

February  
2012

# The Parma Post

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## Celebrating February

**International Expect Success  
Month**

**Bird Feeding Month**

**Black History Month**

**International Snow Sculpting  
Week**

*February 1-5*

**Ballet Day**  
*February 7*

**Paul Bunyan Day**  
*February 12*

**Westminster Dog Show**  
*February 13-14*

**Valentine's Day**  
*February 14*

**International Sword  
Swallower's Day**  
*February 25*

**Leap Year Day**  
*February 29*

## Calendar Confusion

Ever feel the need to make up for lost time? You're not alone. In fact, the entire world will be making up for lost time on February 29, the Leap Day for 2012's Leap Year.

Ancient cultures kept calendars like we do today, but these were based on lunar cycles that followed the phases of the moon, making each month only 29.5 days long. One year would last only 354 days, not nearly enough days for an actual year, which lasts 365.242 days, the amount of time it takes the Earth to orbit the sun.

These 354-day calendars wreaked havoc when it came to celebrating annual holidays. As the years passed, autumn harvest festivals were celebrated during the spring planting season! The Egyptians were the first culture to correct the amount of days, and they even added an extra day, a Leap Day, to the calendar every fourth year to prevent these problems.

Cleopatra shared this system with her boyfriend Julius Caesar, and Caesar decided to fix the Roman calendar. In the year 46 B.C., Caesar instituted a year that lasted 445 days – later called the Year of Confusion – to reset the entire calendar. Then he started a new 12-month-long year of 365 days, with an extra Leap Day added every fourth year to make up for the lost time. But this still was not perfect.

This extra day was still 11 minutes too long, which meant that an entire extra day would be added to the calendar every 128 years. That may seem small, but 1,000 years later, this created major problems. Now it was Pope Gregory XIII's turn to fix the calendar. He decided to keep the Leap Day, but only one out of every four "century years" would observe a Leap Year. The years 2000 and 2400 are Leap Years, but 2100, 2200, and 2300 are not. We still use this Gregorian Calendar today. As for people born on February 29, known as Leaplings, no official ruling has yet been made on how to count their age.

## J-E-L-L-O

There is no other dessert as wiggly and as jiggly as Jell-O. In fact, there is nothing quite like this gelatinous children's treat, so why shouldn't it have it's own weeklong celebration? February 12-18 is Jell-O Week.

During the 1800s in England, gelatin desserts were popular among the rich and famous. Party hosts would present fantastic jelly moulds of different shapes and sizes to their guests. But these fabulous jellies were expensive and hard to make. It wasn't until 1845 that Peter Cooper, the inventor of the first steam-powered locomotive, invented powdered gelatin. Cooper, though, never thought much of his idea and sold the product to a cough syrup maker named Pearl B. Wait. It was Pearl Wait who christened this new product Jell-O.

Jell-O may be the first real advertising success story. Consumers were, at first, suspicious of this strange, colorful, and wiggly food. In 1904, thousands of salesmen were sent door-to-door to give away free Jell-O cookbooks, a very innovative practice at the time. Popularity surged and by 1906, sales topped \$1 million dollars. Jell-O had truly become "America's Most Famous Dessert."

Can't wait to try a variety of Jell-O flavors? Enjoy this recipe for **8-Layer Jell-O**:

First Layer:

1 package cherry Jell-O  
1 cup boiling water  
1/2 cup cold water

Second Layer:

1 package cherry Jell-O  
1 cup boiling water  
3/4 cup evaporated milk



Repeat steps with lemon, lime, and orange Jell-O. Be sure to let each layer set until firm in a 9 X 13-inch pan before adding the next layer.

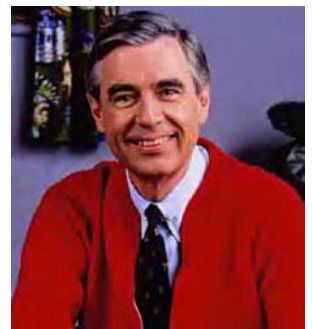
## Best In Show

Tune in February 13-14 to see canines of all breeds strut their stuff at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. The first Westminster Dog Show was held in 1877, making it the second-longest-running annual sporting event in America after the Kentucky Derby. The show originated as a show for hunting dogs. A group of hunters who met at the Westminster Hotel in New York City wanted to see who had the best setter or pointer.

Today, 2,500 dogs compete in seven groups: Sporting, Hound, Working, Terrier, Toy, Non-Sporting, and Herding. In the end, the winners of the seven groups compete for Best In Show. The wire fox terrier has won this honor the most, at 13 times. America's most popular dog breeds, the Labrador retriever and the golden retriever, have never won... unless you count the hearts of their owners.

## Friends and Neighbors

On February 19, 1968, Fred Rogers first invited children to be his neighbor on his hit show *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*.



Fred Rogers once said, "One of the greatest gifts you can give anybody is the gift of your honest self. I also believe that kids can spot a phony a mile away." Taking this belief to heart, he created a show that did not follow a plot, but instead allowed him to talk to his audience about issues. He demonstrated experiments, met members of his community, did crafts, and played music. His show was simple, natural, and wonderful.

Fred Rogers himself wrote the song, "Won't You Be My Neighbor." One of his famous cardigan sweaters hangs in the Smithsonian Institution as a national artifact.

## White Out

The February days leading up to the start of Lent can get pretty crazy. New Orleans has Mardi Gras, and the Caribbean Islands celebrate Carnivale. But the town of Viana do Bolo, in the Galicia region of northwest Spain, has a tradition that takes the cake — or rather, that takes the cake flour. This is the Flour Battle, where locals, armed with bags of the powder, douse each other until the entire town is covered in a blanket of white.



The festival is not all throwing flour. The Galicians are Spaniards, after all, and they love their music and food. Drummers known as the *Folion* arrive, arrive wearing elaborate

costumes and drumming their region's unique beat. The drums rumble louder and louder, with each region competing for their beat to be heard. Drummers march to a local sports arena where 3,000 locals are waiting to feast, each diner banging his fork and knife on the table to the beat of the *Folion*. If you're looking for a quiet lunch, this isn't the place.

But of course, the true spectacle is the Flour Battle. The specific origins of this tradition are lost in time, but some speculate that the white flour is symbolic of innocence. During the festival, the entire community is covered and thereby purified for Lent.

The Galicians are not the only ones who throw things in the days leading up to Lent. In Venezuela, people throw tomatoes and eggs. They used to throw water balloons until the police deemed them too dangerous, because they were causing traffic accidents. In Colombia, children throw egg shells filled with colored and perfumed water. Across the globe, these pre-Lenten festivals all hold one thing in common — lots of people are blowing off lots of pent-up steam before a long season of repentance and fasting.

## Nuts for Nutella

On the morning of February 5, try something other than butter and jam on your morning toast. Try Nutella, that delicious chocolate hazelnut spread. It's World Nutella Day.

This spread was first developed in Italy. When taxes on cocoa beans went through the roof, a savvy business man named Pietro Ferrero invented Gianduja, a spread made of 20% hazelnut paste and 80% chocolate. It tasted like chocolate, but was far more affordable. Gianduja was an instant hit, especially with children. In 1963, this concoction was renamed Nutella. Today you can find it all over the world.

Nutella is not just for your breakfast toast. Aficionados add it to crepes, bake Nutella spice cakes and Nutella banana muffins, make Nutella French toast, and even grill Nutella and mascarpone cheese sandwiches. Take one taste, and you too may get hooked.

## Food for Thought

*Reader's Digest* may be the most popular magazine in the world, with millions of readers worldwide in over 70 countries and with editions translated into over 20 languages. This magazine was started by a man named DeWitt Wallace, who conceived the idea while recovering from shrapnel wounds suffered in World War I. He launched the first issue in February of 1922.



Wallace's idea was simple. He would gather his favorite articles from a wide variety of magazines and publish them together in one journal. Sometimes he even rewrote and shortened articles that were too long. Wallace hoped that his little magazine would earn him \$5,000 a year, and by 1929, it was generating \$900,000 a year. Surprise, surprise. I wonder how long it took Wallace to digest that.



# **ACTIVITY NEWS:**

## **Donations Needed:**

**Stuffed animals, bagged candy, canned diet pop, and cookies, fuzzy socks, decorated coffee cups, all used for prizes. Also needed is nail polish remover, board games, playing cards, poker chips, dice, dvd movies, and music cd's.**

**Please drop donations off to the Activity Department.**

**Thank You in Advanced**

**Kelley Nuttall  
Activity Director**

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