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See Spring Bloom

IN THESE BEAUTIFUL LOCATIONS

Spring is here, which means beautiful flowers are finally showing themselves after a long winter. Here are some of the best places in the U.S. to see flower blossoms and welcome the season.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park stretches across North Carolina and Tennessee, and while its scenery is beautiful year-round, the park is especially alluring to nature enthusiasts during the spring. Through this season, miles of lady's-slipper orchids, irises, cardinal flowers, and lilies dot its lush green landscape. It's dubbed "Wildflower National Park" throughout this time of year, and you can experience it by car or on foot. The park also offers expert-led tours that weave through the flowers during their peak bloom.

CRESTED BUTTE

Crested Butte, Colorado, is best known for its winter sports and summer hikes. But recently it has drawn the attention of flower enthusiasts for its unique pink, orange, and gold alpine wildflowers



that appear in the spring. This natural phenomenon even inspired the creation of the annual Wildflower Festival in midsummer, which features nature walks, art, photography, culinary experiences, and more. For a truly unique experience, you can even ascend the town's titular Crested Butte to spot some rare alpine sunflowers next to the picturesque West Elk Mountains.

ANTELOPE VALLEY

The California Poppy Reserve in Lancaster, California, is a 1,780-acre park that features sloping hills covered with fields of vibrant orange, yellow, and red poppies in the spring. Warm temperatures and heavy rainfall across Southern California during this time of year create a brief period of thick blooms as far as the eye can see. And while the poppies can be enjoyed from the comfort of your car, the best way to experience them is to walk the leisurely Antelope Loop Trail for a breathtaking, up-close adventure.

Spring flora is gorgeous and naturally attracts large crowds of people every year. If you plan to visit any of these destinations, just remember that their ecosystems are delicate. Respect park signs, stay on designated trails, and do your part to make sure these flowers return year after year for future generations to enjoy.



THE TEXAS LAW DOG

I COME TO FIGHT. I DON'T BARK. I BITE!

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On the Waves of Waikiki

A VACATION AND A MASTERMIND MEETING

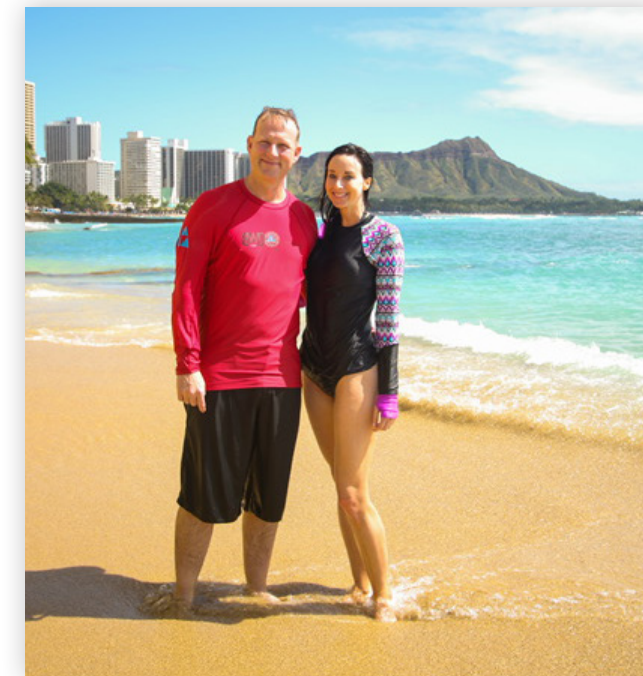
Back in our February newsletter, I mentioned that Alison and I were heading out to Hawaii around Valentine's Day. Well, we've since returned!

Alison and I had a fantastic getaway visiting Oahu and Maui over two weeks. This picture was taken on Waikiki Beach where we stayed — and surfed — while on Oahu. The surf is always perfect on Waikiki for beginners like us! Since it's one of my favorite destinations, I've spent a couple of months in total staying on Waikiki. It's always a great time, with great views.

We ended up staying six days on Oahu, in Honolulu and Waikiki, and six days on Maui along the Kaanapali Beach and around Lahaina. While both destinations were amazing, I did prefer staying on Waikiki. It is more crowded, but everything you need is within walking distance, and this meant we could buy groceries and use our kitchenette! We even rented a car for a day and drove around the island to take everything in.

After Waikiki, we headed to Maui. It's been seven years since I last visited the island. We visited the typical tourist spots like Haleakala and the Road to Hana. We also drove the entire southern and northern sections of the island, but we stayed on the western side of the island, which gave us a view of the sunset every evening. And I will say, those sunsets were amazing! I think on that fact alone, Alison decided she preferred Maui to Oahu. Not only did we get to take in some perfect sunsets there, but it's also less crowded and more laid back.

Of course, I didn't just go to Hawaii for vacation. While I was in Maui, I attended a mastermind group and mixed business with pleasure, which is something I like to do when I can, especially when it takes us out of Texas. The mastermind principle was first introduced by Napoleon Hill, renowned self-help author from the early-to-mid 20th century, in his 1928 publication "The Law of Success." The mastermind principle consists of two or more minds working in perfect harmony for the attainment of a common



objective. Hill believed that success does not come without the cooperation of others.

I was able to meet with a group of like-minded attorneys, and we were all able to openly share ideas to help each other in our practices. It was only a one-day meeting, but we were able to pack in so much in the short time we were together. The highlight of the mastermind to me was meeting John Morgan, who has arguably built the largest plaintiff's personal injury firm in the nation, with over 600 attorneys on staff. During the meeting, he shared some things he's learned while building his firm. I gained a lot of great insights, which I brought back to the firm and to our clients.

Alison and I are already looking forward to our next Hawaii trip, and I'm also looking forward to my next mastermind meeting, even though it won't be in beautiful Hawaii.

-Matt Aulsbrook

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Encouraging Your Little Girl

Tips for Raising Strong, Confident Women

In a time when it's so easy to let technology and school run your child's life, what's your role as a parent or guardian? We often hear motivational quotes talking about the importance of risk-taking and resilience, but it can be tough for little girls to learn from just YouTube videos and school alone. Here's how you can encourage your daughter to spark her own confidence during her toughest moments.

Encourage bravery and a growth mindset.

Even children can feel pressured to perform to high standards yet stay within their comfort zone. They might think, "I'm not strong enough to climb this tree." But whether it's climbing trees or building things with others, small feelings of bravery can grow larger as they grow older.

Self-empowerment will be a crucial skill in their lives, so encourage a mindset focused on growth through the process of learning. Teach them how the brain grows and adapts rapidly whenever we encounter failure and that failure and mistakes are a part of life. Once they understand that failure isn't permanent, they'll be inspired to take risks and solve their problems.

Trust your daughter while teaching grit.

Psychologist Angela Lee Duckworth studies successful people in a wide variety of fields, from business to the military, and has found that the quality most successful people share is grit. The ability to stay engaged with tough tasks for a long period of time is a skill that takes a long time to build, but it's not impossible for your girl to begin developing grit right now. Duckworth believes the growth mindset can start young girls on a path to embracing failure and moving forward from it.

However, a lack of trust in your daughter can suffocate her growth. Despite all the adult-directed activities we give our kids, we need to step back and let them make some of their own decisions. We can give them encouragement and help along the way, but for the most part, we need to trust they can solve problems on their own.

When you put faith and trust in your little girl to handle her most difficult problems, she'll learn to do the same for herself.



PEDALS TO THE METAL

4 Tips for a Better Bike Ride

Bicycles are a practical way to get around, whether you're going for a ride around the neighborhood or commuting to work. On the road, you must be constantly aware of your surroundings, from cars to other hazards along the road. It's also important to be aware of the bike itself. Here are four things to check on a regular basis.

The Tires Always check tire pressure before heading out. Correct tire pressure (which should be on the tire sidewall) ensures a safer and more efficient ride. Underinflation can damage rims and spokes, and overinflation can destroy the tire, especially if you hit a bump. Both can damage the tire and inner tube as well.

The Spokes Correctly tensioned spokes keep the wheel perfectly round. Poorly tensioned spokes can give your ride a wobble. This can damage the wheel, brakes, and the bike itself. Adjust spoke tension with a spoke wrench or take your bike to a bike mechanic for a checkup. (It's always good to take your bike in at least one a year for a professional tuneup.)



The Brakes With regular use, brake levers and cables can become slackened, which means weaker braking. That's the last thing you want if you need to stop in a pinch. On top of this, brakes and brake pads wear out, just like on motor vehicles, and need to be adjusted or replaced on occasion.

The Chain Give your chain, shifters, and derailleurs a regular once-over. The chain should be well-tensioned and clean, with only a light coat of lubrication to keep it running smooth and quiet. When you lift the chain up on the bottom run, there should be little give (no more than half an inch or so) before the rear derailleur cage begins to move forward. Any more and one bump on the road can knock the chain off the drivetrain. Or, if the chain is too tight, it can damage the gears.

Bicycle accidents are serious business. If you've been injured in an accident while on your bike, don't hesitate to call us at 817.775.5364 for a free consultation to learn about your legal options.

THE HIDDEN CENT

A History of Gas Prices and the 9/10 of a Cent

We all see it every time we pull up to the pump — the 9/10 at the end of every gas price. We see it, but we don't really think about it when we pay for our gas. When you see \$1.95 gas advertised at your favorite fill-up spot, the price is really \$1.96. There's a hidden cent. But why is it there?

This fraction of a cent is rooted in American history. In 1792, Congress passed the Coinage Act to standardize American currency. As part of the act, fractions of a cent were established. For instance, there was the 1/1,000 of a dollar, which is the equivalent of 1/10 of a cent. This was also called the "mill."

In the early days of America, the mill was a regular part of day-to-day transactions, but it was slowly phased out. It did, however, remain part of various types of utility billing (some electricity companies still use fractions of a cent), tax assessments, and investment stocks.

In the 1930s, the mill became a normal part of gas pricing. It all had to do with the Revenue Tax Act of 1932. This allowed for a federal excise tax on gas that could be added in fractions of a cent. In 1934, the average price of a gallon of gas was about 16 cents. It was more difficult to raise the price by a cent because people were more sensitive to a one-cent increase at that time.

For reference, 16 cents in 1934 is about \$3.13 today, when adjusted for inflation. Today, the average cost of a gallon of gas around the DFW metroplex is about \$1.89. The big difference, however, is that it's much easier to raise prices by a few cents today because it makes less of an impact.

There's a psychology to this pricing, too. In 1934, if you raised the price of gas by 1/10 of a cent, you could still market your gas at 16 cents, with the fraction tacked on. At a glance, it looked like nothing had changed. This is the same reason why many items' prices end in 99 cents. Most people make buying decisions based on the first number — not what comes after the decimal.

Eventually, it became easier for oil companies to raise gas prices and the federal government to raise taxes on gas as people got accustomed to it. Over time, ending the gas price with 9/10 became the norm, and now we're all used to it, so the hidden cent remains.



Texas-Sized LAUGHS



HOME COOKIN'



EASY DEVILED EGGS

Inspired by TasteOfHome.com

While the kids hunt for Easter eggs in the yard, whip up this easy deviled egg recipe for a hearty snack that's sure to satisfy any craving.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp dried parsley flakes
- 1/2 tsp dill weed
- 1/2 tsp fresh chives, minced
- 1/2 tsp ground mustard
- Salt, paprika, garlic powder, and pepper, to taste
- 12 large eggs, hard-boiled
- Fresh parsley, minced, and paprika for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine mayonnaise, milk, parsley flakes, dill, chives, mustard, salt, paprika, garlic powder, and pepper. Mix well and set aside.
2. Cut eggs lengthwise and remove yolks carefully to preserve egg whites.
3. In a small bowl, mash yolks.
4. Mix mashed yolks with mayonnaise mixture.
5. Spoon or pipe the mixture back into the egg whites.
6. Garnish with fresh parsley and paprika. Refrigerate before serving.