



FINNEY INJURY LAW
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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A Safe and Healthy Valentine's Day MISSOURIANS CAN FIND NEW TRADITIONS THIS YEAR

Valentine's Day is upon us, but just like many other holidays over the past 12 months, it doesn't feel quite like it should. The pandemic continues to throw wrenches into everybody's plans, and although the end is in sight with vaccine distribution running at full speed, we're not out of the woods yet. But this holiday deserves to be celebrated — or more accurately, *you* deserve to celebrate Valentine's Day this year. Here are some ways to show the love, whether with significant others, friends, family, or yourself.

"Date night" has all but fallen out of the American vocabulary this last year, and this is a chance to bring it back. Skip the fixed menus and doubled prices and treat yourself to a fancy candlelit dinner at home instead. You can easily

spruce up your nest to put the magic of romance in the air. First, set up a dining area that isn't where you'd normally eat. Dig out holiday lights, especially single-color strands, and string them around the room — we're big fans of strings of white lights, and they can often be bought at a discount this time of year. Turn the overhead lighting down low, throw a tablecloth on, and spark some candles. Champagne flutes can be had for cheap, and you can put any drink you like in them. Surprise your significant other with a new recipe, or cook it together for added date-night fun. Don't forget the dessert and presents!

You can also use delivery services to help you celebrate safely. A Floral Gallery, Clayton's own family-run floral shop, offers beautiful bouquets and will deliver

them straight to your loved one's door. What better way to let your Valentines know you're thinking of them than a fresh bouquet of flowers? Even more convenient, you can shop straight from their website ClaytonFloralGallery.com.

The most personal gifts are the ones you make yourself. We suggest a visit to the locally owned and operated Schaefer's Hobby Shop, which has been serving the St. Louis area for over 70 years. You can shop in store or online at SchaeferHobby.com. Both are sure to provide not only inspiration but also the supplies you need to get started. Make something that tells your special person "I love you" in whatever love language is theirs.

Last but not least, don't forget to love the one person who's there day-in and day-out: yourself! Take the day off work if you can and do something fun. It might be a spa day at home, a long walk by the water, or a few hours fishing on the dock.

Happy Valentine's Day!



TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

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CIVIL JURY TRIALS TO THE RESCUE GETTING TO THE TRUTH



I recently finished the deposition of a neurologist hired by American National Property and Casualty (ANPC) to "examine" my client. My client is a young lady who was rear-ended and suffered a brain injury. Our client was at the ER within a couple of hours of the crash and was throwing up and complaining that her eyes were "falling out" of her head. She told the doctors there that she lost consciousness from the crash as well. Well, not a single person from the insurance company or this neurologist believes her. Why? Because no one saw her passed out and she can't tell them exactly how long she was out — like she had a timer in her head when she was unconscious.

I spent months looking at this neurologist's report — 24 pages of single-spaced type that just denigrated and assaulted my client's integrity. Some nights I could not sleep because I was so upset. Something just didn't add up. After all, there were two MRIs of my client's brain showing objective brain damage. These were white spots in her brain, commonly known as a white matter area of hyperintensity.

So, I served a subpoena on the doctor to get every single document he was given, including any checks and any reports he made about my client. On their face, the documents were not much — except that he was charging \$800 per hour and made over \$560,000.00 last year working exclusively for defense firms and insurance companies. According to him, since 2017, he has made over \$1,500,000. Curiously, he elected not to produce this year's finances. Well, we will see what those say. And to be clear, he does not render any treatment at all for this money. These people, who are forced by law to see him, are not his patients. They are claimants, and he cannot be sued for malpractice if he messes up.

After reviewing the documents, I took his deposition. It lasted 3.5 hours. He charged me \$3,000 for the first hour and \$400 for every 15 minutes after that. You read that right. The first hour cost me about \$1 a second. The next 2.5 only cost me

about 50 cents a second. Have you ever paid that much for advice or opinions you never wanted?

So, what did I find out over the 3.5 hours? Well, a lot. I found out that before he ever examined my client or even met her, he had decided she "may actually be lying." His first finding had nothing to do with her diagnosis or injuries. His first finding was that he "questions her credibility." Where does a person being paid \$800 an hour by an adverse party get the moral high ground to comment on someone else's credibility?

The defense lawyer complained after the deposition that I took a long time. I don't care. We will take as long as it takes. Just because we don't do \$220,000,000 in revenue a year, like American National, does not mean we won't fight back. You see, a civil jury trial is the only way to fight back and level the playing field. Otherwise, this single immigrant who was brain damaged has absolutely no shot at getting the equal dollar trade value of her injuries from ANPC. They can just buy the testimony they need. But civil jury trials help prevent this. They prevent this "practice" of medicine where doctors use their MDs and fancy educations to call people liars, because we can expose this at trial in front of 12 disinterested, living, breathing humans.

In fact, the file containing most of the quotes from the neurologist was "not for the public," according to him. I was not supposed to see it. I was only supposed to see his report so he could thinly veil and dress up the fact that he was calling my client a liar, a cheat, and a fraud. That's some solid, evidence-based practice of medicine right there.

Thank goodness for doctors with the courage and decency to see people who need help and haven't sold out. Let's hope we never lose that special breed of doctor — the one who actually has patients, not claimants.

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February is Black History Month, a time to recognize the countless men and women who helped change the American cultural, social, and scientific landscape. Black history is American history, and the two are inexorably linked.

Black History Month itself can be traced back to Chicago in 1915, the 50th anniversary of emancipation by the state of Illinois. For reference, the Emancipation Proclamation was delivered by President Abraham Lincoln on Jan. 1, 1863, but Illinois put its own emancipation into effect in 1865.

In 1915, thousands of African Americans went to Chicago to attend an exhibition that chronicled the many achievements African Americans had made since emancipation and partake in a three-week celebration. Carter G. Woodson, one of the attendees, was inspired

by the event. In the months following the exhibition, Woodson worked with several of his Black colleagues to found the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Woodson's goal was to bring the achievements of Black Americans to the national stage.

These efforts led to the creation of The Journal of Negro History in 1916. Woodson and his colleagues published Black Americans' achievements along with insights from Black Americans around the country. Woodson challenged others to follow in his footsteps, and they did. In 1924, Negro History Week was founded, which eventually became known as Negro Achievement Week. It was part of greater outreach in many communities around the country to bring awareness of Black Americans' achievements.

But Woodson and others wanted more. Through the 1920s and '30s,

Black culture expanded in the U.S. At the same time, more Black history was being taught in schools, even as Black communities faced continued oppression, especially in the Southern states.

As the civil rights movement took hold in the '50s and '60s, people made even greater strides. More people were learning about Black history, and more Black Americans explored where they had come from, looking to their African ancestors for inspiration. During this time, many were also celebrating Black History Month, which quickly replaced Negro History Week.

In 1976, Black History Month was finally recognized nationally — 50 years after Carter G. Woodson made strides to change the American cultural landscape. Today, he and countless others are credited with having a major positive impact on American culture.

IT'S IN THE CARDS

Why Valentine's Day Is the Ultimate Card Holiday

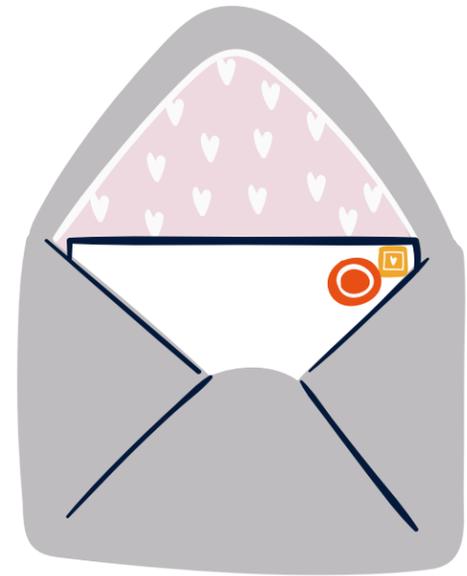
This may be the first year in a long time that kids don't pass out Valentine's Day cards at school. Going in to the new year, the seasonal section of most stores are lined with cards featuring fun characters from superheroes to unicorns. Handing out cards is now a well-loved tradition, but have you ever wondered how Valentine's Day became one of the biggest card-giving holidays of the year?

Like many holiday traditions, the convention of handing out Valentine's Day cards goes back centuries. During the 1700s, it became fashionable to trade Valentine's Day cards with a short poem or verse. The popularity of swapping these cards only increased throughout the 1800s. Sometimes, people would go as far as to paint or draw spring-like images on the cards.

They were much more elaborate than what we typically see today, though they were still usually very small.

But where did those folks get the idea? People of that era were likely inspired by stories that go back even further. There are legends that the originator of this holiday tradition was Saint Valentine himself. One story says that on the night before he was set to be executed, Valentine wrote a small letter to a jailer's daughter. He ended the note with "Your Valentine."

It's unknown whether that story is true, but to 18th century Europeans and Americans, it was inspiring! So inspiring, in fact, that the entire Valentine's Day industry began to gain traction. A guidebook called "The Young Man's Valentine" was published in 1797 to help



suitors garner the attention of their love interests through the written word. Eventually, books aimed at women were also published, including "The Lady's Own Valentine Writer," which served much the same goal.

These publications, along with young people writing notes to one another every February, have made Valentine's Day cards an ingrained tradition, and now people can't get enough of them!

DON'T TOUCH THAT PHONE!

Nobody wants to have a car accident. And yet, so many people seem bent on having one — or at least you'd think so from watching their driving habits. We could discuss a lot of things, like "driving buzzed" or failing to heed the road conditions. But something we need to talk about is distracted driving, i.e., being on your phone when you should have your eyes on the road.

Public-service "distracted driving" campaigns never acknowledge that sometimes the texts and phone calls you receive are tremendously important — you might change your route of travel, for example, or turn around completely if there's an emergency at home. Those instances are not common and not worth the risk, but our brains aren't wired that way. When the phone goes off, we think, "Well, if that is important, I'm going to save a lot of time by glancing at it really quick." Because there's no way to tell if something is important or not without looking at it, right?

Technically, it's actually wrong. A number of hands-free options will read you your messages while you drive, especially in newer cars. But we're not a big fan of those because you're still distracted, and many of those "hands-free" options require you to manipulate the phone at least a little. And that's the thing: No matter what, if you take your

TECH AND DRIVING DON'T MIX

hands off the wheel to touch or press or fiddle, you're a risk to yourself and others.

So, what are you to do?

The first step is to understand how your brain is wired, and why the drive to check a text is so strong. It's human nature, and it's normal — and if you can overcome that urge, you're not just a better driver: *You're doing a good thing.* It's not often that we're handed the opportunity to do something that's absolutely right, and it feels good to take advantage of it.

To aid you in this, there are apps for every phone that silence your messages and phone calls when you get into the car. Some use the Bluetooth connection in your vehicle to do this, and others use GPS and rate of speed. Either way, they make it easier to stay focused on the road.

Of course, even the most focused drivers on the road can still be impacted by distracted driving. We see clients everyday who have been injured as a result of other drivers' lack of focus. In fact, that's what we're here for. If you've been injured in a car accident, the team at Finney Injury Law can help you get the compensation you deserve. Give us a call at 314-293-4222 to see how we can help.

STRAWBERRY KISSED ALMOND BUTTER MUFFINS

Inspired by AmbitiousKitchen.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup ripe bananas, mashed
- 3/4 cup natural creamy almond butter (can substitute creamy peanut butter)
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup (or honey)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup oat flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup strawberry fruit spread, divided (we recommend Bonne Maman INTENSE)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with liners and spray with nonstick cooking spray.
3. In a large bowl, mix bananas, almond butter, eggs, maple syrup, and vanilla extract.
4. Stir in oat flour, baking powder, and salt until smooth.
5. Evenly divide batter into liners. Add 1 tsp strawberry fruit spread to the top of each muffin.
6. Use a butter knife to gently swirl the spread into the batter.
7. Bake for 22-27 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean.
8. Transfer muffins to wire rack to cool and enjoy!

YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.