

Huckleberry Press

The Community Paper of the Inland Northwest

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From Goat Skins to Diamond



by Amy McGarry

bears; and, if your pockets are as deep as your love, maybe even diamonds.

Yes, it's time for Valentine's Day, when children carefully select the tiny cards they will distribute so

that a certain classmate gets the right message, and the other classmates don't get the wrong one. Remember when poor Ralph on The Simpsons thought Lisa was in love with him? She had given him a Valentine with a train on it that said, "I choo-choo-choose you!" "Choose" your cards wisely, kids!

With all the assorted Valentine's Day symbols and associations, I never once considered a goat. However, the origins of Valentine's Day included not just the sacrifice of a goat, but also a dog.

Like so many holidays we celebrate today. Valentine's Day has ancient roots going back to the Romans. On February 15, the Romans celebrated Lupercalia, a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders, Romulus and Remus.

To begin the festival, members of the Luperci,

Roses; chocolates; teddy an order of Roman priests, would gather at a sacred cave where the infants Romulus and Remus were believed to have been cared for by a she-wolf or *lupa*. The priests would sacrifice a goat for fertility and a dog for purification, then tear the goat's hide into strips, dip them into the sacrificial blood, and take to the streets, gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide.

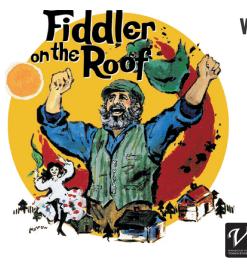
> Oddly enough, Roman women welcomed the touch of the hides because it was believed to make them more fertile in the coming year. According to legend, all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn later that day and bachelors would each choose a name to be paired with for the year. These temporary pairings could lead to deeper relationships or even marriages. While the practices might seem bizarre to us in the modern age, they were deeply ingrained in Roman culture, connecting fertility, love, and the celebration of life.

The Christian Influence: St. Valentine

As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire, many pagan festivals were either abolished or adapted to align with Christian teachings. The Christianization of Lupercalia is thought to have occurred in the 5th century when Pope Gelasius I decided to replace the pagan festival with St. Valentine's Day, named after one or more Christian martyrs named Valentine.

There is some confusion around which Saint Valentine the day is named after, as there were at least two individuals named Valentine who were martyred. The most commonly accepted story is of Valentine of Rome, a priest who lived during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. The emperor had banned marriages for young men, believing that unmarried soldiers fought better than those with families. Valentine, however, defied the emperor and continued to perform secret marriages for young couples. According to legend, eventually Valentine was arrested, and, before his execution, he healed the jailer's blind daughter. The story claims that he sent her a note signed "From your Valentine," which is believed to be the origin of the now-famous phrase.

Valentine was executed on February 14, around the year 269 CE. While the historical accuracy of the story has been debated, the legend Continued on page 12...



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Bird Watching on the Global Scale-

This article is also appears in the February 2025 edition of the North Columbia Monthly and has been adapted for the Huckleberry Press. All photos at right are by J. Foster Fanning.



by J. Foster Fanning

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), otherwise known as the Global Bird Count, occurs each year in February, over Presidents' Day Weekend in the United States and Family Weekend in Canada; this year it will be February 14-17. As a wildlife enthusiast, it is one of my favorite happenings! Cornell Lab of Ornithology along with the National Audubon Society are the primary hosts for this event. At the end of this article is a link to help you get started.

There are several objectives for the GBBC, including catalog observations to help scientists understand global bird populations before spring migrations. The GBBC's data is added to ongoing efforts to track birds, which can be used for conservation efforts, and creates a real-time snapshot of where birds are located around the world.

ing in the winter, and is a great opportunity to introduce people to birding. Participants can count birds in their favorite places, such as their yard, neighborhood, park, or a birding hotspot, and submit their checklists over the four days.

The event also encourages attendees to participate in a photo contest, play bird games and quizzes, and post on social media about the birds they're seeing. You can study up ahead of time using online guides like the free Audubon Bird Guide app or the free Merlin ID app. This is citizen science on a fun and engaging level.

Here is what Cornell Labs had to say about the 2024 GBBC: "Each year we think we've reached the ceiling in terms of the numbers of people who will spend at least 15 minutes (usually more) watching, celebrating, and reporting their birds for GBBC – and each year you surprise us! Collectively, we found 7,920 species of the world's known species. Hundreds of countries and subregions came together to share bird sightings. Thank you to everyone who shared in the joy of birds with us! Be proud of all we have accomplished, together."

At the 2024 GBBC, in addition to the 7,920 species identified: 210 countries or subregions participated; 384,416 eBird checklists; 313,874 Merlin Bird IDs; 164,740 photos, videos, and sounds added to Macaulay Library; 642,003 estimated global participants; and 385 reported community events. All in all a great turn-out! Want more information? Go to: www.birdcount.org

Bundle up, take a thermos of hot beverage and snacks, your camera, field glasses and a friend or two, and head off into the great outdoors. It is truly an enjoyable and worthwhile event. See you out there.

J. Foster Fanning is a father, grandfather, retired fire chief and wannabe beach bum. He dabbles in photography as an excuse to wander the hills and vales in search of the perfect image. Learn more at fosterfanning.blogspot.com.



The GBBC, which began in 1998, gets people excited about bird-

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Huckleberry Press

The Huckleberry Press began in the Fruitland Valley, nestled in the shadow of northeastern Washington's Huckleberry Mountains. Since 2003, "Huckleberry Country" has expanded throughout the Inland Northwest to the 12 counties of Adams, Benewah, Bonner, Douglas, Ferry, Kootenai, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman.

The Huckleberry Press is dedicated to celebrating and connecting people with their communities by featuring stories of people making major contributions as individuals, with new or expanding businesses, and through special, community events. Also included are small business advice, lifestyle, humor, and seasonal features. The Huckleberry Press is dated the 1st of each month.

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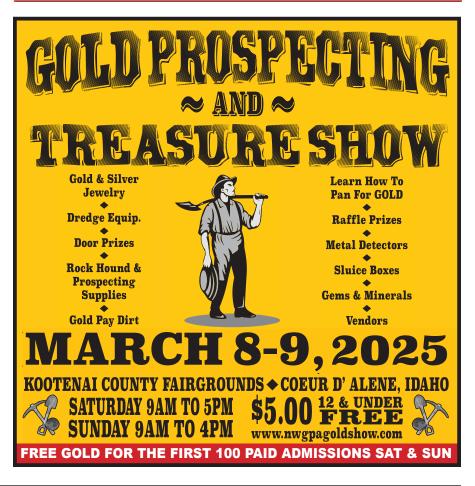
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A Crystal Ball for Decision Making



by Mark Pond, MILS

In today's fiercely competitive market, understanding consumer behavior and leveraging actionable insights are critical for both businesses and nonprofits. Enter Placer.ai, a location analytics platform that provides data-driven insights into foot traffic, demographics, and customer journeys. Through StartUp Spokane, businesses and nonprofits in the Spokane area have a unique opportunity to harness this powerful tool to elevate their

strategies and decision-making. Let's explore why this collaboration is a game-changer for anyone looking to optimize their operations and outreach.

Understanding Placer.ai: What's the Big Deal?

Placer.ai is a geospatial, intelligence platform that helps organizations unlock the value of location data. It provides real-time insights into where people go, how long they stay, and what draws them to specific areas. With a treasure trove of anonymized data from mobile devices, Placer.ai empowers users to:

- Analyze foot traffic trends
- Identify customer demographics
- Compare performance against competitors

Optimize Site Selection and Marketing Strategies

This isn't just another data tool; it's a crystal ball for decision-making. Whether you're a coffee shop owner figuring out where to open your next location, or a nonprofit, strategizing donor engagement events, Placer.ai turns guesswork into precision.

The StartUp Spokane Advantage

StartUp Spokane is more than just a resource hub – it's a launchpad for innovation. By providing access to Placer.ai, StartUp Spokane empowers local businesses and nonprofits to compete with national players. Here's why this partnership is a golden ticket:

Accessibility Without Breaking the Bank: small businesses and nonprofits often shy away from advanced tools like Placer.ai because of the cost barrier. Through StartUp Spokane, these organizations can access Placer.ai without the hefty price tag, leveling the playing field and enabling even the smallest players to make data-driven decisions.

Customized Support and Training: data can be intimidating, but StartUp Spokane bridges the gap with expert guidance, offer training sessions and workshops to help users understand and apply Placer. ai's insights effectively. This hands-on approach ensures that businesses and nonprofits can hit the ground running.

Community Collaboration: joining StartUp Spokane's ecosystem means more than just access to tools. It's about collaboration and shared growth. Organizations can connect, share insights, and even partner on initiatives, amplifying the impact of Placer.ai's data.



Why Businesses Should Jump In

For businesses, data isn't just nice to have; it's a necessity. Here are a few ways Placer.ai can transform business operations:

Pinpointing Prime Locations: location, location, location – the mantra of every successful business. With Placer.ai, you can analyze foot traffic patterns to identify the most promising sites for new stores or pop-ups. Whether you're scouting a bustling downtown spot or a quiet suburban area, Placer.ai ensures you're where your customers are.

Optimizing Marketing Strategies: imagine knowing exactly where your target audience spends their time. Placer.ai provides demographic insights that help businesses tailor their marketing campaigns. Whether it's digital ads or in-person promotions, you'll know where to focus your efforts for maximum return on investment (ROI).

Staying Ahead of Competitors: competitive analysis is no longer a guessing game. With Placer.ai, you can benchmark your performance against competitors, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. This edge is invaluable in today's fast-paced market.

Adapting to Trends: the market is always evolving, and Placer.ai keeps you one step ahead. By tracking changes in consumer behavior and foot traffic, businesses can adapt their strategies in real-time, ensuring they stay relevant and profitable.

The Nonprofit Perspective: Why It Matters

Nonprofits might not be selling products, but they're selling ideas and causes. Here's how Placer.ai can help nonprofits amplify their impact:

Targeting Donor Engagement: knowing where your potential donors are and what events they attend can significantly boost fundraising efforts. Placer.ai provides insights into donor demographics and behaviors, allowing nonprofits to plan events and campaigns that resonate.

Optimizing Volunteer Recruitment: volunteers are the lifeblood of many nonprofits. Placer.ai can help identify areas with high potential for volunteer recruitment, ensuring your outreach efforts are efficient and effective.

Maximizing Outreach Impact: nonprofits often operate with limited resources, making strategic planning crucial. Placer.ai's data allows organizations to focus their efforts on areas where they can make the biggest impact, whether it's opening a new service location or targeting specific communities for advocacy.

Strengthening Partnerships: collaboration is key in the nonprofit world. Placer.ai's insights can help organizations identify potential partners with shared audiences, enabling joint efforts that amplify results.

Wrapping It Up: Why Wait?

In the digital age, data is king, and Placer.ai is the crown jewel for location intelligence. Through StartUp Spokane, businesses and nonprofits have a rare chance to leverage this technology without the usual financial hurdles. Whether you're looking to expand, optimize, or innovate, Placer.ai provides the insights you need to succeed. Visit StartUp Spokane at startupspokane.com and take your organization to the next level.

Mark Pond, MILS, has been the Business Research Librarian with the Spokane Public Library since 2006, and, before that, worked in similar capacities for the Seattle Public Library and the University of Washington Libraries since 1998. Mark has led the effort to develop Spokane Public Library into a nationally recognized leader in the field of business research.



Taste Budz Review: Fusion Korean Restaurant



By Zack & Brooklyn Bolin, Facebook: Taste Budz, Instagram: tastebudz spokane

Zack and I recently discovered a hidden gem called Fusion Korean in Airway Heights. The building is quaint, and the interior is adorable and very clean.

What we devoured:

- ~Combo Number 3 with Bulgogi
- ~Combo Number 1 with Spicy Bulgogi





I chose the combo number three, which came with an entree and rice, a California roll, butterfly shrimp, and some Korean salads. I opted for the bulgogi, and the meat was so tender and juicy. The flavor was sweet but not overpowering, and the portions were very generous. The California roll was extremely fresh and had nice big chunks of imitation crab and avocado. I absolutely love butterfly shrimp, and they went perfectly with the sweet and sour sauce they served. I am not a huge fan of kimchi, but I gave theirs a try, and to my delight it was perfectly pickled with a nice crunch and not overly fishy.

Zack decided to try combo number one. Usually, they don't let you substitute on combo meals, but they let him get extra dumplings in place of a California roll. The

> dumplings come

fried, but the skin is still tender and the inside was a flavorful, juicy pork filling. Zack scarfed them down in what seemed like a matter of seconds. His combo also came with some Korean side dishes. He usually doesn't eat macaroni salad but theirs had a nice, subtle, sweet flavor and the noodles were perfectly al dente, not mushy.

If bulgogi is not your thing, they also have the option of teriyaki chicken, spicy chicken, sweet and sour chicken, and sesame chicken. Zack almost got an order of teriyaki to go but we were just too full. However, as most of you know, Zack is on the hunt for the best chicken

teriyaki so we will be back to try it out.

Our waitress was so kind, attentive, and accommodating. We were looking for some-



where that was open on Sunday, and they were one of few places. They don't serve alcohol, but they do have soda and tea.

The inside is intimate and incredibly well put together, there are even art pieces for sale by local artists. We dined with some friends, one of whom is a picky eater. He ordered their beef fried rice and really enjoyed it; again the portion was enormous.

Whether you are looking for traditional Korean or just quality Asian food, this spot is sure to satisfy your craving. Next time you are in Airway Heights stop by and check it

13116 W Sunset Hwy, Airway Heights, WA 99001, 509-244-9921.

Zack & Brooklyn are a married couple that love showcasing all the fun places to play and eat in the Inland Northwest. They created Taste Budz to promote local businesses and expose people to the great restaurants all around them. Keep up with them to find your next culinary destination!













The Inland Northwest's Sound of Sigh-lence



by Bob Johnson

Consider, if you will, the sigh. It's a seemingly simple word. Four letters. One syllable. Yet, it is a sound that can embody so many personas.

There is the sigh of relief once a task is accom-

plished or a deadline is met.

There is the sigh of frustration when a task is not yet completed or a deadline is missed.

There is the sigh of helplessness when the gate attendant announces that your flight has been delayed.

There is the sigh of dismay when the gate attendant announces that your flight has been canceled.

There is the sigh of disappointment, potentially more powerful in a parent's arsenal of behavioral controls than any other.

There is the sigh of love, when one first sets eyes on their soulmate.



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Some sighs are deep; some are shallow. Each makes a sound that contributes to the panoply of sounds, noises, racket, and clatter that define living in a particular place.

I have lived in a big city (Chicago), a vast metropolitan area (Southern California), a tourist destination known for decadence (Las Vegas), and now a small town (in the Inland Northwest). Each has had its distinctive land-scape, and its own smorgasbord of sounds.

In Chicago, residents pay a premium to live in an upper floor of an apartment skyscraper. The complexes promote the views, but savvy renters understand that the real appeal is the reduction in noise the higher one goes. During the early morning hours, before the hoards arrive on commuter trains to populate the downtown office buildings, city streets are filled with street sweepers, snowplows, and delivery trucks, none of which have quiet engines.

Perhaps the most annoying sound is that of the truck reverse "beep," programmed intentionally loud to alert people nearby that if they are in the truck's pathway, they need to move. My experience was that if one did not occupy an apartment at least 20 floors up, the truck reverse beep system could be a dependable wake-up alarm.

Sirens were also commonplace in Chicago, and when I first moved there, I couldn't figure out why sirens were needed in the heart of the downtown area at 4 a.m., when the streets were empty. Crime existed primarily on the outskirts of the city. Only after I'd signed the two-year lease on a 10th floor studio apartment did I realize that my building was two blocks from a massive hospital campus. Not only did the hospital accept blaring ambulances, but also the occasional helicopter.

Sigh.

Growing up in Southern California involved an entirely different set of sounds, although I was not truly aware of them until I had moved away for several years and returned for a visit.

As a non-practicing, non-certified, com-

pletely unqualified pseudo-ophthalmologist, I can tell you that children's ears hear only what they want to hear, such as the music emanating from an ice cream truck, the word "recess," or the words, "We're going to Disneyland!"

But the adult ear hears a much broader range of sounds, from the din of freeway traffic, to the vroom of obnoxiously loud sports cars, to the roar of jet planes taking off at any of six airports, to the rat-a-tat of jackhammers at ubiquitous construction sites. It is not just sound that is everywhere; it is noise.

Sigh.

Las Vegas brought still another set of distinct sounds. When people think about the Strip or the downtown "Fremont Street Experience," they normally perceive sights. Massive, bright, LED signs on the Strip, enduring neon downtown.

In the heart of the casinos – whether on the Strip, downtown, or elsewhere in the valley – the sounds are similar. Games of chance hail passersby with recorded promises of possible riches (key word: possible). Payoffs on some machines are accompanied by the recorded sound of coins dropping into a metal tray. For anyone who experienced "Old Vegas," when actual coins were spit out of the slots, it's a sound as artificial as AstroTurf.

While such sounds are mere annoyances, others can border on disgusting – true assaults on the ears. Young men (overgrown boys?) slurping ridiculously large alcoholic beverages before letting out loud belches and even louder F-bombs. Many of those same men/boys yelling inappropriate comments at women passing by. Both men and women of all ages yelling profanities at inanimate, super-size screens when the team they did not bet on scores.

Sigh.

Which brings us to the Inland Northwest – and why we came here.

Certainly, one will occasionally encounter truck reverse beep systems when visiting downtown Spokane, but they are not om-







nipresent as they are in Chicago. Certainly, Spokane has its rush hours, but they are hours shorter than those that tie up the southern California freeway system. Certainly, the Inland Northwest has its share of rowdy drunks, but they tend to be confined to limited-capacity bars and are not a 24/7 phenomenon as they are in Las Vegas.

Here, the "big city" sounds aren't nearly so big, while the rural sounds are unique and soothing to the senses, rather than a test for them.

When there isn't so much competition for our ears, we can hear the distinctive crunch as we walk in the snow, the pure joy in a baby's laugh, how different types of birds chirp (this based on my expertise as a non-practicing, non-certified, completely unqualified pseudo-ornithologist), the snap-crackle-pop of an open fire, church bells chiming in the distance, the pure crack of a baseball coming off a bat, the pop of a wine bottle cork, the sizzle of bacon in the frying pan, popcorn popping in the microwave, the buzz of a bumble bee, crickets singing, the crunch of biting into a sun-ripened apple, and the whistle of a tea kettle boiling.

And here's what is magical about living in a special place like the Inland Northwest: even some sounds that may normally be irritating in other settings can be music to some (not all) ears.

There's the sound made by the chains on a rusty swing, rendered much more palatable by embracing the notion that the vast majority of people who live in Chicago or Southern California or Las Vegas do not have swings – rusty or otherwise.

There's the sound of a child's cry, softened by the knowledge that it is almost certainly being monitored and attended to by a caring parent.

There's the sound of a snowplow clearing the path for safe passage to one's destination, loud yet soothing at the same time.

Finally, there is the sound never experienced in big cities, vast metropolitan areas or tourist destinations: silence. It has been said that silence gives, while noise takes. Will Rog-

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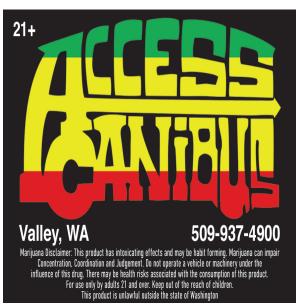
ers put it more bluntly: "Never miss a good chance to shut up."

Even given its breathtaking natural beauty, no matter which direction one cares to look and no matter the season, the best thing about the Inland Northwest may well be its soundtrack, one that evolves from season to season, yet never assaults the senses.

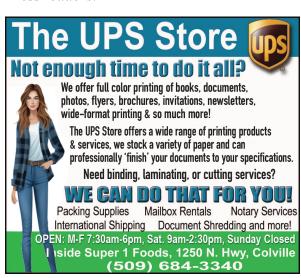
Including something almost unheard of anywhere else: silence.

And that is worth another type of sigh – one of gratitude and wonder.





A recipient of more than 90 national writing awards, Bob Johnson has covered sports, wine, music, travel, business and numerous other topics over the course of his 50-year career. Now, he's looking forward to exploring the many aspects of his family's new home in North Idaho and the surrounding area and sharing his observations with Huckleberry Press readers.





In a Word Search Far Far Away...

CYGHXQZOVHVZFFGSXARED S A N 0 C Т \mathbf{R} GANA \mathbf{P} HMDΥZ RE \mathbf{P} U В L Ι C N W GRHA I T Ρ U Γ N B F G A C Y N K V Α G Μ \mathbf{N} 0 Α GOLB Ι D \mathbf{R} K \mathbf{D} S RKC J Ρ U N Ι Т Μ Y Ρ \mathbf{B} D \mathbf{E} G Ι ΚN Ι Α K U C N Ι N C N Α 0 J Α Α F N W Q W \mathbf{Z} Y Т Ν Y W V K D S W P U 0 X R Ι W W G Ι K 0 C \mathbf{E} R U MF \mathbf{E} \mathbf{L} C 0 N A R A B G L Α W 0 V Μ W XHA V A U Ε L E \mathbf{T} A N Ι D P Y C M Ε \mathbf{E} K D Ο \mathbf{L} \mathbf{E} D 0 Ρ D \mathbf{P} Ι Ι Ι N S D KT Ι Α \mathbf{T} Ι \mathbf{E} Ρ D 0 Α Μ \mathbf{E} G N 0 \mathbf{E} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{E} Η S R W R Y R \mathbf{B} D \mathbf{D} \mathbf{Z} Ι LYKN \mathbf{B} \mathbf{E} Ι Т R A X D 0 D R ${f T}$ \mathbf{E} \mathbf{E} В ΙL ΗA \mathbf{R} R Т Q \mathbf{L} R C Т 0 \mathbf{N} T В В Ι Т Y D G X Α G Ι S Η W V K S \mathbf{E} Α \mathbf{Z} Α \mathbf{R} Т Μ F P \mathbf{P} WARMS A B МО S D \mathbf{T} Q \mathbf{E} Ν 0 Η Т L \mathbf{E} \mathbf{R} Q C ΚA D G Ι Ε W Т Ε N ΥE H D L E \mathbf{E} Α 0 R U G C J \mathbf{T} \mathbf{Z} Ι 0 S Η Η 0 S Ι В \mathbf{Z} C ΙA R L \mathbf{T} R G I ${f E}$ I C X V Α Ν U \mathbf{E} R \mathbf{E} Ι S V В C I S Ν CRKL RRLA U В 0 Ε V N Ι J 0 L W Η J \mathbf{T} Ι Α I Q F P \mathbf{E} 0 N \mathbf{E} Ι C 0 Ρ R L Q R 0 X C В \mathbf{Z} I Ε Α F Η Η Ρ D Α ΥA R C S Ρ Y F N Α B N 0 \mathbf{E} G L \mathbf{P} S V \mathbf{L} F Η \mathbf{D} TAJHMNELPOEPDNASBYLP E E F

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Sudoku Puzzle Instructions:

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing.

Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces.

Every row must contain one of each digit – so must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

Puzzle difficulty level is "Medium." Good luck!

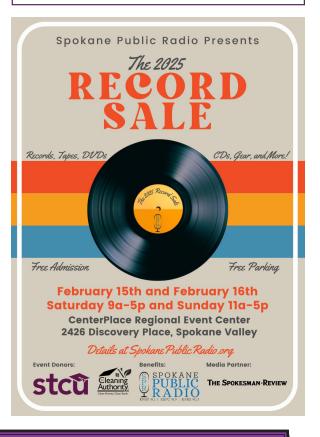
SUDOKU SOLUTION:

Yoda

Below is the Solution to

This Week's Puzzle

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Jokes curated from the Internet by Thea Cruden

What did the French groundhog see when he woke up? His château. What do you get when you cross a groundhog with a Maple Leaf? Six more weeks of hockey.

How do groundhogs move their homes? With wheelburrows.

Knock, knock. (Who's there?) Pun. (Pun who?) Punxsutawney Phil.

How do vampires know if they had a successful Valentine's Day? If it's love at first bite.

Did Adam and Eve ever have a date? No, they had an apple.

What did the man say to his banker on February 14? "You've caught my interest."

Why shouldn't you fall in love with a pastry chef? He'll dessert you.

What did the paper clip say to the magnet? "I find you very attractive."

What did the gardener say to their date? "I dig you."

What did the cucumber say to the pickle? "You mean a great dill to me"

What did one cat say to the other cat on Valentine's Day? "You're purr-fect."

Interpreting Dreams: After she woke up, a woman told her husband, "I just dreamed that you gave me a pearl necklace for Valentine's day. What do you think it means?" "You'll know tonight." he said. That evening, the man came home with a small package and gave it to his wife. Delighted, she opened it...to find a book entitled "The meaning of dreams"

Why did the groundhog bring its watch to the bank? It wanted to save time.

How do you hire a groundhog? Put it on a ladder.

Why is Punxsutawney Phil always cold? Because he has many fans.

Did you hear about the groundhog that drank invisible ink? It's still at the doctor waiting to be seen.

What kind of car does an egg drive? A yolkswagen.

What kind of tea is hard to swallow? Reality.

The wife and I took a long, leisurely drive out to the country and pulled over to fill up our car's gas tank and tires... She was surprised to see that the station had a fee to fill the tires and asked me, "Why in the world do they charge for AIR?!" I responded, "Inflation."

Why wouldn't the shrimp share his treasure? He was a little shellfish.

Did you hear about the sensitive burglar? He takes things personally.

When does a duck wake up? At the quack of dawn.

What does a baby computer call his father? Data.

What kind of tree can fit inside your hand? A palm tree.

An elderly couple are in church. The wife leans over and whispers to her husband, "I just let out a long, silent fart. What should I do?" The husband replies, "First off, replace the batteries in your hearing aid!"

What steals from you when you're in your bathtub? A robber duckie.

What kind of dog tells time? A watch dog.

How do you identify a bald eagle? All his feathers are combed over to one side.

Why does a tiger have stripes? So he will not be spotted.

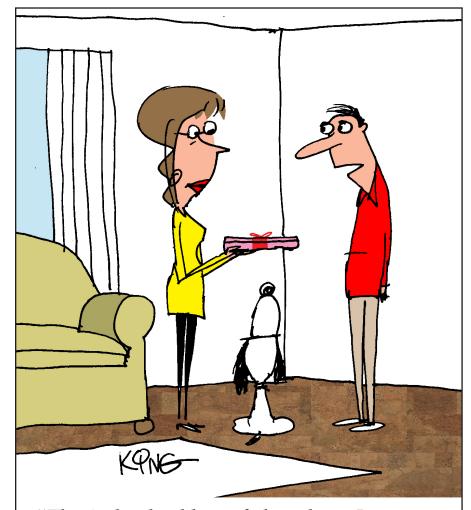
What did one volcano say to the other volcano? I lava you.

What did one boat say to the other boat? Are you interested in a little row-mance?

Did you hear about the actor who fell through the floorboards? He was just going through a stage.

A boy asks his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?" "That's disgusting. Don't talk about things like that over dinner," the dad replies. After dinner the father asks, "Now, son, what did you want to ask me?" "Oh, nothing," the boy says. "There was a bug in your soup, but now it's gone."

Jerry King cartoon printed with permission. www.jerryking.com



"That's the third box of chocolates I got you for Valentine's Day. The other two didn't survive the ride home."

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Regional Chambers of Commerce

Greater Bonners Ferry Chamber of Commerce P.O. Box X

Bonners Ferry, ID 83805 visitbonnersferry.org | 208-290-1143 info@bonnersferrychamber.org

Chewelah Chamber of Commerce

401 South Park St., #E Chewelah, WA 99109 chewelah.org | 509-935-8595 Meeting: Fridays, 7 am, Mistequa Casino

Coeur d'Alene Regional Chamber of Commerce

105 N 1st St., Ste 100 Coeur D Alene, ID 83814 cdachamber.com | connect@cdachamber.com | 208-664-3194 Meeting: 2nd Tuesday, 7 am, Coeur d'Alene

Colville Chamber of Commerce

Resort

986 S Main St., Ste B Colville, WA 99114 colville.com | 509-684-5973 Meeting: 2nd Tuesday, Noon, Eagle's Lodge

Deer Park Chamber of Commerce

316 E. Crawford St.

Deer Park, WA 99006
deerparkchamber.com | 509-276-5900
Meeting: 3rd Tuesday, noon, call for each month's location

Harrington Area Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 291 Harrington, WA 99134 harringtonbiz.com

Greater Hayden/Hayden Lake Chamber of Commerce

157 W Hayden Ave., Ste 103 Hayden, ID 83835 haydenchamber.org | 208-762-1185

Kettle Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

425 W. 3rd Ave. Kettle Falls, WA 99141 kfchamber.org | 509-738-2300 Meeting: 4th Tuesday, 5:30 pm, Kettle Falls Visitor Center

Lake Spokane Chamber of Commerce

5972 Hwy 291 Nine Mile Falls, WA 99026 info@lakespokanechamber.com | 509-218-8062 Meeting: 3rd Tuesday, 11:30 am, Suncrest Fire-Rescue Sta. 8

Newport-Oldtown Chamber of Commerce

325 W 4th St. Newport, WA 99156 newportareachamber.com | 509-447-5812 Meeting: Quarterly, rotating locations

North Pend Oreille Chamber of Commerce

P.O Box 388
Metaline Falls, WA 99153
npochamber.org | info@npochamber.org

Rathdrum Area Chamber of Commerce

8052 W. Main St., Ste 201 Rathdrum, ID 83858 rathdrumchamber.com 208-687-2866 Meeting: 3rd Thursday, 11:45 am, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

Republic Area Chamber of Commerce

P.O Box 502 Republic, WA 99166 republicchamber.org | 509-429-1877 Meeting: 3rd Thursday, noon, 157 N. Clark Ave.

Ritzville Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Info

111 W Main Ave. Ritzville, WA 99169 ritzvillechamber.com | 509-659-1936 Meeting: 3rd Monday, 6 pm, Ritzville City Hall

Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce 1202 5th Ave.

Sandpoint, ID 83864 sandpointchamber.org | 208-263-2161 Meeting: 2nd Thursday, noon, Tango Community Room

Spirit Lake Chamber of Commerce

Spirit Lake, ID 83869 spiritlakechamber.com | 208-428-1908 Meeting: 1st Tuesday, 8 am, Community/Senior Center

Greater Spokane Inc.

P.O. Box 772

801 W Riverside Ave, Ste 100 Spokane, WA 99201 spokanechamber.org | 509-624-1393

Sprague Chamber

213 S. C St. Sprague, WA 99032 spraguechamber.com | 509-251-9165

Springdale Area Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 275 Springdale, WA 99173 509-703-0352 Not currently meeting – looking for volunteers

West Plains Chamber of Commerce

P.O Box 228 Airway Heights, WA 99001 westplainschamber.org | 509-235-8480

Regional Rotary Clubs

Benewah, ID

St. Maries: Tuesdays, noon, Benedictine Hall

Bonner, ID

Center Community Room

Ponderay: first three Tuesdays of the month,

7am, Tango Cafe, Sandpoint

Sandpoint: Wednesdays, noon, Sandpoint

Kootenai, ID

Post Falls: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month, noon, Highlands Golf Course Grille

Coeur d'Alene Sunrise: Tuesdays, 7am, Coeur d'Alene Resort

Coeur d'Alene Evening: Thursdays, 4:30, Life Public House

Coeur d'Alene: Fridays, noon, Coeur d'Alene Resort

Pend Oreille, WA/ID

Newport-Priest River: Wednesday, 6:45 am, St Francis Church Parish Hall

Spokane, WA

Deer Park: Thursdays, noon, First Street Bar & Grill

Spokane Valley Sunrise: Mondays, 7am,

Mirabeau Park Hotel

Spokane North: Mondays, noon, Bark, A Rescue Pub

Liberty Lake: Tuesdays, noon, Trailhead Golf Course

Greater Spokane Valley: Wednesdays, noon, Darcy's

Spokane 21: Thursdays, noon, The Spokane Club

Spokane Aurora Northwest: Thursdays, noon, The Onion Bar & Grill

Spokane South: Friday, noon, Shawn O'Donnell's American Grill & Irish Pub

Stevens, WA

Colville: Wednesdays, noon, The HUB

Kettle Falls: Thursdays, 7am, Sandy's DriveIn

Whitman

Colfax: Thursdays, noon, Methodist Church *Pullman:* 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, noon, Zeppos

...continued from page 1

of St. Valentine played a key role in the transformation of February 14 into a day of love.

Medieval and Renaissance Celebrations

By the Middle Ages, St. Valentine's Day began to gain popularity in Europe, particularly in England and France. It was during this period that the association between February 14 and romantic love became more pronounced. A notable influence was Geoffrey Chaucer, the famed English poet, who referenced St. Valentine's Day in his 1382 poem *Parliament of Foules*. Chaucer's writing suggests that the day was considered a time when birds (a symbol of love) chose their mates, which helped solidify the connection between the day and romantic love.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, the tradition of exchanging love notes or gifts became popular. These early valentines were often simple poems or messages of affection written by hand, and they were exchanged among lovers and friends. The popularity of written love letters grew during the Renaissance, as more people learned to read, and printing presses began to make books and materials more accessible.

The Commercialization of Valentine's Day

By the 18th century, Valentine's Day had become a more commercialized occasion, particularly in Britain. The practice of sending mass-produced, beautifully decorated cards became widespread, even reaching the United States. In 1847, Esther Howland, an American woman, is credited with creating the first commercially successful Valentine's Day cards. Her cards featured lace, ribbons, and intricate designs, and she marketed them through local shops, creating a booming industry around the holiday.

Howland's innovations marked the beginning of Valentine's Day as a major consumer holiday. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the tradition of sending cards had become firmly established, with people sending cards, flowers, and chocolates to their loved ones.

The Modern Era: Globalization and Commercialization

Valentine's Day continued to evolve in the 20th century, becoming increasingly commercialized in many countries. Businesses capitalized on the growing demand for romantic gifts, and the holiday became synonymous with flowers, chocolates, jewelry, and other tokens of love. The introduction of mass-produced greeting cards, which could be purchased at almost any store, made it easier for people to express their feelings on the day. Roses, particularly red ones, became symbolic of love and passion, and a staple Valentine's Day gift.

Valentine's Day also became a day for expressing love between friends, family members, and even colleagues. In some cultures, it is common for people to give small gifts or handwritten notes of appreciation to anyone they care about. What better way to increase profits than to expand the pool of who can be a "valentine?"

The rise of globalization has further spread Valentine's Day celebrations across the world. While some countries, particularly in the West, have long embraced the holiday, others in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East have adopted their own ways of celebrating it. In Japan, for example, women typically give chocolates to men on February 14, while men reciprocate the gesture on March 14, known as "White Day." Similarly, in South Korea, the celebration of love is extended over several months, with dif-

ferent days designated for expressing affection.

A modern description of Valentine's Day would be incomplete without including Galentine's Day. As a teenager, I dreaded Valentine's Day because it was a painful reminder that I didn't have a boyfriend and would be receiving no roses, no chocolates, no teddy bear, and, apparently, not even a smack with a blood-soaked goat skin. I wish I had thought to celebrate Galentine's Day back then to reduce that sting. Celebrated on February 13, Galentine's Day rebuffs traditional Valentine's Day customs. Instead, it celebrates women's friendship, reminding us that the gift of friendship is better than chocolates or roses. The concept of Galentine's Day is about honoring close friendships and showing appreciation for those who are like family, but not romantically involved. It's an opportunity for friends to gather, often through brunches, gift exchanges, or simply spending quality time together.

Valentine's Day has come a long way from its origins in ancient Roman fertility rites to its modern status as a global celebration of love. Whether you celebrate Galentine's Day on the 13th or romantic love on the 14th, remember that love in all its wondrous forms is a great cause for celebration on any day.

Happy Valentine's Day to our beloved readers!

Amy McGarry grew up in Spokane Valley, Washington. After a 20 year hiatus, she moved back to Spokane Valley where she lives with her husband, daughter and two cats. She is the author of I am Farang: Adventures of a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand available on Amazon.com, Auntie's Bookstore, and Barnes and Noble.

