

# Where's the Beef? Seymour.

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The library is the biggest room in our office. It is chock full of all types of legal books, with some over a century old. We have laws on CD-roms and we belong to several online legal services. The laws we have access to address taxes, real estate, business law, civil procedure, traffic violations and even keeping dogs on leashes. But with all the legal resources at our disposal, it's still only a fraction of all the laws in the U.S., let alone the world.

As attorneys, it is our job to stay on top of the laws, which are constantly changing. Personally, I have to keep tabs on estate tax and nursing home laws, which change so rapidly it's like shooting at a moving target. These laws are important and I enjoy reviewing them, but they are a tad dry.

That's why 2007 Assembly Joint Resolution 12 is a law that I can really sink my teeth into. This is the law where the Wisconsin legislature officially declared Seymour as the Original Home of the Hamburger.

People who know me are aware that I am overly fond of hamburgers. Many folks like restaurants that serve breakfast all day; I love places where I can get a cheeseburger for breakfast. That's why as an attorney and a hamburger aficionado, I'm proud that we have a law recognizing that hamburgers were invented in my own home county.

According to Seymourians, the world's first hamburger was served at the Seymour Fair in 1885 by Charlie Nagreen. At the young age of 15, Nagreen loaded up his ox cart and traveled the 20 miles from his hometown of Hortonville to Seymour to sell meatballs at the fair.

Nagreen thought fair-goers would want a snack while strolling the fairgrounds viewing the agricultural exhibits. Unfortunately, meatballs weren't conducive to walking and eating. With a stroke of genius, Nagreen smooshed one of his meatballs together between two pieces of bread and the more portable hamburger was born.

Nagreen named his concoction after ground up beefsteak called Hamburg, inspired by the city in Germany where it was very popular. Soon Nagreen became known as "Hamburger Charlie," and he returned to sell hamburgers at the Seymour Fair every year for the next 65 years until he died in 1951. Hamburger Charlie even entertained patrons with his guitar and mouth organ while he sang his famous jingle: "Hamburgers, hamburgers, hamburgers hot; onions in the middle, pickle on top. Makes your lips go flippity-flop."

To commemorate Hamburger Charlie and the birth of the hamburger, Seymour built the Hamburger Hall of Fame prominently displaying an enormous statue of Hamburger Charlie. In 1989, Seymour established Burger Fest, an event that features hot air balloon rides, live entertainment and many hamburger-themed events, such as the world's biggest hamburger parade, a hamburger-eating contest, the bun run and the ketchup slide. At the inaugural festival, a 5,520 pound burger was served. In 2001, a world record 8,266 pound burger was cooked on the gigantic "Charlie Grill" that fed 13,000 people.

Burger Fest takes place on the first Saturday in August each year, so that means the 2010 festival is next Saturday, August 7. So mark your calendars for next week and head on out to Seymour for some burgers and fun. After all, it's the law.