

# Cultural News

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## Chinese New Year 2016

### *The Year of the Red Monkey*

The Chinese name of 2016 in the Chinese Horoscope calendar is Male Fire Monkey, and it is the 4713th Chinese Year. Chinese New Year Day of Red Monkey Year is on February 8, 2016.

Chinese New Year is a spring festival that begins on the second new Moon after Winter Solstice. But in the Solar Terms Chinese agricultural calendar, the Chinese New Year begins on February 4 or 5. This Li Chun date, based on Solar Terms (15 degrees along the ecliptic) is close to February 2nd, a date that marks the point between winter solstice and spring equinox. This time of year is celebrated in many traditions including Candlemas in Christianity and Tu B'Shvat New Year for trees in Judaism. Called Imbolc in Gaelic, this time of year is for a fire festival of the Celtic Goddess Brigid, and the first stirrings of spring. Animals awaken after winter hibernation, hence Groundhog Day on February 2nd for divination from the movement of animals.

### **The Way of the Monkey**

The year of the Monkey is ideal for a quantum leap in your life! Now is the time to shake things up, create change, and innovate a new path. Join Monkey's enthusiast energy when risks are rewarded and anything can happen. Even the most ambitious plans can succeed. There will be more than enough action and opportunity to keep you busy. In Monkey year, it's fine to just make it up as you go along. Just don't be gullible and trust the wrong people, or wily Monkey will take all the peanuts and leave you only shells.

Those born in Monkey years (1908, 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016) are clever, sharp, mercurial, and entertaining. They are wonderful to be around because they are fun, creative, and bring the sparkling energy that only Monkey can provide. Monkeys embodies strong leadership potential and, like their best friend the Dragon, won't allow anyone to tell her them to do. Uninhibited Monkey rarely gets embarrassed by anything, and is free to express herself fearlessly in all walks of life.

In addition to acute mental alertness, Monkey also possesses physical stamina. Monkey is good with her hands, has skills and dexterity with machines, naturally has technological talents, and can easily master new concepts. A superb generalist, Monkey can do anything! In relationships, a Monkey loves romance, and is very sensitive and generous. But she can be fickle, run hot or cold, and treat relationships like a game. But everyone loves the Monkey, and the birth rate skyrockets in Asia during a Monkey year.

<http://susanlevitt.com/astrology/monkey-year-2016/>



## FEBRUARY 2016 CALENDAR

NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

NATIONAL WOMEN INVENTORS MONTH

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

- 1-7- African Heritage & Health Week (US)
- 2- Imbolc- Lughnassad (Wicca/Pagan)
- 3- Setsebun sai (Shinto)
- 7- Transfiguration Sunday (Christian)
- 8- Chinese New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)
- 9-15- National Green Week (US)
- 12- Vasant Panshami (Hindu)
- 14- St. Valentine's Day (International)
- 15- Nirvana Day (Buddhism-Jain)
- 15- President's Day (US)
- 17- National PTA Founders Day (US)
- 18- Pluto Day (International)
- 19- Iwo Jima (US)
- 21-27- Brotherhood / Sisterhood Week (US)
- 22- George Washington's Birthday (US)
- 26- Intercalary Days begin (Baha'i)
- 27- National Day of Action (Peace Corps)
- 28- Rare Disease Day (International)
- 29- Leap Year (International)

## Valentine's Day History

### **Roman Roots**

The history of Valentine's Day is obscure, and further clouded by various fanciful legends. The holiday's roots are in the ancient Roman festival of Lupercalia, a fertility celebration commemorated annually on February 15. Pope Gelasius I recast this pagan festival as a Christian feast day circa 496, declaring February 14 to be St. Valentine's Day.

### **Valentines Galore**

Which St. Valentine this early Pope intended to honor remains a mystery: according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, there were at least three early Christian saints by that name. One was a priest in Rome, another a bishop in Terni, and of a third St. Valentine almost nothing is known except that he met his end in Africa. Rather astonishingly, all three Valentines were said to have been martyred on Feb. 14.

Most scholars believe that the St. Valentine of the holiday was a priest who attracted the disfavor of Roman emperor Claudius II around 270.

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At this stage, the factual ends and the mythic begins. According to one legend, Claudius II had prohibited marriage for young men, claiming that bachelors made better soldiers. Valentine continued to secretly perform marriage ceremonies but was eventually apprehended by the Romans and put to death. Another legend has it that Valentine, imprisoned by Claudius, fell in love with the daughter of his jailer. Before he was executed, he allegedly sent her a letter signed "from your Valentine." Probably the most plausible story surrounding St. Valentine is one not focused on Eros (passionate love) but on agape (Christian love): he was martyred for refusing to renounce his religion.

In 1969, the Catholic Church revised its liturgical calendar, removing the feast days of saints whose historical origins were questionable. St. Valentine was one of the casualties.

### Chaucer's Love Birds

It was not until the 14th century that this Christian feast day became definitively associated with love. According to UCLA medieval scholar Henry Ansgar Kelly, author of *Chaucer and the Cult of Saint Valentine*, it was Chaucer who first linked St. Valentine's Day with romance.

In 1381, Chaucer composed a poem in honor of the engagement between England's Richard II and Anne of Bohemia. As was the poetic tradition, Chaucer

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/valentinesdayhistory.html>

associated the occasion with a feast day. In "The Parliament of Fowls," the royal engagement, the mating season of birds, and St. Valentine's Day are linked.

### Tradition of Valentines Cards

Over the centuries, the holiday evolved, and by the 18th century, gift-giving and exchanging handmade cards on Valentine's Day had become common in England. Hand-made valentine cards made of lace, ribbons, and featuring cupids and hearts eventually spread to the American colonies. The tradition of Valentine's cards did not become widespread in the United States, however, until the 1850s, when Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke graduate and native of Worcester, Mass., began mass-producing them. Today, of course, the holiday has become a booming commercial success. According to the Greeting Card Association, 25% of all cards sent each year are valentines.

by Borgna Brunner



## National African American Month 2016 Theme:

The history of African Americans unfolds across the canvas of America, beginning before the arrival of the Mayflower and continuing to the present. From port cities where Africans disembarked from slave ships to the battle fields where their descendants fought for freedom, from the colleges and universities where they pursued education to places where they created communities during centuries of migration, the imprint of Americans of African descent is deeply embedded in the narrative of the American past. These sites prompt us to remember and over time became hallowed grounds.

One cannot tell the story of America without preserving and reflecting on the places where African Americans have made history. The Kingsley Plantation, DuSable's home site, the numerous stops along the Underground Railroad, Seneca Village, Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church and Frederick Douglass' home — to name just a few — are sites that keep alive the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in our consciousness. They retain and refresh the memories of our forbears' struggles for freedom and justice, and their belief in God's grace and mercy. Similarly, the hallowed grounds of Mary McLeod Bethune's home in Washington, D.C., 125th Street in Harlem, Beale Street

in Memphis, and Sweet Auburn Avenue in Atlanta tell the story of our struggle for equal citizenship during the American century.

The Association for the Study of African American Life & History has selected this annual theme to bring attention to the centennial celebration of the National Park Service and the more than twenty-five sites and the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom that are part of America's hallowed grounds, including the home of the father of black history, Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

<http://asah100.org/black-history-themes/2015-theme/>

## New Staff Interpreter Profile: Marty Carvajal

Marty Carvajal is our new staff addition to the MIS Spanish Medical Interpreting team. Marty was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. He attended the Universidad Autonoma De Guadalajara and graduated with a BA in accounting. Marty always wanted to learn English, and when he immigrated to the USA in 1993, he picked up English language rather quickly. He took on employment with various companies, specializing in Bilingual support (English - Spanish).

Marty started his Interpreting career about six years ago. He worked for various agencies, such as CPS, IHSS, law firms, Twin Rivers School District and Carmazzi Global Solutions, as a Spanish-English interpreter. One of Marty's greatest accomplishment is being able to overcome adversity as an immigrant and mastering new skills.

In his free time, Marty loves spending time with his children, family and friends. He enjoys bike riding, playing soccer and auto racing.

In Marty's own words, "Joining the MIS team and UC Davis Medical Center has probably been the best thing that could have happened to me in the last several years. I came to find out I have a lot of passion for this line of work. Being able to help and assist people with their interpreting needs brings a lot of satisfaction, and I truly feel I can make a difference to many. I look forward to spending many years in this great place".

Welcome aboard, Marty! We are happy to have you as a part of the UC Davis Medical Center Interpreting Team.

