



FORGING CONNECTIONS

POWER OF THE PEN IN A DIGITAL AGE

In a random corner of my basement, I recently found a box of old handwritten letters and cards from the 1980s and 1990s. Opening that box and seeing all those old cards and notes flooded my mind with family memories.

In one cream-colored envelope was a note written in a scrawl that I immediately recognized as my grandmother's handwriting. Reading her handwriting was always a challenge for me, but once I took the time to read it, I realized it was likely the last card she wrote me before she died.

That trove of old cards reminded me of a lesson I learned as a child that still sticks with me today: Always send birthday cards to people you care about. Our parents taught my brother and me very early to honor family birthdays. My mom kept a weekly desk calendar on the kitchen counter in whatever home she was in. We would go through it each year and write our loved ones' birthdays. As dates bearing the names of Grandma, Grandpa, and other family members rolled around, all four of us would sign the birthday card.

By my early teens, I had learned everybody's birthday. I knew my grandfather's and my brother's were in February, Mom's and mine were in May, Grandma's was in June, and Dad's was in September. For me, the ebb and flow of those birthdays marked the seasons of our lives.



Today, our phones remind us of special dates. I admit I was really happy when electronic organizers came out, and I didn't have to write everybody's birthday on a paper calendar each year in January. Digital technology, no question, has made record-keeping easier.

Still, I've carried our family birthday card tradition forward. When a family birthday is coming up, I always talk about it with my three children and have them sign the birthday cards. Even though we have an electronic calendar in the kitchen, if you ask one of our kids who has the "next" birthday in the family, they can always tell you (depending on when this newsletter lands in your mailbox, it's either my uncle or me as the next birthday on the list).

Through the years, my birthday card tradition has expanded beyond my family. In law school, I had a friend I sent birthday cards for years — for so long that he started kidding me. "I guess once a person gets on your birthday card list, they're on it until they die?" he asked.

"Yes, that's pretty much the case," I said. "Until you die or I die — one of the two."

As my biological family has grown, so has my law firm family, and if I know their birthday, I try to make sure to send a handwritten card to them. My notes are usually brief, but I hope it brightens someone's day to receive a handwritten birthday card. Aside from my law school friend, I've only had one person ask me to take them off the list, saying paper cards harm the environment. Usually, people just email me saying, "Thank you for remembering my birthday."

A personal handwritten card has become rare. We all get hundreds of emails a day, and most of them wind up in the digital trash. But your mailbox at home is probably a lot lighter and doesn't contain many quality items. To me, receiving a birthday card in the mail is a warm reminder of our human connection. In a digital world, that analog piece helps us stay grounded. You can put it in a box and keep it.

After discovering that box of old cards in my basement, I was worried a flood might hit one day and ruin all of its contents — including the note from my grandma. So, I bought a plastic box to store them. The enduring value of those paper cards and the human bonds they memorialize make them so important, and I want to protect that.

- Andrew M. Ayers

A Legacy of Resilience and Brilliance

MARIE CURIE'S DEDICATION TO SCIENCE

Marie Curie, born in 1867 in Warsaw, Poland, left an undeniable mark on the scientific world. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only person to receive Nobel Prizes in two scientific fields. Her groundbreaking work in physics and chemistry reshaped our understanding of the universe at large and paved the way for future generations of women in science.

Born Marya Skłodowska, she was the daughter of teachers and was curious from a young age. She worked as a governess for her sister as she pursued her doctoral career in Paris. She was determined to channel her curiosity into higher education, though women were not encouraged to attend school, especially in science. But in 1891, she followed her sister and moved to Paris to attend school in Sorbonne, where she met and married Pierre Curie, a fellow scientist who became a lifelong collaborator.

In 1903, she won her first Nobel Prize alongside her husband and Henri Becquerel for their research on radioactivity. The recognition became historic, not just for Curie but for all women. This win challenged the prevailing belief that women

couldn't be real scientists. It was the first of many accomplishments to improve gender equality for the masses.

Madame Curie, unfortunately, lost her collaborator and husband in a road accident in 1906. She took her late husband's position as chair of the physics department at the Sorbonne and continued as a single mother of two daughters. Just five years later, in 1911, Curie secured her second Nobel Prize, this time in chemistry. She discovered radium and polonium, two elements that significantly advanced our understanding of radioactivity, further cementing that women could succeed in science.



Her extensive exposure to radiation throughout her career took a heavy toll on Curie's health. She passed away from leukemia in 1934 after helping allied efforts in the First World War. Her pioneering spirit, dedication to research, unyielding perseverance, and intellect continue to inspire countless scientists today, especially women in STEM. Madame Curie will always be remembered as a symbol of scientific excellence and the relentless pursuit of knowledge for the greater good.

Dialing for Dollars

Wannabe Bank Robber Calls Ahead, Orders Cash to Go

Any bank robber knows you have to hurry through a heist to escape. A crook in Connecticut tried a novel time-saving technique: calling ahead.

Taking a cue from the take-out food craze, the wannabe bank robber called a bank in Fairfield, Connecticut, and demanded that \$100,000 in large bills be prepared for him with no dye packs in the bag. If the orders were not carried out, the caller told the employee, "there will be a bloodbath."

Fairfield cops, who thought they'd seen it all, were dumbfounded. "You can't make this stuff up," said a spokesman for the Fairfield Police Department. Robbers have tried many routes when attempting to rob a bank, including entering the drive-through lane and terrorizing tellers through the window. But, "I've never had somebody call ahead and say, 'Get the money, we're coming,'" said a detective in the Fairfield case.

In taking advantage of the telephone warning, the police were already at the scene when the robbers arrived. "I would classify these individuals as 'not too bright,'" the police spokesman said.

The employee who answered the robber's call immediately hung up and called 9-1-1. The thief's accomplice, a minor, was

already inside the bank when the managers initiated a lockdown. The accomplice passed the teller a note and collected about \$900, but police stopped him as he left the bank. The fleeing accomplice was undoubtedly disappointed when the bag exploded in dye after throwing it on the ground. (Bank employees had disregarded the robbers' phone order that no dye packs be tucked in with the cash. You just can't get good service these days.)

The accomplice and the robber who placed the call, who had been sitting in a car nearby, were both arrested at the scene without incident. The adult suspect, Albert Bailey, was on probation for a different bank hold-up several years earlier. Both were charged with first-degree robbery and threatening in the first degree.



TAKE A **BREAK**



PARENTING WITH EMPATHY

The Gentle Parenting Philosophy

Parenthood is the greatest challenge many people will ever face, and raising children today is tougher than ever before in the technology-laden and constantly shifting state of the world. There are many parenting methods, and the latest viral one, gentle parenting, deserves a closer look. This parenting philosophy focuses on a strong parent-child relationship, offering a compassionate alternative to traditional physical disciplinary methods.

Gentle parenting emphasizes building a deep, intentional understanding of a child's needs and the emotions that stem from them. Rather than punishing a child for acting out, gentle parents encourage their children to voice their concerns so they can get to the root of challenging emotions. They view behavioral challenges as opportunities for connection and growth instead of corrections to be made. Active listening, open communication, and constructive problem-solving foster a positive environment where children feel valued and understood.

This empathy doesn't mean that children can mistreat parents, either. It's still important to set boundaries. Instead of strict rules supported by physical punishment, gentle parenting invites parents to collaborate with their children on decision-making. Involving children in discussions about expectations and consequences will ensure they understand the reasoning behind your rules and what breaking them means. This can encourage children to feel empowered and respected in the discipline process.

At its core, the most important aspect of gentle parenting is rejecting traditional punishments. Gentle parenting is about teaching children appropriate behaviors through positive reinforcement and intentional understanding of emotions — inspiring good behavior by acting as a positive example rather than by fear of punishment.

By prioritizing empathy, open communication, and nonviolent discipline, you can raise children who are able to recognize, inspect, and voice their emotions in a peaceful manner. As parents embrace these principles, they contribute to the development of emotionally secure, confident, and well-adjusted children who will grow into great global citizens.



Grilled Red Curry Beef Satay With Peanut Sauce

Inspired by StarTribune.com

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb flank steak
 - 1/2 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 - 2 tbsp lime juice
 - 1–3 tbsp Thai red curry paste
 - 1 tbsp fish sauce
- For sauce:*
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 - 1–2 tbsp Thai red curry paste
 - 1 tbsp brown sugar
 - 1 tbsp fish sauce
 - 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
 - 1 tbsp lime juice

Directions

1. Freeze flank steak for 30 minutes. Cut crosswise, against the grain, into thin slices.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together coconut milk, lime juice, curry paste, and fish sauce. Add steak and toss to coat. Cover and chill for 8 hours.
3. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine coconut milk, curry paste, brown sugar, and fish sauce. Bring to a gentle boil for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add peanut butter and stir until well blended. Remove from heat and add lime juice.
4. Thread the marinated meat onto 12 long skewers. Grill until beef is medium rare, 1–2 minutes per side.
5. Transfer satay to a platter and serve with peanut sauce.



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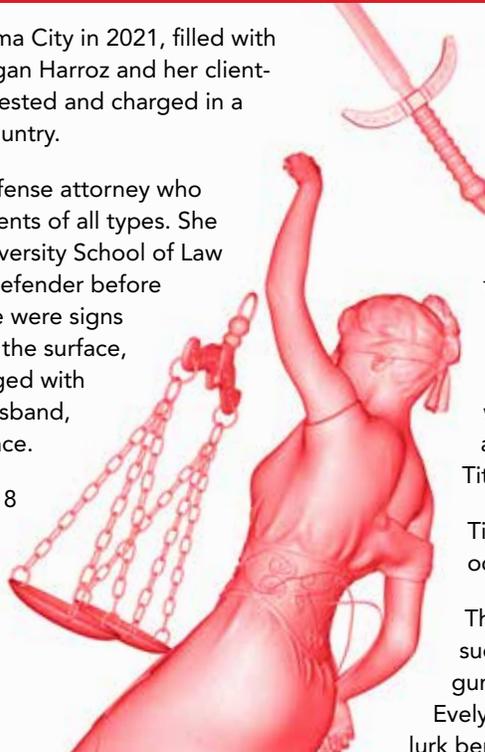
Promising Career Allegedly Upended by Secret Love

A chilling story unfolded in Oklahoma City in 2021, filled with passion, betrayal, and murder. Keegan Harroz and her client-turned-lover, Barry Titus II, were arrested and charged in a triple homicide that shocked the country.

Harroz was a renowned criminal defense attorney who had a compassionate touch with clients of all types. She graduated from Oklahoma City University School of Law and worked as an assistant public defender before starting her own firm in 2014. There were signs of something darker swirling under the surface, though. In May 2014, she was charged with the domestic assault of her then-husband, allegedly kicking him twice in the face.

She began to represent Titus in 2018 on drug, firearms, and domestic assault and battery charges. She began dating Titus shortly after.

In October 2018, Titus was arrested for domestic assault. Two months later, according to the criminal complaint, Harroz used



another client to plant a bag of "methamphetamine" (it was sugar) at the home of the victim, Tiffany Eichor, 43, who lived with her parents, Jack and Evelyn Chandler. The Chandlers found the bag and called the police; then, they installed security cameras.

On Sept. 6, 2019, Harroz and Titus allegedly drove to the Chandler home near Oklahoma City. They allegedly cut the electricity and phone lines and broke in. The couple then went on a rampage, shooting each member of the family as they ran. Just days after the murders, Harroz's brother turned over an AR-15 rifle to police, stating that the gun was "involved in a triple homicide." The gun was traced to an Oklahoma man who said he'd sold the gun to Harroz and Titus, according to police.

Titus and Harroz are still in jail; their trials are expected to occur sometime in 2024.

The larger community is still grappling with the aftermath of such a crime, many missing the family who was senselessly gunned down. The tragic murder of Tiffany Eichor and Jack and Evelyn Chandler is a reminder of the potential darkness that can lurk beneath seemingly ordinary lives.