



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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- 1 The Stamina to Succeed
- 2 Fresh Starts for Seasoned Singles
The Art of Everyday Ingenuity
- 3 The Peace of Preparedness
Sizzling Chinese Pepper Steak With Onions
- 4 Create a Relaxing Day for Mom

A SIMPLE PLAN FOR MOTHER'S DAY GIVING MOM REST, FUN, AND KEEPSAKES

Mother's Day is one of those holidays that can sneak up on you. Many of us have had to Google Mother's Day ideas the night before and hope brunch will be enough. While you don't want to wait until the last minute to plan, you don't need to stress over the holiday.

If asked, many moms would probably say the same thing about what they want: a little rest, some help, and to feel like someone sees how much they do. One simple way to give Mom what she wants this year is to think about the day in three parts. Start with a gentle beginning, then pick one shared thing to do together, and finish with a small keepsake she can hold onto later.

The "soft landing" in the morning sets the tone. Some moms want to sleep in for an hour with zero kid noise. Others like a slow breakfast with everyone at the table. You don't need a perfect spread. Just some toast, fruit, and coffee (that she didn't have to make!) can go a long way. If she's tired, give her time to read, take a bath, or sit with a face mask while someone else handles dishes, pets, and doorbells.

Next comes the part you do together. For that, choose something she would enjoy doing, not just an activity that keeps the kids busy. If the weather is good, head outside for a picnic, hike, or family bike ride. Indoor activities can include a simple family game day, a movie marathon, or a family cooking class. Just be sure she's not the one left to clean up the mess!

For the keepsake, keep it personal. A handwritten note from the kids will mean much more than a scented candle. You can even turn it into a creative activity. Everyone could sit down together for a family scrapbooking session or a painting party. Another fun idea is to create a "reason why I love mom" jar filled with handwritten notes from family members. With a little planning and a focus on appreciation, you can make the day feel special without adding more work to her plate.



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The Mottley Law Firm

Fitness, Family, and Focus *A Spring Life Snapshot*

Is anyone else out there ready to get out and enjoy some long-overdue post-winter health and happiness?

As I write this article, the Mottley household is brimming with excitement. Our schedules are about to become very busy, with plenty of milestones that I'll get to in a minute. But to make sure I can embrace life to its fullest and get everything done, I need to do all I can to stay in shape ... especially with May being National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.



My son Andrew and me participating in a 10K race

Admittedly, I wasn't the most athletic guy growing up, but I still participated in sports as a kid. I played in Little League before playing JV basketball in high school, but baseball was my true passion. Unfortunately, being part of a graduating class of about 500 students made things highly competitive, and I never made the

teams (which was pretty crushing at the time, to be honest). Still, I enjoyed a good game of basketball or baseball whenever I could.

Eventually, these activities waned as I moved into my adult life, but I still work to keep fit. Running and occasional fits and spurts of weightlifting have been my go-to's in recent years, with the former taking center stage lately due to some recent problems with my shoulder. My son Andrew and I just completed the RVA Monument Avenue 10K on April 18.

Beyond being a great opportunity for physical activity and a unique experience with Andrew, the 10K run kicked off a full, deeply significant weekend for my family and me. The same day as the run, Andrew and I went to Charlottesville following the race for a round of golf before going to see Billy Strings perform at the University of Virginia later that evening. (We even had *fourth-row tickets*, an incredibly kind thank-you gift from a client for whom I settled a case.)

The following morning, I flew to Boston to catch up with my wife, Tricia, and my daughter, Sarah Ann, at the Boston Marathon. Sarah Ann is a serious runner who has reached what I would call the beyond-hobby stage, and she qualified to participate in this year's marathon. To say it was a memorable weekend would be an understatement. We proudly watched as Sarah Ann finished with an impressive time of 3:18:21.

And the hits keep coming. On May 11, our youngest child, Catherine, will participate in a



Sarah Ann's Boston Marathon finish

ceremony at the University of South Carolina, where she'll receive a stethoscope to officially mark her entry into the nursing program. It's a major accomplishment and turning point she's worked very hard to achieve, and we can't wait to share the moment with her.

Later that week, we're off to California to watch Sarah Ann receive her master's degree in architecture from UC Berkeley. From there, we'll spend 7-10 days celebrating her graduation and will likely spend some quality time together in Napa Valley.

Wow ... that's a lot of things scheduled within a short period, but I'm thrilled to experience them all. I'm also grateful to have a life and career that has blessed me with the chance to have these moments. I hope for the same for every client who asks for my help when unexpected circumstances steer them away from these gifts. Whether their dream is to run again or to embrace a loved one when they achieve greatness, my firm is here to do all we can to make those dreams possible and to bring wholeness and peace of mind when they become difficult to find.

No matter what your spring and summer plans entail, live them to the fullest. And if you can add some exercise along the way, all the better.

-Kevin Mottley

We Didn't Do It Alone!

In the April edition, I discussed how lawyers do a lot of free, pro bono work, and I gave as an example a fair housing case I worked on nearly 20 years ago. After it was published, I got a call from a lawyer friend of mine who reminded me that he and other lawyers at the firm I was with at the time also worked on that case. And he's exactly right. Numerous lawyers were involved in that case, and the firm was very supportive of our efforts, as all the good firms are. Let me take this opportunity to emphasize that whenever you see me or any other lawyer discuss a positive case result, the result is always due to the efforts of a team of people working together for a common goal, and that was certainly what happened in that fair housing case.

Strong Selves and Steady Hearts

NEW FRONTIERS FOR LOVE AFTER 50

If you thought asking someone to the school dance when you were growing up was intimidating, you haven't experienced *anything* until you've tried dating in your 50s!

All kidding aside, dating later in life doesn't need to be frustrating or wreak havoc on your sense of self. Here are three helpful reminders as you navigate new relationships.

Believe in your knowledge of you.

Whether you've experienced a divorce, the death of your partner, or just haven't found "the one" yet, entering the dating pool at this age can be daunting. However, you have more working in your favor than against you. After all, you've had decades to discover your wants, needs, and goals, as well as what worked and what didn't in past relationships. This

understanding of yourself is invaluable, as it will help you find a partner who aligns with who you are now and where you want to go in life.

Use your screen time selectively.

Attempting to find satisfying company on dating apps or social media can often feel like trying to catch the ocean in a cup. Instead of scrolling through a sea of posts, search for online communities that appeal more directly to your specific hobbies and interests. Interacting with others who share your enthusiasm for things that make you happy is a much better gateway to a new bond than hoping for the best through endless swiping.

A 'no' may have nothing to do with you.

Dating is a lot like applying for a new job. You may not land the position despite having an



exceptional résumé that earns you several interviews and a strong hunch that things were going well. At the end of the day, the company's decision to pass may have had more to do with its structure or budget than an issue with your qualifications or capabilities. While being turned down by a prospective partner may be heartbreaking at first, take solace in the fact that it obviously wasn't meant to be and move forward. And if there was a specific reason the other person decided not to pursue it further, consider it a learning experience to help guide your next connection.

With self-knowledge, selectivity, and a little patience, love in your 50s can be richer than ever!

Marketplace Mishaps and Hatchback Hassles



Lessons From a Furniture Fiasco

Life lessons can appear from anywhere ... even through Facebook.

My wife and I recently purchased a new home, and going through the move has required us to get rid of a lot of things. To find new homes for these items, we relied on two methods: consignment shops and Facebook Marketplace. I'm not a fan of the latter, but my wife likes it. Along the way, we were both surprised to learn how often people aren't prepared to take possession of things they have paid for.

Here's one example that makes me chuckle as much as shake my head. A lady who had purchased a desk and hutch from us showed up at our home one day to pick it up. She pulled up to our garage in a Subaru packed full of stuff ... along with a child in a child's seat.

Somehow, we were able to move around enough of her stuff to barely get the desk in there (even if the back hatch didn't close fully). Then, she said, "My husband has a truck, so he'll come back for the hutch."

Well, what *she* thought was a truck turned out to be a Honda Pilot. The hutch wouldn't fit inside, so he asked for my help getting it onto the roof.

"Are you sure this is a good idea?" I asked. Ultimately, he strapped it down on his roof and drove away.

How could this situation have been more convenient for everyone involved? Well, the husband and wife certainly could have confirmed whether their vehicles would have room for our desk and hutch (especially with a child in tow!) and made better arrangements in advance.

While this story may be humorous (and a bit alarming), it illustrates the importance of asking questions and considering things from different perspectives. That is exactly what we do every day at this law firm, and clients should always do the same. For example, when someone is involved in an automobile accident, they should prepare for potential legal ramifications by documenting as much as possible about the scene, the extent of damage, and the circumstances surrounding the crash.

Whether you're transporting furniture or working with me to shape your case for a jury trial, being prepared matters. Your peace of mind (and quite possibly your car) will be better off for it.

-Kevin Mottley

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IMAGINATION AND IMPACT

CREATIVITY ACROSS LIFE'S CHAPTERS

Life is never too busy to keep us from being creative.

I recently learned that National Creativity Day is celebrated on May 30. I'm looking forward to it, as it's a fantastic way for us to celebrate and reflect on how we use our imaginations in our everyday lives.

I've always thought of myself as a creative person, particularly in art and music. Those were two big interests of mine growing up, but I'm embarrassed to say I probably don't use those faculties as much as I should or as much as I used to. The time I spent painting in my late teens and early 20s was later devoted to raising a family and building a law firm, but I do still enjoy playing my mandolin now and then. Cooking and gardening also entered the picture, and both have been fun ways to keep my mind sharp as I test recipes and landscape ideas.

That said, my most significant creative sparks often occur during my practice of law. A few years ago, I was talking with the sister of a client who had suffered a traumatic brain injury in a tractor-trailer crash. The sister marveled at how smart, intelligent, and quick on her feet my client had been before her accident ... and how much her life had changed.



As an example, her sister told me that their father came home with a Rubik's Cube, which was all the rage at the time. My client, who was the youngest member of the family, was the only one who solved it! Unfortunately, she was no longer able to do something like that following her accident.

When I heard that story, my lightbulb went off, and my creative juices started flowing. We created a series of exhibits based on a Rubik's Cube analogy. We created visuals of a Rubik's Cube with all the colors harmonized, reflecting my client's pre-crash mindset and life experiences. We made others showing another Rubik's Cube, but this one was jumbled and disorganized, reflecting my client's daily experience after the crash. Ultimately, presenting her condition in this manner was both creative and effective in showing the jury what she had gone through.

Even if you don't paint, play an instrument, or need to present a case before a jury, the opportunities to be creative are everywhere. Embrace them as often as possible, on May 30 and always.

-Kevin Mottley



SIZZLING CHINESE PEPPER STEAK WITH ONIONS

INGREDIENTS

Steak

- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 lb beef strips (sirloin or rib eye)
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil, separated
- 1 large onion, sliced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Steamed rice or noodles

Sauce

- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp cornstarch

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together soy sauce, oyster sauce, ginger, garlic, and sesame oil.
2. Toss beef strips in marinade; let sit 10-15 minutes.
3. In a skillet over medium heat, heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil, then add sliced onions.
4. Sauté until soft, slightly caramelized; season with salt and pepper, remove from pan, and set aside.
5. In the same skillet, heat 2 tbsp vegetable oil over high heat.
6. Add marinated beef strips; stir-fry for 2-3 minutes until browned.
7. In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, hoisin sauce, rice vinegar, and cornstarch.
8. Pour sauce over beef and simmer until thickened.
9. Add sautéed onions back into pan; stir to combine.
10. Serve hot over steamed rice or noodles.