



# Random Thoughts

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*73% of Valentine Day flowers are bought by men, whereas women buy only 23% of Valentine flowers.*



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Mardi Gras day in 2008 is February 5. Mardi Gras Day (which is also Fat Tuesday) is the last day of the Mardi Gras Carnival season. Mardi Gras day falls on a different day each year. It is always 46 days before Easter.

## History of February 2nd

According to popular legend, the groundhog -- or woodchuck -- emerges from his winter hibernation on Groundhogs Day, traditionally celebrated on February 2. If the day is sunny, the Groundhog will see his shadow and -- for some reason frightened by it -- he will return to his hole to sleep for 6 more weeks as we endure an extended winter. If it's cloudy, however, he won't receive the sleep-inducing fright and we are due for an early spring. European folklore attributes this weather-forecasting ability to not only the groundhog, but the bear and the badger, too. And a similar tradition -- where snow and overcast skies signal an early end to winter -- is observed in northern Europe on Candlemas Day, which also falls on February 2 and in some areas marks the beginning of spring planting.

Historians claim that the first valentine was a poem sent in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London at the time. In the United States, Miss Esther Howland is given credit for sending the first Valentine's Day cards. Commercial valentines were introduced in the 1800s and now the date is very commercialized. The town of Loveland, Colorado, does a large post office business around February 14.

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## FEBRUARY EVENTS

February 2	Ground Hog's Day
February 2	Candlemas Day
February 3	Super Bowl Sunday
February 5	Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday)
February 6	Ash Wednesday
February 8	Boy Scouts Day
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 18	President's Day
February 29	Leap Day 2008



Designer Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel introduced her first perfume in 1921. She gave it the name "Chanel No. 5." According to Chanel, she jumped straight to number five because it was her lucky number. To add luck to the fragrance, she introduced it on the fifth day of May, the fifth month. Chanel No. 5 became the world's best selling perfume.

The U.S. Civil War conflict had at least thirty different names during the 1800s: The War Against Northern Aggression, The War for States' Rights, The War for Constitutional Liberty, The War for the Preservation of the Union, The Brothers' War, Mr. Lincoln's War. Many Southerners back then preferred to call it "our Second War of Independence." Some Southerners today eschew calling it the Civil War, preferring "The War Between the States." U.S. Official Records use the term "The War of the Rebellion."

For the 2000 Super Bowl, about a third of the TV commercial spots were purchased by dot-com companies. The following year, the numbers dropped to just 10 percent bought by 'Net companies.

The groundhog and badger were not the only animals that have been used to predict spring. Other Europeans used the bear or hedgehog--but in any case the honor belonged to a creature that hibernated. Its emergence symbolized the imminent arrival of spring.

The male house wren builds several nests as part of his courtship ritual. Once the nests are completed, his potential bride looks them all over, then selects one as her preferred choice for the laying of her eggs.

### ?! BRAIN TEASER !?

If it takes six men six days to dig six holes, how long will it take one man to dig half a hole?

*Answer on Page 3*

During the late 1800s, postage rates around the world dropped, and the obscene St. Valentine's Day card became popular, despite the Victorian era being otherwise very prudish. As the numbers of racy valentines grew, several countries banned the practice of exchanging Valentine's Days cards. During this period, Chicago's post office rejected more than 25,000 cards on the grounds that they were so indecent, they were not fit to be carried through the U.S. mail.

Until 1971, both February 12 and February 22 were observed as federal public holidays to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and George Washington (February 22). In 1971 President Richard Nixon proclaimed one single federal public holiday, the Presidents' Day, to be observed on the 3rd Monday of February, honoring all past presidents of the United States of America.

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#7

Boy Scout Day celebrates the birthday of Scouting in America. On February 8, 1910, Chicago publisher William Dickson Boyce filed incorporation papers in the District of Columbia to create the Boy Scouts of America.

Scouting groups across the country celebrate this day. Often a cake will be served at the weekly meeting or on a campout. Scout Sunday, the Sunday nearest the 8th of February, will often be marked with a church service, followed by a pancake breakfast.

Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts offer a tremendously valuable program of life skills and values for millions of boys. It has been popular ever since Lord Baden-Powell founded Boy Scouts in the early 1900s in Great Britain. The top award of Eagle Scout, is an accomplishment that reaps recognition, rewards, and benefits for a young man throughout his life.

In the Middle Ages, one Valentine's Day custom was for young men and women to draw names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would then wear these names on their sleeves for one week. "To wear your heart on your sleeve" now means that it is easy for other people to know how you are feeling.

Ancient Egyptians regarded the heart as the center of intelligence and emotion. They believed the brain to have no significance whatsoever, and in the important process of mummification, the brain was removed through the nose and discarded.

February 2nd is Candlemas Day. This ancient festival marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. People believe that Candlemas Day predicted the weather for the rest of the winter. The weather proverbs express the idea that a fine bright sunny Candlemas day means that there is more winter to come, whereas a cloudy wet stormy Candlemas day means that the worst of winter is over.

*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright  
Winter will have another fight.  
If Candlemas Day brings cloud and rain,  
Winter won't come again.*

*If Candlemas Day be dry and fair,  
The half o the winter's to come and mair;  
If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,  
The half o the winter's gone at Yule.*



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**Brain Teaser Answer:** You can't dig half a hole.

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## RANDOM THOUGHTS

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# FEBRUARY 2008



## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- ▶ New Year's Facts
- ▶ February Events
- ▶ Brain Teaser
- ▶ Money Saving Offers & Much More!

## WHAT'S THE ANSWER?



- ▶ WHAT IS CANDLEMAS DAY?....**3**



- ▶ WHAT IS FAT TUESDAY?...**1**

- ▶ HOW MANY DIFFERENT NAMES  
DID THE CIVIL WAR HAVE?.... **2**

The Answers To These and Many  
Other Questions Are Inside