your creativity and opportunities will come.

LIBRA: Money, money, money. It's on your mind too often. Remember that you can't do everything, though you may want to. Separate emotion from your financial plan. Then think about it only once a week.

SCORPIO: Your life has more to do with the way you handle moment-to-moment activities than anything else. Pay attention to your to-do list, do it now, and the future will take care of itself.

SAGITTARIUS: You will soon have

an educational opportunity that could send you to the next level. If you aren't totally committed to take the opportunity at this time, think it over and you'll see the benefits.

CAPRICORN: Attraction to an unavailable person may come your way.

Don't be open to this dangerous situation and the feeling will pass. Focus on the good things in your life and how to preserve them.

AQUARIUS: The facilitator, the peace maker, the visionary. These are the roles you are called upon to fill. Though you don't ask for it, you are the one who can bring people and projects together.

PISCES: If you're a person who dreams of riches from playing the lottery or an unexpected windfall, over time you will discover that riches are the happy result of your own work. Dream less and do more