



The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A.

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MINIMIZING LUCK

MANAGING RISK AND STRATEGY

Full disclosure: I am not much of a gambler. I prefer to compete in an arena I can control, one that considers skill, strategy, and preparation. July 17 is National Lottery Day, celebrating the miniscule, though enticing, chance of striking it rich. Including Florida, 45 states nationwide have some form of lottery, and Americans spend over \$100 billion on lottery tickets each year. I like an underdog as much as the next guy, but I do not like those odds. While I may occasionally play a game of chance, I would never hedge my professional success on luck nor rely on it long-term to help me get ahead. Sure, I have been lucky in a lot of ways. I was lucky to be born in America, where I am free to follow my dreams. I was also fortunate to have parents who raised me right. Not everyone is that lucky. I have no problem with people gambling casually, but those who jeopardize their financial futures for the slim chance of hitting the jackpot need a reality check. In my experience, luck is no substitute for hard work, preparation, and the appropriate amount of calculated risk.

FOLLY OF FORTUNE

By definition, luck is something you *cannot* control. You may have good luck, bad luck, or some mixture of both at any given moment. It is not a factor you can effectively anticipate, mitigate, or maximize — it simply *is*. If you rely purely on luck to make a fortune and hit it big, you will *very likely*

end up bitterly disappointed. While I may *hope* for good luck, I prefer to focus on things I can exert some control over.

RISK AND REWARD

I mentioned earlier that I partially rely on calculated risks to get ahead professionally. While it may seem like taking a risk is like a gamble, your efforts, diligence, and planning can help tip the scales in your favor. During the pandemic, I took risks by retaining my workforce and hiring new talent. I was banking on the lockdown easing and business recovering, and it turns out that I was right. The risks I took were beneficial not just to me but to my employees as well. I turned a grave situation into a professional renewal. But that was not a pure gamble: My decisions, planning, and knowledge all played a part in making that risk pay off.

PLANNING AHEAD

If you are fed up with waiting on luck to propel you forward, work harder to maximize your odds of success. Whatever enterprise you choose, proper preparation will serve you well. Accumulating the necessary knowledge to anticipate and handle the myriad of potential problems that come your way is another surefire way to stack the odds. Rather than making luck the focal point of your long-term plans, focus on yourself and your achievements to help you get ahead.

"In my experience, luck is no substitute for hard work, preparation, and the appropriate amount of calculated risk."

*Marc L.
Shapiro*



LIGHTS, CAMERA, CASH Why Real Money Can't Take Center Stage

Have you ever wondered how moviemakers can afford to blow up piles of money on the big screen? It turns out that it's tricky, as the government has a set of strict rules to follow when studios feature U.S. currency on screen. So, roll out the red carpet because we're about to explore the laws of prop money.

IDENTICAL BILLS ARE ILLEGAL.

Prop money can't look identical to actual bills because of concerns about whether it could be circulated to the public and used. This happened after a "Rush Hour 2" scene where they blew up billions of dollars in prop money. Extras took home some of the fake cash and tried to use it in Las Vegas. The Secret Service got involved immediately, shutting down the shoot and confiscating the bills. If the money is a replica, it must be either 75% smaller or 150% larger than real bills. One of the most common methods studios use is printing only one side of the fake money. The design can also be altered slightly, like changing the shading or picture.



REAL CASH CAN'T BE DESTROYED.

Even though blowing up or burning money on camera can pump up the action for the audience, legal tender **cannot** be destroyed in movies. Anyone can be charged with a federal crime, punishable by 10 years in prison and fines for destroying money. Only the Federal Reserve has that power. Technically, it's illegal to even flatten a penny.

YOU CAN'T PRINT MONEY.

Real currency is printed on a unique blend of cotton and linen available only to the U.S. government. Prop money can't feel like the real deal. It has to be on paper and printed at a lower resolution. Robert De Niro didn't like how the prop money felt in his hands while filming "Goodfellas." To get around it, the prop master withdrew money from his bank account for De Niro to use. At the end of each scene, no one could leave until all the money was counted and returned.

So, next time one of your favorite movie characters has cash to burn, remember, those are fake bills in the flames!

Unpacking the Personal Injury Surge

Why Cases Are Piling Up in Florida

You may have heard that people filed more personal injury cases filed in Florida last year than in any other state in the country. Not just a *few* more, either — Florida had over 1,200% *more* personal injury cases per capita than the national average. While studies show that Florida's injury rate is about 9% higher than the national average, that far from makes up for the discrepancy on its own. In my opinion, the true culprit is House Bill 837 (HB 837), which Florida's Senate passed and came into effect in March of last year, and I will explain why.

WHAT'S IN THE BILL?

Many things about this bill affect how our state handles personal injury cases. It shortens the statute of limitations for negligence cases from four years to two, meaning victims have *less* time to file suit and seek justice for their injuries.

It completely changes how the state views negligence, moving us from a pure comparative negligence system to a modified one. This means that a plaintiff who is found to be even 51% at fault for their injuries may not recover damages from a defendant. It also repeals the provision that provided attorney fees for plaintiffs who obtained a favorable judgment against their insurer. All in all, it is a radical alteration of the status quo and has enormous ramifications for victims in personal injury cases.

WHY THE UPTICK IN CASES?

Given how much the Florida Senate bill changes personal injury cases, it should be no surprise that last year saw a massive influx of cases filed. All personal injury lawsuits filed *before* HB 837 went into effect were grandfathered in — meaning they were subject to the *old* laws, not



the new ones. This meant the plaintiffs in those cases could expect more favorable conditions if their cases went to trial and higher payouts from the insurance companies. Now that this bill has been in effect for some time, I expect the rate of personal injury cases filed in Florida will diminish *significantly*, and it may even fall below the national average for a time.

EXCEPTIONAL ADVOCACY

OUR SERVICE EARNS GLOWING REVIEWS

"I worked with Katie from the Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro. She was very professional and made my ugly experience as pain-free as possible. She communicated with me at every step of the process, answered my every question, and guided me gracefully through these uncharted waters. Thank you, Katie!"

-Mark S.

"I would like to take the time to thank the entire team for winning my case with exceptional expertise. They fought long and hard to ensure my case was settled in a timely manner and got the job done without any doubts."

-Christine S.

"They go above and beyond, making sure the client is the top priority at all times. Special thanks to Katie and Patrick for handling my case with compassion and making sure I understood the whole process. Hands down, the best of the best."

-Maricela R.



Ingredients

- 1 lb pizza dough
- 1/4 cup pesto
- 1/3 cup shredded quesadilla cheese
- 10 thin slices of zucchini
- 10 thin slices of summer squash
- 2 mini bell peppers, thinly sliced
- 1 thin slice of red onion, diced
- 1 strip cooked bacon, chopped

Butter Glaze (optional)

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp steak seasoning

Directions

1. Preheat grill to high heat on one side.
2. Reduce the flame on half of the grill burners to low.
3. Roll out pizza dough into a circle. Place dough on the grill over high heat.
4. Close the cover and let dough grill for 1–3 minutes until bottom is slightly cooked and shows char marks.
5. Use tongs to flip crust over and move it to the low-heat side.
6. Brush dough with pesto, sprinkle with cheese, and evenly distribute veggies and bacon.
7. Grill for about 3 minutes until cheese is melted; then carefully remove.
8. Optional: Combine butter and seasoning. Brush crust edges with butter glaze and place pizza in broiler until golden.

Word Search

P	G	Y	R	R	E	H	C	F	A	K	F	E	D	U
A	U	B	Q	H	Z	T	D	F	I	V	C	T	H	L
D	U	A	A	Y	O	V	Q	B	O	N	R	W	E	L
D	M	X	L	R	Y	P	A	U	E	A	F	T	N	I
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Q	I	S	T	N	K	S	H	G	F	V	I	R	T	I
F	U	I	B	H	V	B	N	X	X	P	H	P	I	S
G	C	B	P	U	V	K	T	U	L	A	E	Y	U	F
P	F	E	A	D	N	U	S	H	S	H	X	B	K	Z

ALIEN	FLAG	PATRIOTIC
BALLPARK	INDEPENDENCE	SUNDAE
CHERRY	ORCHID	SUNSCREEN
FIRECRACKER	PADDLEBOARD	TRAMPOLINE



Inside ⇄

Why Luck Can't Be Relied Upon
Page 1

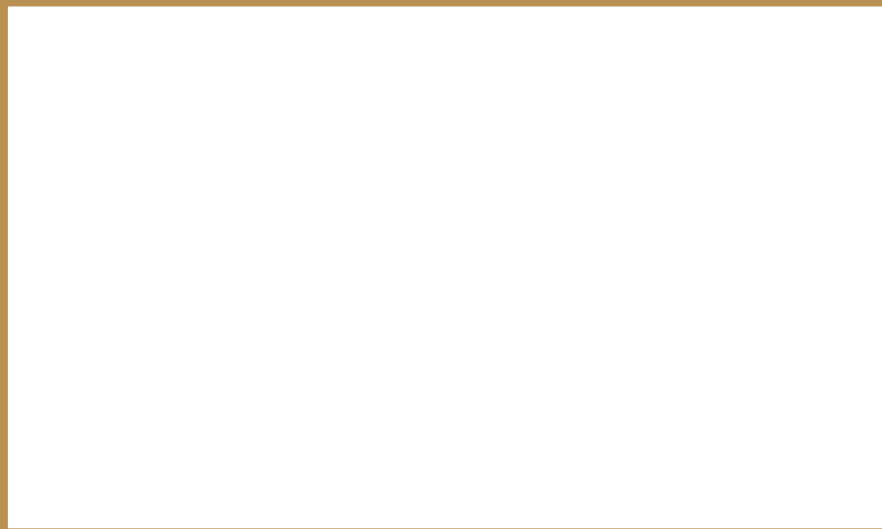
The Surprising Rules of Movie Currency

A Look at Florida's Personal Injury Boom
Page 2

What Our Clients Are Saying

Summer Pizza
Page 3

The True Story Behind the Invention of Ice Cream
Page 4



WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

TRACING THE HISTORY OF ICE CREAM

While fables exist of Marco Polo returning from his adventures in the Far East with a recipe closely resembling modern-day sherbet, that was *not* the inspiration for the treat we're exploring here. The history of America's favorite dessert is as varied as a cone of Neapolitan ice cream!

BEGINNINGS IN EUROPE

While people have enjoyed iced desserts for thousands of years, sources tell us that the origin of ice cream dates back at least *four centuries*, with written records from 1600s Naples boasting that everyone in the city was born with

the gift of making sorbet. While this was similar to the dessert we enjoy today, it was still quite different. A typical 18th-century ice cream maker was the *sorbetiere*, a bullet-shaped pewter mold filled with cream or custard, immersed in a salt and ice slush, and twisted back and forth with a handle on the lid. Every few minutes, you had to remove the lid and scrape away at the sides to keep it from freezing into a hard block, making it a labor-intensive process.

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC

Our favorite treat likely made its way across the pond sometime in the early 18th century. Our first president, George Washington, was an ice cream fan. In 1784, presumably as a reward for winning the Revolutionary War, he bought a mechanical ice cream maker for his home in Mount Vernon. However, until refrigeration was invented and homemade ice became accessible to the masses, the dessert remained a rare delicacy reserved for the wealthiest Americans. However, by the 1940s, ice cream production flourished, and ice cream shops popped up just about everywhere. The dessert has remained popular ever since, with the average American eating roughly 20 pounds of ice cream yearly!