

MARCH 2022

OPENING



STATEMENTS

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317-934-9725 | INFO@RDLAWOFFICE.COM

FROM THE DESK OF **JOHN RAZUMICH**

MARCH 2022 HOLIDAYS

- March 1** - Mardi Gras Carnival (New Orleans)
- March 2** - Read Across America Day
- March 3** - National Anthem Day
- March 4** - Employee Appreciation Day
- March 5** - National Cheese Doodle Day
- March 6** - National Dentist's Day
- March 7** - National Cereal Day
- March 8** - International Women's Day
- March 9** - National Barbie Day
- March 10** - World Kidney Day
- March 11** - Promposal Day
- March 12** - National Girl Scout Day
- March 13** - Daylight Saving
- March 14** - National Pi Day
- March 15** - The Ides of March
- March 16** - National Panda Day
- March 17** - St. Patrick's Day
- March 18** - National Sloppy Joe Day
- March 19** - Certified Nurses Day
- March 20** - March Equinox
- March 21** - World Down Syndrome Day
- March 22** - National Goof Off Day
- March 23** - National Puppy Day
- March 24** - World Tuberculosis Day
- March 25** - National Tolkien Reading Day
- March 26** - Epilepsy Awareness Day – Purple Day
- March 27** - National Scribble Day
- March 28** - National Something on a Stick Day
- March 29** - Mom and Pop Business Owners Day
- March 30** - Doctors' Day
- March 31** - National Vietnam War Veterans Day



Lemon, lime, cherry, orange, strawberry, green apple, grape — what do these fruits have in common? Well, they're some of the most popular flavors of candy! Pick up any bag of generic candy, and you'll likely notice that there's at least red, green, orange, and/or purple pieces.

But did you know that spice candy used to be far more common than fruit candy? In fact, spice candies were more common all over the world. In many ways, America single-handedly popularized fruit-flavored candies across the globe.

Sugar and Spice — Almost Everything Nice

Candy, as we know it today, is a fairly recent invention. Refined sugar used to be expensive, and even rare, because the process of growing sugar cane (or sugar beets) and then refining it into sugar was extremely laborious. In fact, people considered nuts to be like candy or "sweets" in the early 1800s, since sugar consumption remained so low.

However, in America, we were a step ahead of the game. In 1864, the largest and most technologically advanced sugar refinery in the world opened in Williamsburg on Long Island. With improvements in manufacturing, the production of American sugar increased and drove down costs. That led to mass production of new candies that had sugar in them.

While chocolate bars and caramels already existed in the mid-1800s, cheap sugar brought new hard candies to the American diet. What did the world's first hard candies taste like? Besides a basic sugar flavor, those first candies were flavored with cinnamon, mint, clove, rose, lilac, and aniseed — no fruit. Most Americans hadn't grown accustomed to fruit flavors yet since fruit was a fairly rare delicacy to be enjoyed at home, much less to be added to candy.

That changed as the fruit industry developed, and the candy industry found itself growing alongside it.

Continued on Page 2 ...

The Rise of Fruit

In many ways, the availability of fruit in the United States was an incredible innovation. Although native to North America and abundant in the wild, strawberries used to be a very small fruit and certainly not a plant that would interest most farmers as a marketable product. However, a pioneering horticulturist named James Wilson developed a strawberry plant that grew larger fruit similar to the ones we know and love today. Suddenly, farmers started growing strawberries, and Americans could buy them more often in their local markets.

Similarly, the railroad allowed California orange farmers to ship their delicious produce to the rest of the country. Oranges were previously known as an exotic fruit from Spain, but now, any middle-class American could afford them! Thus, oranges became a symbol of how comfortable modern life had become.

Americans started eating more fruit, and they wanted to experience more fruit flavors. So, candy manufacturers found natural and artificial ways to develop fruit-like flavors.

Today, the fruit industry is constantly finding new ways to bring fresh fruits into the United States or to grow them within its borders. As new fruits — from kiwi to watermelon to blueberries (and much more) — have become available over the decades, some of the same fruit candy flavors have become popular.



Fruit candies have now become common not only in the United States but around the world. So, next time you eat a Jolly Rancher or fruit candy, know that you're partaking in America's cultural legacy!

THE WWII ASSASSINATION PLOT YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF *EXPLODING CHOCOLATE!*

Everyone has heard the phrase "death by chocolate" — especially applied to a restaurant's seven-tiered chocolate cake. But there's at least one person in history who took the saying seriously: Adolf Hitler.

According to Smithsonian Magazine, Hitler and his German forces once plotted to assassinate British Prime Minister Winston Churchill with ... an exploding chocolate bar.

The plan was to cover a small bomb with dark chocolate, wrap it in black and gold paper, and slip it into a snack basket in the British War Cabinet's dining room. When the prime minister unwrapped the bar, he'd have just seven seconds to react before the "treat" detonated and potentially turned the tide of World War II.

Fortunately, the British intelligence agency MI5 caught wind of the German plot and put a stop to it. More than 60 years later, the rest of the world found out about the exploding chocolate when a letter detailing the plot went public. It was sent on May 4, 1943, by MI5 intelligence chiefs Lord Victor Rothschild to the illustrator Laurence Fish. According to Smithsonian Magazine, the letter read:



Dear Fish,

I wonder if you could do a drawing for me of an explosive slab of chocolate. We have received information that the enemy are using pound slabs of chocolate which are made of steel with a very thin covering of real chocolate. Inside there is high explosive and some form of delay mechanism ... When you break off a piece of chocolate at one end in the normal way, instead of it falling away, a piece of canvas is revealed stuck into the middle of the piece which has been broken off and a ticking into the middle of the remainder of the slab.

As wacky as this assassination plot sounds, it's far from history's strangest. That crown might have to go to the CIA for its dozens of attempts to do away with the former Cuban dictator Fidel Castro. Those instruments included a poisoned cigar, explosive seashell, and fungus-laced diving suit.

According to CNN, Castro's former security service chief estimated he'd foiled no fewer than 634 assassination plots against the dictator. That makes exploding chocolate look quaint!

5 WAYS TO DEAL WITH ANNOYING ROBOCALLS

PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY AND KICK SCAMMERS TO THE CURB

According to the latest data, scammers and telemarketers make 1,528 robocalls to Americans every single second. No wonder they're driving us all crazy! Some of these calls are legitimate reminders about doctor's appointments and payment plans, but around 55% of them are just nuisances — and we can't rely on the government to stop them.

If you're sick of hearing about "your car's extended warranty" or the "student loans" you paid off 40 years ago, try these five tips to cut down on robocalls and outwit scammers.

1. Explore your carrier's free tools. AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon all offer services to cut down on scam calls. Some of them are free and/or come with your phone, but others you have to pay for or activate. If you have Verizon, for example, you can download the "Verizon Call Filter" app from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Visit your carrier's website or call them to learn about the tools they offer.

2. Download an ad blocker. For extra protection, you can download a separate ad blocker from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Hiya is a free app that will give you caller ID and block spam calls, and Nomorobo is an award-winning option that's free for landlines and costs \$1.99 per month for cellphones.

3. When in doubt, let it ring out. If you don't recognize the number calling, don't answer. You can always call back if they leave a legitimate voicemail.

4. Suspect spam?

Hang up. So, you accidentally answered a spam call. Whether it's a person or a robot on the line, hang up immediately! Even saying your name or the word "yes" could set you up for identity theft.



5. Handle voicemails with care. If you get a suspicious voicemail, never call the number or visit the website given by the caller. Instead, Google the company or agency they claimed to be with and call that number. If the real agency has no idea about the call, you've just escaped a trap.

By taking all five of these steps, you can protect yourself and your wallet from Ponzi schemes, identity thieves, and annoying telemarketers. For even more specific advice, visit AARP.com and search "The Definitive Guide to Reducing Robocalls."

Simple Bok Choy Chicken Soup

Inspired by [TheSpruceEats.com](https://www.TheSpruceEats.com)

Is the chill of winter lingering? A hot bowl of this Asian-inspired soup will warm you right up! Our recipe makes 4–5 servings.

Ingredients

- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 10 leaves bok choy, thinly sliced
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken

Directions

- In a medium saucepan, bring chicken broth to a boil.
- Stir in red pepper flakes, soy sauce, sesame oil, and garlic.
- Add bok choy leaves and rotisserie chicken. Simmer for 10 minutes or until the bok choy is dark green and tender.
- Enjoy with slices of your favorite whole-wheat bread!

TAKE A BREAK!



MAYBE YOU SHOULD

"SPRING FORWARD"
WITHOUT ME!

A photograph of a man lying in bed, looking tired. An alarm clock on the nightstand next to him shows the time as 2:11. The text "MAYBE YOU SHOULD" is at the top, and "SPRING FORWARD WITHOUT ME!" is at the bottom, both in white, bold, sans-serif font.



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317-934-9725

156 East Market Street, 13th Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

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I Don't Want to Be Like Mike

WHY ONE MAN SUED MICHAEL JORDAN FOR \$832 MILLION

Many people have been told they have a passing resemblance to a celebrity, and they usually have a funny story or two. To Allen Ray Heckard, his celebrity look-alike was no laughing matter. In 2006, he sued Michael Jordan for looking too much like him and ruining his life.

The amount of the lawsuit was \$832 million, and Heckard not only sued Jordan but also Nike, reasoning that the company helped Jordan achieve his incredible fame. The complaint argued that the resemblance to Jordan "has troubled Heckard's nerves" and being stopped by fans caused him emotional distress for over 15 years. He requested damages for defamation, permanent injury, and pain and suffering.

For someone tired of being "recognized," Heckard didn't shy away from media coverage. When asked how he arrived at the astronomical \$832 million lawsuit figure, he gave this much-shared (yet difficult to parse) answer: "Well, you figure with my age, and you multiply that by seven and, ah, then I turn around and, ah, I figure that's what it all boils down to." When asked why he felt the resemblance

to Jordan had affected his life so negatively, he could only answer, "I want to be recognized as me, just like Michael's recognized as Michael."

Funnily enough, most people didn't think Heckard and Jordan looked alike at all. While each had a bald head, mustache, and a gold earring, the similarities seemed to end there. Many news stories noted that, compared to Jordan, Heckard is 8 years older and 6 inches shorter.

One question reporters did not appear to ask was why Heckard felt that Jordan should be held personally liable for hundreds of millions of dollars simply for his natural appearance. Sadly, we will probably never know the answer because the case ended rather unceremoniously. After a few weeks, Heckard dropped the lawsuit. He never publicly shared why, but a Nike spokesperson was glad to speculate that Heckard "finally realized he would end up paying our court costs if the lawsuit went to trial."

In the end, many '90s kids would argue that Heckard was most guilty of looking a gift horse in the mouth. After all, there is no higher achievement than to "be like Mike."

