



**24 HOUR
EMERGENCY
SERVICE**

Water Remediation

New Year's Traditions

Celebrating the arrival of the New Year is perhaps the oldest holiday in recorded history. It started with the ancient Babylonians more than 4,000 years ago, and continued with the Egyptians, Romans, Celts and so on. Here are some other quick facts about New Year's traditions and their origins:

- **January 1:** January 1 officially became the first day of the New Year in 46 BC, when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.
- **Resolutions:** The ancient Babylonians began the idea of New Year's resolutions as a way to start the year off with a clean slate by returning borrowed items.
- **Baby New Year:** Using a baby to represent the birth of the New Year started in ancient Greece in 600 BC. Early Egyptians also used the baby as a symbol of rebirth. The tradition was brought to early America by the Germans.
- **Black-eyed peas & cabbage:** Some say the black-eyed pea's lucky streak dates back to the pharaohs. Others say it started in Vicksburg, Virginia, during the Civil War when the town ran out of food while under siege and the inhabitants were lucky enough to discover cow peas (aka black-eyed peas). Meanwhile, cabbage leaves (a symbol of prosperity) are thought to bring prosperity to those who eat them on New Year's Day.
- **New Year's Parades:** In the US, one of the most famous parades is the Tournament of Roses where the floats are all decorated with flowers. The parade dates back to 1886 when members of the Valley Hunt Club decorated their carriages with flowers.

New Year's is celebrated in many countries with a parade. After spending many months creating colorful costumes, the Junkanoo parade is held in the Bahamas where thousands of people celebrate in the New Year's Festival. Prizes are given to the best, the strangest and the most beautiful costumes.

In Nepal there is a four day parade during the New Year's celebration, and in Greece people carry figures of apples, ships and stars.

In Syria and Lebanon children parade door to door.

Thailand's parade is led by an honored woman and people march to the beat of drums and gongs. Dragons, elephants, buffalos and giants are popular parade costumes there.

In Oberammergau, Germany, the parade is very long and the parade leader carries a tall pole with a star on the top. He sings songs about the past year and dances to a band.



January is named after the Roman god Janus, who was always shown as having two heads. He looked back to the last year and forward to the new one. The Roman New Year festival was called the Calends, and people decorated their homes and gave each other gifts.

Having a Good Cry: Most vertebrates are capable of producing tears, which serve to clean the cornea and keep the eye moist, as well as to flush out dust and grit. But most scientists agree that humans are the only animals who produce tears prompted by emotion.

According to a recent study, women cry an average of 5.3 times a month, while men cry an average of 1.4 times. There is no difference in the length of time that both genders cry, but women typically sob and cry tears that run down their cheeks; men usually cry quietly and just get teary-eyes.

"It isn't proven yet, but weeping has most likely served humans through our evolutionary history by reducing stress," says Dr. William Frey, a biochemist and tear expert. Indeed, 85 percent of women said they feel better and more relieved after a good cry, as did 73 percent of men.

Recipe Corner

French Toast Casserole

1 (1-lb) loaf French bread, cubed
1 (8oz) pkg. cream cheese, cubed
8 eggs
2 ½ C whole milk
¾ C sugar
6 T butter, melted
¼ C pure maple syrup

Spray 13x9 inch glass baking dish with cooking spray. Place half of the bread in the dish, sprinkle with cream cheese. Top with remaining bread.

Whisk all remaining ingredients in large bowl; pour over bread, pressing on bread with spatula to soak up egg mixture. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Heat oven to 350°F. Bake, uncovered 45 minutes or until lightly browned.

Benjamin Franklin Quotes

Never confuse motion with action.

A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. There will be sleeping enough in the grave.

A man wrapped up in himself makes a very small package.

Take time for all things; great haste makes great waste.

A small leak can sink a great ship.

When you're finished changing, you're finished.



Batman: Origins of the Dark Knight



Batman is a comic book superhero co-created by artist Bob Kane and writer Bill Finger (though only Kane receives official credit), first appearing in publications by DC Comics. The character first appeared in *Detective Comics* #27 in May of 1939.

Unlike most superheroes, Batman does not possess any superpowers; he makes use of intellect, detective skills, science and technology, wealth, physical prowess and intimidation in his war on crime.

Batman became a popular character soon after his introduction and gained his own comic book title, *Batman*, in 1940. As the decades wore on, differing interpretations of the character emerged. The late 1960's *Batman* television series, debuting in January of 1966, used a campy aesthetic which continued to be associated with the character for years after the show ended. Various creators worked to return the character to his dark roots, culminating in the 1986 miniseries *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, by writer-artist Frank Miller, while the success of film director Tim Burton's 1989 film *Batman* helped to reignite popular interest in the character.

The Space Shuttle Challenger Disaster, January 28, 1986



The Space Shuttle Challenger disaster occurred on January 28, 1986, when Space Shuttle Challenger broke apart 73 seconds into its flight, leading to the deaths of its seven crew members. The spacecraft disintegrated over the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of central Florida at 11:39am EST.

Disintegration of the entire vehicle began after an O-ring seal in its right solid rocket booster failed at liftoff. The O-ring failure caused a breach in the SRB joint it sealed, allowing pressurized hot gas from within the solid rocket motor to reach the outside and impinge upon the adjacent SRB attachment hardware and external fuel tank. This led to the separation of the right-hand SRB's aft attachment and the structural failure of the external tank. Aerodynamic forces promptly broke up the orbiter.

The crew compartment and many other vehicle fragments were eventually recovered from the ocean floor after a lengthy search and recovery operation. Although the exact timing of the death of the crew is unknown, several crew members are known to have survived the initial breakup of the spacecraft. However, the shuttle had no escape system and the astronauts did not survive the impact of the crew compartment with the ocean surface.

The disaster resulted in a 32-month hiatus in the shuttle program and the formation of the Rogers Commission, a special commission appointed by President Ronald Reagan to investigate the accident.

The Dangers of Worrying: Norwegian scientists tracked 62,591 people and found that those who scored high on an anxiety test were 25% more likely to have pre-malignancies.

Theory: Psychological stress and anxiety depress the ability of the immune system to track and destroy pre-cancerous cells. – APA

January Birthday Hall of Famer: Elvis Presley

A cultural icon, Elvis Presley is known worldwide simply as Elvis. He's also often referred to as the King of Rock and Roll, or even just The King.



Elvis began his career in 1954 as one of the first performers of rockabilly, an up-tempo fusion of country and rhythm and blues, with a strong back beat. His novel covers of existing songs made him popular – and controversial – as did his uninhibited performances.

Presley had a versatile voice and he had unusually wide success encompassing many genres, including rock and roll, gospel, blues, country, ballads and pop. To date, he has been inducted into four music halls of fame.

In 1968, after making movies in Hollywood and having been away from the stage for seven years, he returned to live performances in a television special, which led to a string of successful tours across the U.S., notably in Las Vegas, for the remainder of his career. In 1973, Presley staged the first global live concert via satellite (*Aloha from Hawaii*), reaching an estimated 1 billion viewers live and an additional 500 million on delay. It remains the most watched broadcast by an individual entertainer in television history.

Throughout his career, he set records for concert attendance, television ratings and recordings sales. He is one of the best-selling solo artists in the history of popular music, with sales between 600 million and one billion worldwide, and he is regarded as one of the most important figures of twentieth century popular culture. Among his many awards and accolades are 14 Grammy nominations (3 wins) from the NARAS, and the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, which he received at the age of 36.

Health problems, prescription drug dependence and other factors led to his death in 1977 at the age of 42.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is January 15



The campaign for a federal holiday in Martin Luther King Jr.'s honor began soon after his assassination. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed in 1986. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays.

It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day was founded as a holiday promoted by labor unions in contract negotiations. After King's death, US Rep John Conyers introduced a bill in Congress to make King's birthday a national holiday. The bill first came to a vote in the House in 1979, but fell five votes short of the number needed for passage.

The main arguments mentioned by opponents were that a paid holiday for federal employees would be too expensive, and that a holiday to honor a private citizen would be contrary to longstanding tradition (King had never held public office). Soon after, the King Center turned to support from the corporate community and the general public. Six million signatures were collected for a petition to Congress to pass the law, in the largest petition in favor of an issue in U.S. history.

Does Bottled Water Spoil?

According to the US Food and Drug Administration, which regulates bottled water, properly bottled and sealed water should last indefinitely. But it may pick up an unpleasant odor and taste when stored in certain sites, such as a garage, where gasoline fumes can be absorbed through the plastic bottle.

The International Bottled Water Association recommends that bottled water be kept in a cool, dry location. Be sure to store it far away from toxic substances that may be absorbed through the bottle. – www.fda.gov

Thank You!

Thanks to YOU the word is spreading! Thanks to all of my wonderful clients and friends who graciously referred me to their friends and neighbors last month!

My business runs on the positive comments and referrals from people just like you! I couldn't do it without you!

Thanks for

All the Kind Words!

Excellent work and service
from start to finish!

~ Mr. Stoffer

Your New Issue Has Arrived!

*Look Inside For Some
Amazing Money-Saving
Tips and More!*

Dear Abby First Published Jan 9, 1956

Dear Abby is the name of the notable advice column founded in 1956 by Pauline Phillips under the pen name Abigail Van Buren and carried on today by her daughter, Jeanne Phillips, who now owns the legal rights to the pen name. According to Pauline Phillips, she came up with the pen name, Abigail Van Buren, by combining the name of a biblical figure (Abigail, the Book of Samuel) with the last name of former U.S. President Martin Van Buren.

Drinking Too Much Water

Drinking too much water too quickly can dilute the blood's content of salt to dangerously low levels that may cause illness or death. That's why the advice typically given to a sick person to drink plenty of fluids can backfire. If one person follows this advice to the extreme and overdoes it, he/she can be harmed.

Safety: Have your doctor tell you exactly how much fluid – and which fluids – to drink, rather than “plenty.” – *Marvin Lipman, MD*

Who Wants To Win Movie Tickets?

**Take my Trivia Challenge
And you could win too!**

This is one of my favorite parts of the newsletter! Each month, I'll give you a new trivia question. The first 5 people who e-mail my office with the correct answer will win **two FREE movie tickets**. Enjoy a night out on me with someone special in your life! Take your best guess, and then e-mail me at **candy@allfloodfire.com!** Remember, your chances of winning are better than you think!

This month's Mega Trivia Question:

In which year did Elvis Presley perform his record-setting live performance *Aloha from Hawaii*?

A) 1961 B) 1968 C) 1973 D) 1976

HINT: The answer is somewhere in this newsletter