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FEBRUARY 2020

THE HERRMAN HERALD

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CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF BLACK AMERICANS

February is Black History Month. It's a month that recognizes the countless men and women who helped change the American cultural, social, and scientific landscape. Black history is American history. The two are inexorably linked. This month, we take a look at the history behind Black History Month and its centurylong history.

Black History Month itself can be traced back to 1915 in Chicago. It was the 50th anniversary of emancipation by the state of Illinois. For reference, the Emancipation Proclamation was delivered by President Abraham Lincoln on Jan. 1, 1863. Illinois put its own emancipation into effect in 1865.

In 1915, many thousands of African Americans made the journey to Chicago to attend an exhibition that chronicled the many achievements that African Americans had made since slavery had been crushed only 50 years before. It was a three-week celebration.

One of the attendees, Carter G. Woodson, was in awe of everyone in attendance, not to mention all the achievements that were being shared at the event. Following the exhibition in Chicago, Woodson helped found the now-called Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Woodson's goal was to bring the achievements of black Americans to a wider stage.

This led to the creation of The Journal of African American History in 1916. Woodson and his colleagues used this journal to publish those achievements along with insights from other black Americans from around the country. Woodson challenged others to follow in his footsteps.

And they did. In 1924, "Negro History Week" was founded. This eventually became known as "Negro Achievement Week." It was part of greater outreach in many communities around the country to bring awareness of black achievement.

Woodson and others wanted more, however. Through the 1920s and '30s, black culture grew in the U.S. At the same time, more black history was being taught in schools, even as many blacks and black communities faced oppression, especially in the Southern states.

As the Civil Rights Movement took hold in the '50s and '60s, more people made even greater strides. More people were learning about black history, and more black Americans where they had come from and looking to their African ancestors for inspiration. During this time, more people were also celebrating Black History Month — which was quickly replacing the idea of "Negro History Week."

It wasn't until 1976 that Black History Month was finally recognized nationally. It was 50 years after Carter G. Woodson made strides to change the American cultural landscape. Today, he and countless others are credited with having a major positive impact on American culture. It's richer for their efforts.

As we round out the month, we do want to mention Valentine's Day, too. That is to say, we want to share our love with our clients! Our clients are our No. 1 priority, and we're here every step of the way. We're here to not only handle your car accident cases and other injury cases, but we're also here to make sure you get back pay on wages you may have lost following an accident or to make sure your medical bills get covered.

Every case is different and every client has different needs. It's always been our goal to make sure every aspect of a victim's life is taken care of so they have less to worry about. When you have less to worry about, you can focus more on recovery and getting back on your feet. We appreciate the trust you put in us to handle your case. You mean the world to us, and we only want you to have the best!

-Greg Herrman

CREATE YOUR OWN ODYSSEY

MYTHICAL ADVENTURES AWAIT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

One of the oldest stories in Western literature is Homer's "The Odyssey." This epic poem tells the story of Odysseus and his long journey home after the Trojan War. While Odysseus' travels were fraught with mythical monsters and magic, many of the places he visited are said to be inspired by real islands in the Mediterranean. Even today, travelers flock to these islands looking for peace, adventure, and epic stories of their own.

Sicily, Italy

One of the most popular stories in "The Odyssey" is the tale of Odysseus rescuing his crew from Polyphemus, a man-eating Cyclops. It's said that Polyphemus made his home on what is now modern-day Sicily. Fortunately, there are no Cyclopes in Sicily today; there are only cultural festivals, world-class golf courses, and delicious food.

Gozo, Malta

While Odysseus' journey was perilous, he did enjoy one peaceful stop. Odysseus spent seven years on the mythical island of Ogygia, home of the nymph Calypso.



Historians suspect that Ogygia was Gaudos, now modern-day Gozo, Malta. Gozo is home to the Ġgantija temples, which are older than the Egyptian pyramids. In addition to exploring its archeological marvels, Gozo's visitors can also enjoy snorkeling, horseback riding, and other memorable adventures.

Ithaca, Greece

If you want to chart your own Odyssey, make your final stop Odysseus' home, the island of Ithaca. Covered in lush greenery and quaint villages, Ithaca is a wonderful place to relax at the end of your trip. Visitors can enjoy their morning coffee by a seaside cafe before lounging on a secluded beach for the rest of the day. It's no wonder why Odysseus fought so hard to get back to Ithaca!

With dozens of other islands to explore, the Mediterranean is the perfect place to plan your own odyssey — minus the mythical monsters, of course.

STEALING MISS HELEN

'OCEAN'S 3' ATTEMPT A HIGH-STAKES HEIST

On a hot summer day in late July 2018, three people entered Miss Helen's home, forcibly removed her, put her in a stroller, and ran toward their getaway vehicle. This might sound like a typical kidnapping story, but Miss Helen is no ordinary person. She is a 16-inch horn shark living at the San Antonio Aquarium.

Fortunately, their fishy behavior didn't go unnoticed, and someone alerted the aquarium staff. One perpetrator drove away with Miss Helen in tow, but the other two were stopped by aquarium staff, later confessing to their involvement. Thanks to some observant witnesses and aquarium surveillance, police were able to identify the third thief and obtain a warrant to search his house. As it turned out, he had an extensive aquarium in his home and possibly hoped to add Miss Helen to his collection. After being identified, Miss Helen was returned home safely.

The aquarium staff was grateful to have Miss Helen back unharmed, despite her ordeal. "She's a tough little horn shark, I'll tell you that," affirmed Jamie Shank, the assistant husbandry director at the aquarium.



No Minor Crime

While many animal lovers might disagree, animals are considered personal property, so stealing them is a crime of theft, not kidnapping. The penalties for stealing animals vary depending on each state's laws, and some states have specific laws regarding animal theft.

In Texas, larceny law designates the theft of property valued between \$1,500-\$20,000 as a felony. In the case of Miss Helen, who's valued by the aquarium at \$2,000, the thieves committed a felony. Also, transporting certain animals requires special permits, which led to additional charges against the three thieves.

The Animal Welfare Act, which was adopted in 1966, is the only federal law that regulates the treatment of animals in research, exhibition, transport, and by dealers. Interestingly, it only applies to warm-blooded animals, so if Miss Helen had needed further protection, she would be left out in the cold.



TESTIMONIALS

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT



"Herrman & Herrman care about their clients and they really do put their clients first. Donna Rosales gave me great advice. The staff is so knowledgeable and polite. They also have an amazing holiday commercial. Way to go! Herrman & Herrman will always be my first choice."
-Lisa Mendez

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Self-Driving Cars and Accidents — Who's to Blame?

Self-driving cars may be less prone to accidents, but they are not necessarily safer. So, here's the question many people have: Who takes the responsibility for crashes involving autonomous cars?

Tesla, Uber, and Google are driving efforts to advance the technologies of autonomous cars, which are still in early development, even though these companies have products on the road right now. The safety of people around the vehicle has become a concern, yet the great support for the push of the advancement of technology still thrives.

The development of autonomous cars has promised safer roads, as these cars aren't affected by human error and don't suffer from conditions like fatigue, illness, stress, or driving under the influence.



Waymo, a company that contributes to the self-driving technology, predicted that autonomous cars would be available for purchase in 2018. Technically, this has come to pass — self-driving vehicles are available in some regions in limited numbers. Texas is one of the regions approved for self-driving cars. It's a region where crashes involving these cars have occurred.

The irony here is that the autonomous car technology touted for improved safety by its manufacturer has not lived up to expectations.

In 2016, the federal government rolled out its first policy for automated vehicles. The policy does not delve into the details of manufacturing but outlines a safety checklist for the manufacturers to adhere to.

Additionally, some state laws have created guides for the manufacturers to follow. Well-known guidelines involve the test cars having standard vehicle registration and following approved routes with police escorts. However, none of the laws place any proactive emphasis on the protection of human lives.

With recurring accidents, lawmakers are not yet making tangible laws regarding self-driving vehicles in Texas.

Another potential situation worth taking into consideration is that when filing claims against these companies, victims might face stumbling blocks due to the lack of proper laws about autonomous vehicles.

Regardless, Texas might see more lawsuits filed against the manufacturers of these vehicles and the situation concerning casualties involving these self-driving vehicles won't see any improvement if appropriate laws are not put in place.

MEMES



EASY SHRIMP SCAMPI

Make date night simple with this easy shrimp scampi recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- * 4 tbsp butter
- * 4 tbsp olive oil
- * 1 tbsp minced garlic
- * 1 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- * 1/2 tsp oregano
- * 1/2 cup dry white wine
- * 1/4 cup lemon juice
- * 8 oz cooked linguine
- * 1/4 cup parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. In a skillet over medium heat, melt 2 tbsp of butter with 2 tbsp of olive oil. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes.
2. Add shrimp and oregano, stirring frequently until shrimp is pink. Remove shrimp from skillet.
3. Add wine and lemon juice to skillet and bring the mixture to a boil.
4. Stir in remaining butter and olive oil and cook until butter is melted.
5. Add cooked shrimp to skillet and cook for 1 minute, stirring occasionally.
6. In a serving bowl, top cooked linguine with shrimp mixture. Garnish with parsley and serve.

Inspired by The Blond Cook

