



A Monthly Publication of BENGGLASSLAW
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Image credit: Ronco

Ron Popeil was well known as a pioneer in the infomercial industry

BUSINESS LESSONS

From America's Greatest Salesman



By Ben Glass

Ron Popeil died recently. If you are my age, you remember his commercials for things like the Chop-O-Matic, Veg-O-Matic, and the Electric Food Dehydrator. While he is well known as a pioneer in the infomercial industry, my personal recollection, growing up in the 60s, was that I was exposed to his products on regular TV commercials. According to his obituary in the Washington Post, in 1956, he made his first television commercial, a 3 1/2-minute spot for the Chop O-Matic. We wondered why our own mother had not sprung for its companion, the Veg-O-Matic ("three easy payments"), so one Christmas, there was one waiting for her under the tree.

People like Popeil are worth studying by people who run businesses. He lasted only 18 months at the University of Illinois—never had further formal education and went on to make millions and millions of dollars. He and his company, RONCO, became household names.

What made Ron Popeil so successful?

1 It was the personality that sold the product, not the other way around.

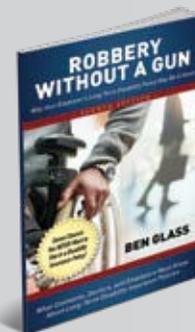
Most of his products were criticized for being cheap and poorly made. That didn't stop him from selling, for example, over \$1 billion worth of a rotisserie he developed. Popeil had honed the skill and talent of having an outsized personality. He knew how to draw a crowd to the demonstration.

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FREE BOOK REVEALS THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE CLAIM



Employer-provided disability insurance typically falls under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (also known as ERISA).

ERISA disability insurance companies are notorious for denying claims hoping the claimant won't hire an attorney to help with their denial. Claimants who try to appeal their claim find themselves against a wall, trying to prove that they are disabled while the insurance company waits for them to "give up" and accept the claim denial.

Go to RobberyWithoutAGun.com to get your free download now or call (703) 991-2870 to have a copy sent to you.



BGL's Best Bites:

ZUCCHINI TACO BOATS

By Yasemin (BGL Intern)

As Labor Day weekend is coming up and people look for new recipes, here is a healthier, low-carb alternative to a popular meal—the taco. Taco-stuffed zucchini boats retain the authentic taco flavors while making you feel healthier—so you can go back for seconds. The best part is how customizable the dish is to your diet! Feel free to swap out the ground beef with another alternative, such as ground turkey, and add whatever toppings you'd like!

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 2 large zucchinis
- ½ cup red onion, diced

Toppings:

- 1 avocado, cubed
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, chopped
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 lime, to taste
- sour cream, to taste

Directions:

- 1 Preheat oven to 400 °
- 2 Cut the zucchini in half, lengthwise, and hollow out the center with a scooper. This way, you will have enough room to fill the zucchini with meat.
- 3 Place the zucchini on an oven-safe dish. Line the inside with olive oil and lightly season with kosher salt and ground pepper for taste.
- 4 Place the zucchini in the oven for 20 minutes, until soft.
- 5 While the zucchini is baking, heat a large skillet on medium heat and line with olive oil.
- 6 Add the onions and cook until soft.
- 7 Add in the ground beef and taco seasoning and mix until meat is cooked.
- 8 Once the zucchini are done baking and the meat is cooked, fill the zucchini with ground beef and sprinkle with shredded cheese. Bake for another 3 minutes.
- 9 Once the cheese is melted, remove the zucchini, and begin to garnish. Add avocado, tomatoes, cilantro, and sour cream or lime to taste. Pair it with a side salad, if desired. ■

The BEN GLASSLAW™ BakeOff!

We can't wait to read everyone's tasty ways to celebrate the holidays!

Join the Ben Glass Law community in our first-ever recipe contest!

Be sure to enter your favorite holiday-themed recipe!

Competitors must submit their recipes to interns@benglasslaw.com by September 29th.

The winners' recipes will be included in our upcoming newsletters! All entrants will get a free BGL bake-off magnet.

My **HIGH SCHOOL** Experiences During the **PANDEMIC**

By Nadia (BGL Intern)

Throughout my childhood, I looked forward to high school. I had seen it portrayed in movies and TV shows as a once-in-a-lifetime experience when teenagers asserted their independence and lived lives full of fun, friends, and freedom. When the pandemic first struck in the middle of my sophomore year, I found myself struggling to process and adapt to the new way of life we were all forced to adopt.



Learning how to succeed in virtual school was a challenge I faced throughout my junior year. I experienced a substantial drop in motivation to complete my assignments and found paying attention in class extremely difficult. I had to put in a lot of effort to keep my grades up and kept wishing for things to go back to normal.

Now going into my senior year, there is finally a light at the end of the tunnel. Most of my classmates and I are fully vaccinated, allowing us to return for in-person learning. The things I had taken for granted before COVID, like walking with my friends to class, are the things I am looking forward to the most. My class is lucky because we will likely experience traditional school events, including homecoming and prom. **Even though we have to wear masks for seven hours, five days a week, that is a small**

price to pay for everything we will be getting back after the last year and a half.

Like most kids my age, my social life is really important to me, and much of my social interaction comes as a result of school. I'm beyond grateful that we can finally have a normal year of high school and that we can do it safely. Our uncertain future due to the pandemic was stressful, but now it feels like we can relax—at least a little. While the emergence of the Delta variant is concerning, the pandemic has taught me that worrying about things out of my control is pointless and detrimental to my mental health. All I can do is make safe, informed choices and hope for the best. I am going into my final year of high school optimistic but with low expectations. No matter what I encounter, all I can do is make the most of it. ■

Reminder About Our Firm's Communication Policy

Our promise to you is that while we are working on your case, we don't take inbound phone calls, faxes or emails. Ben Glass takes no inbound unscheduled phone calls whatsoever. It makes him much more productive and helps get your case resolved faster. You can always call the office at 703-544-7876 and schedule an in-person or phone appointment, usually within 24-48 hours. This is a lot better than the endless game of "phone tag" played by most businesses today. Remember, too, that email is "quick," but is checked no more than twice a day. Replies are then scheduled into the calendar. So if it's really important, don't email—call the office instead.

This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, ERISA disability, and small business issues. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.



WHAT WOULD BEN SAY

Here are my thoughts for the month:

- **LIBERTY SHOULD NOT BE THAT DIFFICULT OF A CONCEPT TO UNDERSTAND.** Liberty means that I am free to act on my own judgment. It means that you are free to act on your own judgment. Neither you nor I should initiate force to prevent the other from acting on our own judgment. Hats off to Texas federal judge Lynn Hughes who ruled recently that a hospital may require employees to be vaccinated. See, the hospital is acting on its own judgment. You have no right to a job—let alone any particular job. Judge Hughes said, “The hospital is trying to keep staff, patients, and families safe. Employees [who brought a lawsuit] can choose to accept or refuse vaccination, and if they choose not to vaccinate, they can work elsewhere.”

This is liberty at work. The hospital is not forcing anyone to do anything. An employer should be free to set the “rules of engagement.” If you don’t like your employer’s rules, you move on (or, like many, start your own business venture.)

Now contrast this with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who recently refused to allow cruise ship operators to make their own rules and require passengers to prove they have been vaccinated before boarding. He called this “a matter of liberty”, referring to, I suppose, the “liberty” of people to choose not to be vaccinated. He has liberty backward. He is

preventing cruise ship operators from acting on their own best judgment. Consumers don’t have a right to a product or service, in this case, to go on a cruise. If there was such a right, that would mean they could simply show up and get on a cruise ship even without paying. This is why stores can prohibit you from entering without a mask if they want to. You don’t have a right to shop at any store under whatever conditions you choose. (Which is also why you don’t have a right to force a baker to make a cake of your choosing, by the way.)

Individual liberty was the new concept on which the United States was founded. People wanted to be free of the government telling them what to do. Government has three legitimate purposes: (1) protect individual liberty; (2) provide a court system for the adjudication of controversies; and (3) provide a defense from bad actors, both domestic and international. Go beyond those three, and the government is now in the business of picking winners and losers, and that’s not a place where we want to be.

- **FREE COLLEGE.** I wonder how many clamoring for this “right” have searched for and read 10 books in the last year to make themselves more valuable to the market? Signed up for and fully attended any of hundreds of free online classes? (Most recent stats show only 15% who sign

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Inside The Mind of Ben Glass

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What Would Ben Say

up for free online courses complete them.)
Sought out a mentor? Just saying.

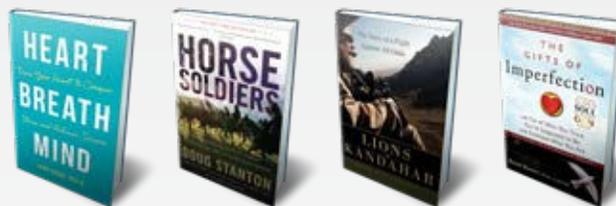
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www.elitecontentmarketer.com/online-education-stats

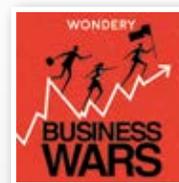
- **THE WASHINGTON POST JUST FINISHED AN EDITORIAL SERIES WITH ITS “PLAN” FOR A “REDUCTION” IN WEALTH INEQUALITY IN AMERICA.** Of course, their “answer” was to take more money from the wealthy and “redistribute” it. (That’s an example of the government’s use of force.) The Post, in none of the four lengthy editorials run in June and July, never addresses this moral conundrum: if it’s not OK for me to enter your house and take something that I need, why is it OK for you to get a bunch of your friends together to VOTE to enter my house and take what you need? If you can justify “taking by taxation” I’d love to hear that argument. Send me an email, and I’ll consider it for printing here.
- **BEST IDEA I HEARD LAST MONTH.** What if before we make a whole bunch of almost free money available in the form of student loans, we required colleges and universities to make loans out of their endowments? This would give schools some “skin in the game.” They would be a lot more careful about who they loaned money to, what students spend their time studying during the four years they are at the university and making sure that they were prepared to go out and make enough money to repay the loans.
- **SECOND BEST IDEA OF THE MONTH.** One of my kiddos spent the summer working for one of those government agencies where you aren’t allowed to bring your cell phone into the facility. His report: “Dad, I’ve never been so focused and productive in my life!” ■



What I’m Reading and Listening to Now



- **Heart Breath Mind: Train Your Heart to Conquer Stress and Achieve Success**, by Leah Lagos, Psy.D.
- **The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You’re Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are**, Brené Brown
- **Lions of Kandahar: A Story of a Fight Against All Odds**, by Major Rusty Bradley and Kevin Maurer.
- **Horse Shoulders, The Extraordinary Story of a Band of U.S. Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan**, by Doug Stanton.



- **Favorite Podcasts: Built to Sell Radio** (John Warrillow) and **Business Wars** (from Wonderly). “Built to Sell” are interviews with business owners who have sold their businesses. It’s well done, and whether or not you are planning to sell a business, there are hundreds and hundreds of good ideas for improving your business. Business Wars are dramatizations of some of the epic “wars” in American business life. Think Netflix vs. HBO, Adidas vs. Nike, Coke vs. Pepsi. ■



LOOKING FOR THE OTHER LEVERS

As we gear up for the Fall, I found myself sitting in a backyard Cub Scout leader meeting discussing how we might be able to save the Pack \$5 per scout if we collect the old slides (the golden emblems that hold the kerchief in place), keep them in the shed, and recycle them the next year. The discussion went on for about twenty minutes, including logistics of how to store them, what happens if a scout wants to keep them, and who is responsible for inventory. Then it occurred to me. We have 30 kids in the den, so we're doing all of this work for a total of \$150.

What other ideas could we come up with that would generate \$150? How many boxes of popcorn would we have to sell to close that gap?

It's the same problem that I have with Dave Ramsey-style militant budgeting. Yes, making coffee at home instead of going to Starbucks will save you \$5 per day. But what if you **really like** Starbucks coffee? Well, maybe there's another lever. I bet you could find a way to earn another \$5 per day.

The problem is that most people get so stuck trying to solve the first problem (spending too much) without even considering that there might be another lever (earning a little more) that might take less work and yield a greater result. ■



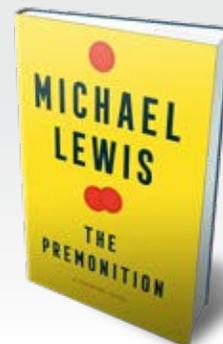
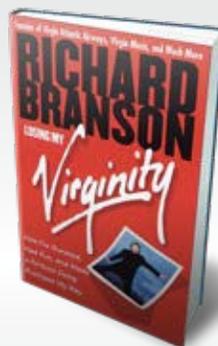
BESTS OF THE MONTH

What I'm Reading

Richard Branson's ***Losing My Virginity*** – what a life! From bootstrapping a student newspaper to sailing around the world in a hot air balloon to signing the Sex Pistols, Branson seems to have had his hands in everything.

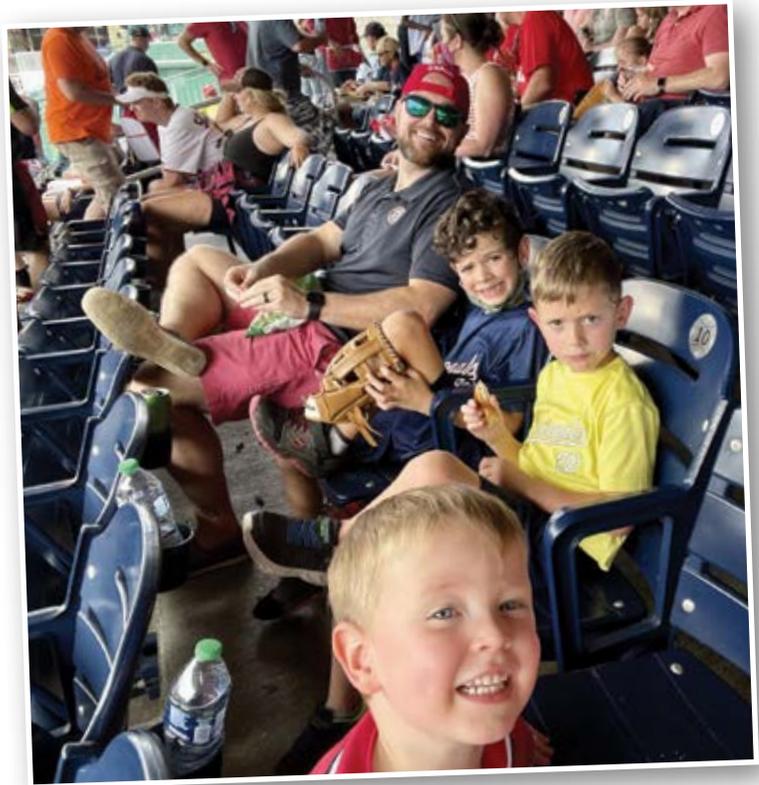
Michael Lewis' ***The Premonition*** – interesting post-mortem on the CDC's bungling of the early COVID-19 interventions.

Candidly, both of these books are great for about the first two-thirds. You can put them down after that.



Adventures of the Glass Bros

The older boys are getting ready for another season with Coach Dad. Nolan will be playing his first year of machine pitch and Kellan will be playing his first year of kid pitch. If you need us, we'll be on the baseball field six nights per week! ■



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Business Lessons from America's Greatest Salesman

He appeared approachable—if he could “slice of tomato so thin that it only had one side”, then so could my mom. People do business with people they know, like, and trust. If you are a small business owner, do your customers/patients/clients really know your story? It's a marketing advantage that most do not take advantage of.

2 He kept his eyes open for what the market was telling him it wanted. Though he was a millionaire many times over, he shopped at Costco. Reportedly, during one of his Costco visits, he saw crowds lining up to buy rotisserie roasted chicken. If you've ever walked by the “just cooked” rotisserie section of your local grocery store, you know what I mean. “Why not put this experience in people's kitchen,” he thought. [Bingo](#). The **Showtime Rotisserie** was born. We live in a data-filled world. Market information swirls around us. Understanding what the market for your product or service is telling you through data analysis is your key to developing more products and services that your market wants. You must be an observer of life and data.

3 “But wait, there's more.” Whether he was selling in front of a live audience or in an infomercial, Popeil developed the skill of over-delivering through pricing. He surprised his customers by offering more than they thought they were going to have to pay for his products. For most, this is not an argument for discount pricing but rather an argument for figuring out how you can “surprise and delight” your tribe of customers. I'll bet you if you ghost-shop your competitors, you will find areas where they are not only NOT bringing surprise and delight but are actively creating and delivering bad experiences. It's not that hard to deliver a different experience, no matter what your business.

Challenged by this in your business? Reach out to me. I do (almost) free mentoring for local small businesses. It's my passion, and I love working with people making a dent in the world. Reach out to Susan Callahan at scallahan@benglasslaw.com if you'd like to meet. (Oh yeah, I said it's “almost” free. You bring the lunch; I'll bring the drinks and chips, and we meet in my office. ■

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Celebrating

NATIONAL
HISPANIC
HERITAGE MONTH

Hispanic Heritage Week.” In 1998, in Public Law 100-402, Congress changed this to “National Hispanic Heritage Month.” It is a time to appreciate the colorful cultures, rich histories, and diversity of the American Latinx community. Modern-day celebrations occur in Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, the United States, and South America throughout the observation period. Collective pride unites Hispanic-Americans who are determined to promote their culture in many traditional ways. Celebratory events such as concerts, parades, food fairs, educational events, and more are organized to highlight the importance of Hispanic culture.

September 15th is especially noteworthy because it is the anniversary of independence and freedom for most Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Similarly, Mexico celebrates its independence on September 16th, and Chile celebrates on September 18th. This year, the Hispanic Heritage Month theme is “*Esperanza: A Celebration of Hispanic Heritage and Hope.*” ■

By Sydnie Coffee

Between September 15th and October 15th, the United States honors Hispanic culture and heritage. This month-long stretch, labeled “National Hispanic Heritage Month,” began to gain traction in the 1960s when Congressman George E. Brown introduced the idea of a one-week commemoration.

In 1968, in Public Law 90-498, Congress authorized and requested that the president designate the week containing September 15th and 16th as “National