

MARCH 2020

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STATEMENTS

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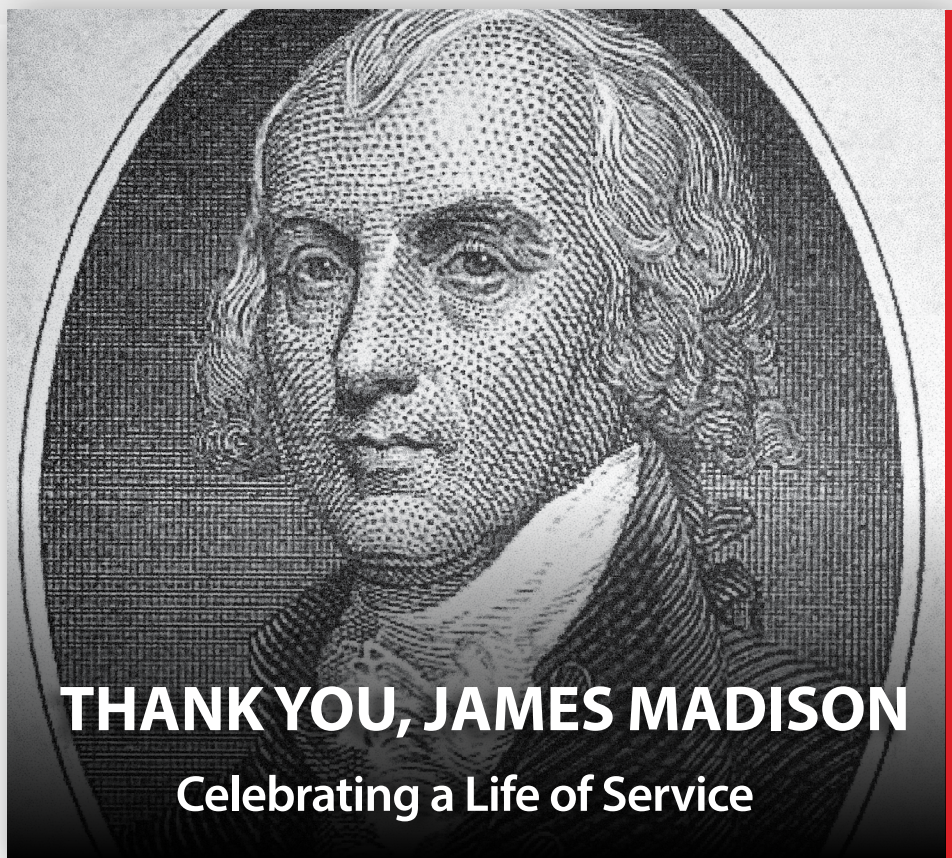
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FROM THE DESKS OF RAZUMICH + DELAMATER

It's hard to believe that it's ALREADY March! Where does the time go? By the time that you get to read this, the Firm will have already handled at least two (and possibly three) Jury Trials in 2020. Justice, it seems, never sleeps.

Along with March comes Spring Cleaning season. I have a policy of completely cleaning out my desk every December in order to start the new year fresh, and it's always interesting the things that you learn after decluttering like that. For example, it would seem that Keebler Fudge Stripe Cookies can stay fresh for a REALLY long time if you keep the package in a Ziploc bag.

Since many of you will be cleaning out your homes in the next month, why not also focus on cleaning up your history while you're at it? We spoke to several people late last year about expunging their records as part of our December offer of waiving filing fees, and while a number of people jumped at the savings at that time, many more indicated that they would wait on their tax refunds. New year, new season, new you without your past holding you back. We're ready when you are.



As a full-grown man, James Madison stood just 5 feet, 4 inches tall. He had a health condition that, while never diagnosed, bore a resemblance to epilepsy, and he weighed only 100 pounds. He was so soft-spoken that his speeches were often difficult to hear, and he was frequently described as shy and quiet.

Despite those qualities, Madison, whose birthday we celebrate on March 16, went on to become the fourth president of the United States. He held office for two terms, and, during that time, he helped establish America as a force to be reckoned with. For example, he led us through the War of 1812, which was our first war as an independent nation.

Today, Madison is most well-known for co-writing the U.S. Constitution. In fact, so

many of Madison's ideas made it into the document that he is widely credited with being the father of the Constitution. If it were not for Madison, the Constitution might have never been ratified.

To garner widespread support for the Constitution, Madison co-wrote 85 letters to the public with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay that explained the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution and defended its contents. Known as "The Federalist Papers," these letters are still celebrated as some of the most groundbreaking political philosophy ever published, and it is broadly accepted that without them, the Constitution would not have been sworn into law.

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Even with “The Federalist Papers” circulating, the Constitution was only ratified in Massachusetts, Maryland, and South Carolina under the assurance that amendments would soon be proposed that would provide additional protections. Tireless in his efforts, Madison went to work on the Bill of Rights, which he promptly wrote and passed into law.

Madison was an abolitionist, and although he did not free his own slaves or write the end of slavery into the Constitution, he helped lay the groundwork for ending slavery. In a historically groundbreaking move, Madison referred to slaves as people rather than belongings, which was remarkable since not many people were speaking, let alone thinking, in that way at the time.

On his birthday this year, Madison should be remembered not only as a man of great intellect and accomplishment but also as a man whose life was characterized by hard work and humility. With that in mind, he would not want his birthday to come and go without a nod to his wife, Dolley, born Dolley Payne Todd.



While Madison was described as shy and quiet, Dolley, who was 17 years his junior, was famous for being vivacious, loud, and well-loved by everyone. During Madison’s presidency, she hosted and entertained countless guests at the White House, where politicians from many different backgrounds and viewpoints gathered and socialized. Many political alliances and bridges were built under Dolley’s watch,

and, for this reason, she is often credited with defining the role of the first lady.

Many of the good aspects of America today can be traced back to the efforts of James Madison. On his birthday this year, let’s celebrate him by remembering the contributions he made to our government, our freedom, our justice, and the very fabric of our nation.

TAMA, THE CALICO

THE FIRST FELINE STATIONMASTER IN ALL OF JAPAN

During the mid-2000s, the Kishi Train Station in Japan began to deteriorate. By 2006, Kishi Station was left completely unstaffed because of low ridership and financial problems. However, one last resident still remained after everyone else was long gone: a black, white, and tan cat named Tama.

Tama first appeared at the station as a young cat in the late 1990s. She lived near the train station and would visit commuters daily to receive affection and the occasional treat. But, as it turned out, her continued visits to Kishi Station would end up playing a much bigger role for the station.

The same year it became unstaffed, residents living near the station asked the president of the Wakayama Electric Railway, Mitsunobu Kojima, to revive the station because the cat’s survival depended on it. It turns out Tama’s original owner had asked the railway workers

to care for her before he moved away — he couldn’t bear to take her from the station she loved to visit so much.

So, Kojima decided to go meet Tama. He liked her immediately and adopted her. A year later, Tama was officially named the Stationmaster of Kishi Station, the first cat stationmaster in Japan. To complete her look, Kojima gave her a small conductor hat to wear as she greeted commuters from her window perch inside the ticket gates.

As an official stationmaster, Tama became well known all across Japan and throughout the world. She appeared in the media and on promotional materials that soon brought much-needed foot traffic to Kishi Station. Thousands of tourists came rushing to Kishi to see Tama for themselves, ride the Tamaden carriage, and pick up Tama merchandise inside the station.



Tama brought joy to all commuters for the next several years before passing away in 2015. Nearly 3,000 people attended her funeral, and her legacy lives on. Tama’s successors continue as stationmasters: Nitama, who serves as Kishi stationmaster, and assistant Yontama at Idakiso, five stations away.

Tama’s friendly and loving nature impacted many people around her, and she will always be affectionately known as the cat who saved the Japanese train station.

STAYING STATESIDE FOR ST. PADDY'S?

CELEBRATE WITH THESE LITTLE-KNOWN FESTIVITIES

There's no place quite like Ireland on St. Patrick's Day. What was once a purely religious holiday to honor the legend of St. Patrick chasing all the snakes out of the country has turned into a global celebration. But if a trip to Ireland isn't in the budget, check out these three little-known stateside destinations that are just as festive.

SHORT AND SWEET IN ARKANSAS

Thanks to the clever thinking of some Irish friends meeting for a pint at a bar on one of the shortest streets in the world, Bridge Street in Hot Springs, Arkansas, the First Ever 17th Annual World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade will travel 98 feet once again this year. Don't assume the turnout isn't robust just because the distance is staggeringly low. The parade lasts for hours, drawing thousands of people to watch celebrities, musicians, bands, floats, and Miss Arkansas glide by. The event also features a Blarney stone kissing contest and a parade king and queen.

A LITTLE LUCK IN AMERICA'S HEARTLAND

O'Neill, Nebraska, is home to the world's largest shamrock and more unique St. Patrick's Day traditions. This Irish community doubles down on its heritage every March with a traditional parade, music, and Irish dancing. But the town also hosts a popular dodgeball tournament and donkey basketball. What could be better than pummeling your opponents in dodgeball and outpacing the competition while riding a donkey in the school gymnasium? Perhaps enjoying a pint or two with your teammates afterward. And O'Neill is just the spot to do it.

OHIO'S LITTLE PIECE OF IRELAND

You may not be able to fly to Ireland, but you can visit a little piece of it right in the U.S. Head to Dublin, Ohio, this St. Patrick's Day for a traditional celebration sure to put a wee bit o' pep in your step. Partake in a traditional Irish breakfast or enjoy a parade complete with



bagpipers and Irish dancers. Boasting one of the largest celebrations in the U.S., Dublin is an affordable alternative for those looking to celebrate the Irish way.

TAKE A BREAK!

You are only one decision away from a totally different life.

EASY IRISH SODA BREAD

Inspired by AllRecipes.com

Irish soda bread is a staple of many St. Patrick's Day celebrations, but it was born out of necessity for the impoverished citizens of Ireland way back when. Celebrate their ingenuity and grit with this easy, modern version.

Ingredients

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 tbsp white sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk, divided
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

Directions

1. Heat oven to 375 F, and lightly grease a large baking sheet.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and margarine.
3. Stir in 1 cup buttermilk and egg, and mix until dough comes together.
4. Knead dough on a lightly floured surface. Form dough into a round before placing it on baking sheet.
5. In a small bowl, combine melted butter and remaining 1/4 cup buttermilk.
6. Brush the raw loaf with this mixture and cut an "X" into the top.
7. Bake loaf for 45–50 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean after being inserted into center of loaf. You may need to continue brushing the loaf with the butter mixture while it bakes.



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DIGGING FOR THE TRUTH

FOIA LAWSUITS THAT CHANGED HOW AMERICANS PARTICIPATE IN DEMOCRACY

The Freedom of Information Act, commonly referred to as FOIA, has been a crucial part of the democratic system for decades. It was designed to improve public access to governmental records, but unfortunately, it doesn't always work as intended. In most cases, requests are only answered if a lawsuit is filed. Nevertheless, FOIA has had a crucial role in many high-profile legal cases. Here are a couple of the most significant ones in American history.

A JOURNALIST'S 16 YEARS IN COURT

California-based journalist Seth Rosenfeld has had some serious contention with the FBI. In 1985, he filed his first lawsuit against the FBI for ignoring his requests for information about the Berkeley protests of the 1960s. The case was eventually settled in 1996, and Rosenfeld was awarded \$560,000 in fees. In their settlement agreement, the FBI agreed to be more thorough with FOIA requests.

Rosenfeld filed a second lawsuit in 2007 accusing the FBI of withholding information during former President Ronald Reagan's presidency. Five years later, he was awarded \$479,459 in attorney fees. Rosenfeld is known for having some of the longest-pending FOIA requests and has received over 300,000 pages of FBI documents since the 1980s.

THE SCOMM SCANDAL

In a landmark FOIA settlement concluded in 2013, the federal government paid \$1.2 million to settle a suit brought by several civil rights groups over the Secure Communities (SCOMM) Immigration and Customs Enforcement program. The litigation exposed a plan to create a multi-agency database focused on collecting DNA, a person's gait, and iris scans. When evidence was uncovered during the litigation, governors of New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts tried to opt their states



out of the program, but the Department of Homeland Security determined SCOMM mandatory, according to the Center for Constitutional Rights. The case also changed how the government is required to identify, collect, and produce data for all FOIA requests.

Thanks to FOIA and these important cases, the people's right to government information (and honesty) will continue to progress in America's democracy.