

EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

SPRING
BRUNCH
RECIPES

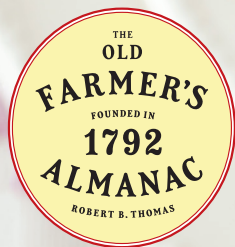
PLANT
COMPANIONS

THE LURE OF
ANGLING LORE

SPRING-CLEAN
NATURALLY

MAY HOLIDAYS,
HISTORY, AND FOLKLORE

MAY 2016





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Visually navigate the night sky from your own backyard.

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WIT

Humor Me
Grins and groans from the Almanac

WHAT'S NEXT

See what we have in store for our June issue!



THE MONTH OF MAY

HOLIDAYS, HISTORY, AND FOLKLORE



MOON VIEW

May's full Moon, the Full Flower Moon, occurs on the 21st, at 5:15 P.M. EDT.

 TAP FOR MORE MOON PHASES

 TAP FOR MORE ABOUT THE FULL FLOWER MOON AND OTHER FUN MOON FACTS



MAY'S ZODIAC SIGNS

Taurus: April 21–May 20

Gemini: May 21–June 20

PHOTOS: THINKSTOCK

SAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If they try to rush me, I always say, I've only got one other speed and it's slower.

—Glenn Ford,
American actor
(b. May 1, 1916;
d. August 30, 2006)



MAY'S BIRTH FLOWER:

Hawthorn or Lily-of-the-Valley

- The hawthorn means hope.
- The lily-of-the-valley symbolizes sweetness or the return of happiness.



 TAP FOR MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

FOLKLORE FUN

*A dry May and a leaking June
Make the farmer whistle
a merry tune.*



MONTHLY HAPPENINGS



+ TAP FOR FUN
CAMEL FACTS

MAY 14: CAVALRY CAMELS ARRIVED IN U.S.

On this day in 1856, the first 34 camels shipped from Turkey on the USS *Supply* disembarked in Indianola, Texas. Their purpose: to join the U.S. Army. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis had ordered their purchase, believing that they would prove useful in transporting military supplies in the Desert Southwest. In many trials, they indeed were faster and stronger than mule-drawn wagon teams, and they did not need as much water or food. Eventually the U.S. Camel Corps experiment fizzled, however. The advent of the Civil War disrupted research, and the soldiers (and their mules and horses) did not like the animals—the odor, spitting, and biting being a deterrent.



MAY 22: NATIONAL MARITIME DAY

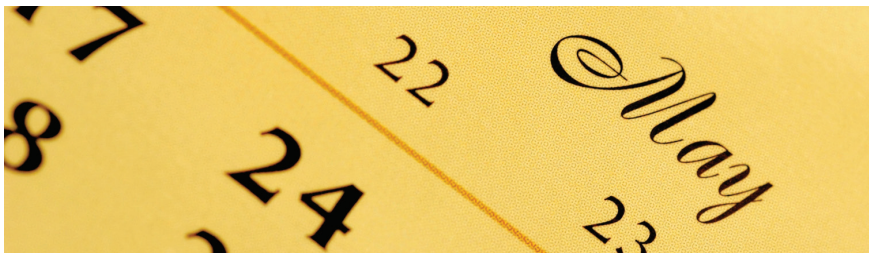


In 1933, Congress designated May 22 as National Maritime Day, an occasion to honor the past and present contributions of the U.S. merchant marine during both peace and war.

Why May 22? On this day in 1819, the first successful transoceanic voyage under steam propulsion began when the steamship *SS Savannah* set sail from Savannah, Georgia. It arrived in Liverpool, England, on June 20.



CALENDAR Q&A



Q: According to astronomers, what is a Julian day?

A: The term “Julian day” can be confusing because it has several meanings, including being a date on the Julian calendar. In astronomy, however, the Julian day (or Julian day number) is the number of days that have passed since the start of a Julian period.

The Julian period is a year-numbering system developed by 16th-century French astronomer Joseph Justus Scaliger. He determined that the current Julian period began on January 1, 4713 B.C. of the Julian calendar; every 7,980 years, the count of years restarts.

For dating and comparing the timing of astronomical events and observations, John Herschel and other astronomers created a day-numbering system based on Scaliger’s Julian period. There are no months in a Julian day system; it simply counts the days, and fractions of days in decimals, since the period began. Julian day 0 occurred on January 1, 4713 B.C. The Julian day starts at noon Universal Time (Greenwich Mean Time) so that nighttime astronomical events occur on one Julian day.

A Julian *date* includes the fraction of a Julian day. For example, on May 1, 2016 (Gregorian calendar date), at midnight (the start of the day on a common calendar) the Julian day number is 2457509, and the Julian date is 2457509.5. On May 1, 2016, at noon, the Julian day number changes to 2457510 and the Julian date to 2457510.0.

[+](#) TAP TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE JULIAN PERIOD

DID YOU KNOW?

- Arabian camels, also called dromedaries, have one hump. Bactrian camels have two humps.
- Camels store fat, not water, in their humps, which have a capacity of up to 80 pounds in each hump. Camels convert that fat to energy when food and water are not available.
- Camels can survive without water for about 2 weeks and without food for up to a month.

DID YOU KNOW?

French astronomer Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) sought to standardize calendar years so that all historical eras would fall on a single timeline and all years were consecutive and positive.

Why 7,980 years? That's how long the 28-year solar cycle (related to how the days fall on the Julian calendar), the 19-year Golden Number cycle (related to how the Moon phases fall on the calendar), and 15-year indiction (a Roman tax cycle that was used to date legal documents) take to all start on the same day again.

Why 4713 B.C. for the start of the first period? Scaliger wanted it to be a year in which no historical record existed, in order to prevent confusion in record-keeping. Following calendar tradition, he based his calculations on an epoch—the year of Christ's birth as determined by Dionysius Exiguus, a 6th-century scholar. In that year, Scaliger knew that the solar, Golden Number, and indiction cycles were at 9, 1, and 3, respectively. He then determined that the year of Christ's birth corresponded to year 4713 of his newly devised Julian period. Working backward, year 1 of this Julian period began on January 1, 4713 B.C. (Julian calendar date).

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BEST DAYS

These May dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

PERSONAL

Begin diet to lose weight: 2, 30
 Begin diet to gain weight: 10, 15
 Cut hair to encourage growth: 17, 18
 Cut hair to discourage growth: 29, 30
 Have dental care: 14, 15
 Quit smoking: 2, 30
 Wean children: 2, 30

AROUND THE HOUSE

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 1–3, 29, 30
 End projects: 5
 Start projects: 7

OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 24, 25
 Go camping: 22, 23
 Go fishing: 6–21
 Set posts or pour concrete: 24, 25

IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 4, 5, 31
 Graft or pollinate: 10, 11
 Prune to encourage growth: 12, 13
 Prune to discourage growth: 4, 5, 31
 Plant aboveground crops: 19–21
 Plant belowground crops: 1–3, 29, 30
 Harvest aboveground crops: 7, 14–16
 Harvest belowground crops: 24, 25

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 19–21
 Castrate animals: 26–28
 Cut hay: 4, 5, 31
 Set eggs: 16, 17, 25–27
 Slaughter livestock: 19–21
 Wean animals: 2, 30



GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the May dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT: Cancer, Scorpio, or Pisces

HARVEST: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS: Capricorn

CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED: Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

PRUNE: Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



APP EXTRA!
TAP FOR MAY
MOON PHASES

THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN MAY

1 Pisces	9 Gemini	17 Libra	25 Capricorn
2 Pisces	10 Cancer	18 Libra	26 Aquarius
3 Pisces	11 Cancer	19 Scorpio	27 Aquarius
4 Aries	12 Leo	20 Scorpio	28 Aquarius
5 Aries	13 Leo	21 Scorpio	29 Pisces
6 Taurus	14 Virgo	22 Sagittarius	30 Pisces
7 Taurus	15 Virgo	23 Sagittarius	31 Aries
8 Gemini	16 Virgo	24 Capricorn	

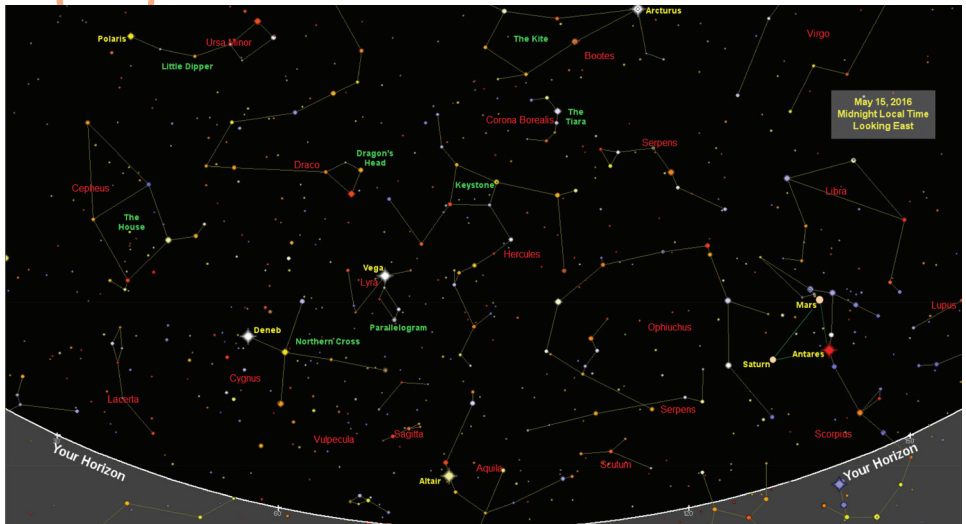
MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion retrograde motion.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions. **Mercury will be retrograde from April 28–May 22, August 30–September 22, and December 19–January 9, 2017.**

–Celeste Longacre



May 15, 2016
Midnight Local Time
Looking East

ALL ABOUT ASTERISMS

An asterism is an easily recognized star pattern that lies within a constellation. Unlike constellations, asterisms are entirely “unofficial.” There is no international organization or governing body that assigns names to asterisms. Their names have come into popular usage because they are a convenience—an easy way to navigate the sky. If you wish, feel free to identify and name your own asterisms. Who knows? Your names might catch on!

For a fine example of an asterism, look near the center of this month’s star map for the Keystone, a compact pattern of four stars that lies within the constellation Hercules, the Hero. Hercules is a sprawling constellation, the fifth largest in the sky, but the distinctive shape of the Keystone stands out.

Above and to the right of the Keystone is the constellation Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown. To me, this semicircle of stars looks far more like a tiara than a crown, so the Tiara is it, at least for me.

Higher in the sky lies Boötes, the Herdsman, whose main

APP EXTRA!

TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
MAY SKY MAP

APP EXTRA!

TAP TO
FOLLOW
OHIOAN JEFF
DETRAY’S SKY
ADVENTURES



stars form an asterism known as the Kite. It's a sloppy-looking kite to be sure, but the shape is certainly suggestive of a kite, enough so that it can help you to get your bearings to find Boötes. The bright star Arcturus anchors the tail of the Kite.

Off to the left, look for the Little Dipper asterism, part of the constellation Ursa Minor, the Lesser Bear. At the end of the Dipper's handle is Polaris, the North Star. From brightly lit suburbs, you'll see only Polaris and the brighter stars of the Dipper's bowl. In areas with little or no artificial light, you'll see the whole Dipper.

Between the Little Dipper and the Kite slithers the body of Draco, the Dragon, which culminates in the Dragon's Head, a four-sided asterism that shows up well at a dark location.

Below the Dragon's Head, look for two very bright stars that point the way to a fine pair of asterisms, one small and the other quite large. The star Vega, in the small constellation Lyra, the Lyre, achieved notoriety as home to the fictional aliens who sent a message to Earth in the 1997 Jodie Foster film, *Contact*. Beneath Vega is a small but beautifully symmetrical asterism, the Parallelogram. Its exquisite and geometrically perfect shape is a wonder.

To the lower left is the bright star Deneb. It sits at the tip of the Northern Cross, which lies on its side at this time of year. Deneb and the Northern Cross are part of the large constellation Cygnus, the Swan. The name Deneb is derived from the Arabic word for "tail"; indeed, Deneb sits at the tail of the Swan.

The left side of our sky map features the House, an asterism within the constellation Cepheus, the King. Yes, it's a lopsided house, but no more lopsided than the ones we all draw as children.

Far to the right on our map is a very temporary asterism, a triangle composed of the orange-y star Antares and the planets Mars and Saturn. Enjoy this asterism while you can, because Mars is on the move and in another few weeks will travel far from Antares and Saturn. Saturn, which moves much more slowly than Mars, will remain in the vicinity for a few more months, but it too will eventually vacate the area.

Planets are always moving relative to the stars. The very word "planet" means "wanderer" in ancient Greek and was applied to the few celestial objects that early astronomers found to be "wandering" among the never-changing stars.

—Jeff DeTray

NEW THIS MONTH!



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FOOD



Spring Brunch Recipes

Whether you're celebrating Mother's Day or just the warmer weather—or both—now is the perfect time to start planning a tasty spring brunch!

From fragrant scones to savory quiche, these recipes will help you to welcome spring in a most delightful and delicious way.

FOOD

Lavender Scones

 TAP FOR
RECIPE



PHOTO: EMILY ADAMSON



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THIS
RECIPE

LAVENDER SCONES

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons sugar

2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons chopped fresh lavender flowers or 1
teaspoon dried lavender flowers

1 teaspoon orange zest

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter

1 egg, slightly beaten

2/3 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 400°F.

In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, lavender, zest, salt, and baking soda. Cut in butter until mixture resembles cornmeal. Stir in egg and buttermilk with a fork.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead gently but briefly (don't overknead). Divide in half and pat each piece into a 3/4-inch-thick round. Cut each round into six wedges and place them 1 inch apart on an ungreased baking sheet.

Bake for 20 minutes, or until golden. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Makes 12 scones.

FOOD

Crab Scramble

+ TAP FOR
RECIPE





SHARE
THIS
RECIPE

CRAB SCRAMBLE

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted

9 eggs

1/2 cup milk

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 can (6 ounces) crabmeat, drained

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, cut into small cubes

**1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill
chopped parsley for garnish (optional)**

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Pour butter into a 12x8-inch baking dish.

In a bowl, beat the eggs, milk, salt, and pepper. Stir in crabmeat and cream cheese. Pour into the baking dish and sprinkle dill over the mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes, then lower heat to 300°F and bake until firm in the center, about 10 minutes. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

Makes 6 servings.

FOOD

+ TAP FOR RECIPE

*Spinach and
Mushroom Quiche*

FOOD

SPINACH AND MUSHROOM QUICHE

- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter**
- 3 cups sliced mushrooms**
- 1/4 cup chopped onion**
- 1 unbaked 9-inch deep-dish piecrust**
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- 4 eggs**
- 1 cup milk or heavy cream**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained**
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add mushrooms and onion and cook for 10 minutes, or until soft; set aside to cool.

Sprinkle bottom of pie shell with Swiss cheese.

In a bowl, lightly beat the eggs, then add milk, spinach, mushrooms and onion, salt and pepper, and nutmeg; stir well.

Gently pour the egg mixture over the Swiss cheese in the piecrust and sprinkle Parmesan on top.

Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 350°F and continue baking for 30 to 40 minutes more, or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow to stand for 15 to 20 minutes before cutting.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.



**SHARE
THIS
RECIPE**

FOOD



TAP FOR
RECIPE

Scalloped Potatoes and Ham

SCALLOPED POTATOES AND HAM

- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cups chopped ham
- 3/4 cup Parmesan cheese, divided
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme or dried dill
- 4 to 6 potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 cups milk

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 1-1/2- to 2-quart casserole with a cover.

In a bowl, combine onions, ham, 1/2 cup Parmesan, and thyme.

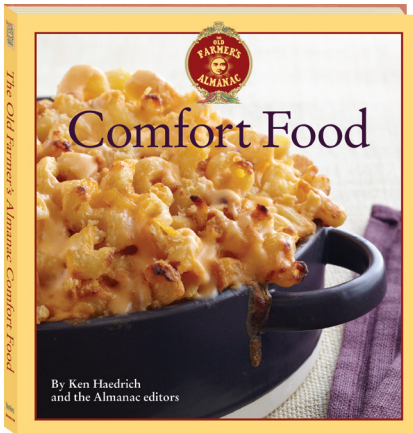
Arrange a layer of potato slices in bottom of casserole. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Sprinkle one-third of the ham mixture over the potatoes. Repeat the layers two more times, each time generously seasoning the potato slices with salt and pepper. End with potatoes. Pour milk over the layers. Sprinkle the remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan over the top.

Cover and bake for 45 minutes. Remove cover and bake for 15 minutes more, or until potatoes are tender and top is golden brown.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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PLANT COMPANIONS: FRIEND OR FOE?

It takes more than good soil, sun, and nutrients to ensure success in a garden. Plants have to grow well with one another. How much do you know about companion planting, aka companion gardening? Learn some of the many ways that plants support each other—and see how others compete—to get better results with your plants this season.

Marigolds are as good as gold when grown with just about any garden plant.

GARDENING



DILL AND BASIL PLANTED AMONG TOMATOES PROTECT THE TOMATOES FROM HORNWORMS.

Vegetable Garden Companions

Some plants, especially herbs, act as repellents, confusing insects with their strong odors that mask the scent of the intended host plants.

Dill and basil planted among tomatoes protect the tomatoes from hornworms, and sage

scattered about the cabbage patch reduces injury from cabbage moths.

Marigolds are as good as gold when grown with just about any garden plant, repelling beetles, nematodes, and even animal pests.

Some companions act as trap plants, luring insects to themselves. Nasturtiums, for example, are so favored

by aphids that the devastating insects will flock to them instead of other plants.

Carrots, dill, parsley, and parsnip attract garden heroes—praying mantises, ladybugs, and spiders—that dine on insect pests.

Much of companion planting is common sense: Lettuce, radishes, and other quick-growing

GARDENING

plants sown between hills of melons or winter squash will mature and be harvested long before these vines need more leg room.

Leafy greens like spinach and Swiss chard grow well in the shadow of corn.

Bush beans tolerate the dapple shade that corn casts and, since their

roots occupy different levels in the soil, don't compete for water and nutrients.

Incompatible Edibles

Plants that are not compatible are sometimes called combatants. Here are a few:

While garlic and onions repel a plethora



TAP TO LEARN ABOUT
WOODLAND
COMPANIONS

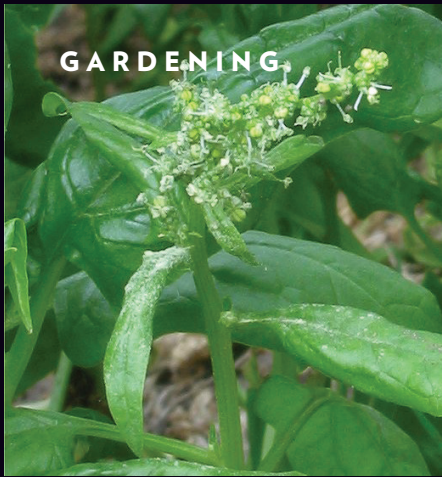
of pests and make excellent neighbors for most garden plants, the growth of beans and peas is stunted in their presence.

Potatoes and beans grow poorly in the company of sunflowers,



POTATOES AND BEANS GROW POORLY IN THE COMPANY OF SUNFLOWERS.

GARDENING



SPINACH AND SWISS CHARD GROW WELL IN THE SHADOW OF CORN.

TAP TO VIEW OUR **PLANT COMPANION AND FOES LIST** FOR 10 COMMON GARDEN VEGETABLES

and although cabbage and cauliflower are

closely related, they don't like each other at all.

One of the keys to successful companion planting is observation. Record your plant combinations and

the results from year to year and share this information with other gardening friends. Companionship is just as important for gardeners as it is for gardens.

DID YOU KNOW?

Even plants in woodlands are companions:

Blueberries, mountain laurel, azaleas, and other ericaceous (heath family) plants thrive in the acidic soils created by pines and oaks.

Shade-loving plants seek the shelter provided by a wooded grove. The shade-lovers in return protect the forest floor from erosion with their thick tangle of shallow roots.

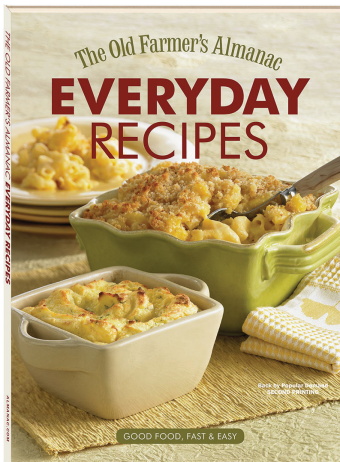
Legumes and some trees, such as alders, have symbiotic relationships with bacteria in the soil that help them to capture nitrogen from the air and convert it to fertilizer, enriching the soil so that plants can prosper in their presence.

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Peachy Almond Cake



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Clam-Stuffed Mushrooms

LIVING NATURALLY



Spring-Cleaning Naturally

LIVING NATURALLY

THESE NATURAL PRODUCTS
WORK WELL, AND THEY
SAVE A LOT OF MONEY
OVER THE YEARS.



When it comes to housecleaning, I count myself among the minimum-but-good-enough class of rural dwellers.

Heating with wood (smoke, ash, wood chips, sawdust), living with a food-producing solar greenhouse that communicates directly with the house (dirt, dust), and preferring to spend my time growing, foraging, and preserving as much of my own food as possible makes maintaining high cleaning standards challenging.

For my good-enough housecleaning tasks,

I use a small and admirably versatile array of natural housecleaning products: vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice, salt, borax, wood ash.

I started using these products many years ago, mostly because so many commercial cleaning products gave me headaches and irritated my eyes and nasal passages.

The headaches stopped, the natural products worked well, and they've saved a lot of money over the years.

ASTONISHING VERSATILITY

I continue to love the fact that this half-dozen

of natural products singly or in combination will clean my toilet, tub, teeth, upholstery, carpets, and windows; super-clean our grubbier laundry; deodorize our pets and our car's interior; and also soothe sunburns and insect stings, relieve an itch, gargle away many sore throats, and wash and condition my hair.

And please note: Four of the six are pantry staples and safe enough to eat.

Here are just a few of the cost-effective ways in which I use these products for tough cleaning and deodorizing tasks.

LIVING NATURALLY



VINEGAR

I use white vinegar in a spray bottle to sanitize kitchen and bathroom surfaces; to prevent or remove hard-water scale from the coffee pot, tub, and toilet; as a window cleaner; and to remove labels from products or glue-backed stickers from walls. You can unplug most drains by pouring in half a cup of baking soda, followed by a cup of white or cider vinegar. (Don't use a commercial



FOR MORE **VINEGAR TIPS**, TAP HERE



FOR MORE **BAKING SODA TIPS**, TAP HERE



FOR MORE **LEMON TIPS**, TAP HERE

drain product first, as you could create toxic fumes.)

I've learned that those tough, long-standing, lime scale stains in sinks and toilets that no amount of scouring will clean eventually give way after repeated, long soakings with white vinegar.

Oh, and a couple of tablespoons of ordinary olive oil in a cup of vinegar works well to dust and polish wood furniture.



BAKING SODA

Especially in combination with salt, baking soda works well for scouring sinks and tubs, brushing your teeth, wiping down and deodorizing the refrigerator, and removing smells and

stains from carpets and upholstery (rub in, leave for an hour, shake or vacuum out).



LEMON JUICE

Half a cup in a gallon of water helps to brighten white clothes without bleach (especially if you hang the clothes in the sunshine). Sprayed or rubbed on straight, lemon juice removes stains from countertops and rust stains from clothing. Clean toilets with a paste of baking soda and lemon juice; squirt lemon juice for a fresh smell.

Half a cut lemon left on a shelf will deodorize the fridge. Sprayed or rubbed on with a cloth, straight lemon juice (or straight vinegar) will remove mold and mildew from many surfaces.



WHEN YOU COME UP AGAINST CHALLENGING CLEANING TASKS, TRY USING ONE OR MORE PRODUCTS IN COMBINATION.



SALT

One part table salt mixed with four parts each of borax and baking soda makes a good scouring powder for tubs, sinks, and toilets.

Adding a little vinegar to a teaspoon of salt

TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG

makes a good scrub for removing coffee or tea stains from mugs and cups.



BORAX

Borax helps to clean the tub and remove tough stains in laundry.

I add it to baking soda and salt to make a general-purpose scouring powder (see "Salt" above).



WOOD ASH

In a paste with a little water, it cleans glass! Sprinkled on and scrubbed into pavement, bricks, and stone, it will help to remove oil stains.

When you come up against challenging cleaning or deodorizing tasks, try one or more of these together, and you'll probably find something that will do the trick. That's what I do, and it almost always works.

—Margaret Boyles

FISHING

The Lure of Angling Lore



PHOTO: KUBAN GIRL/SHUTTERSTOCK

For centuries, anglers' charms, omens, beliefs, and superstitions have explained—or excused—the results of a day on the water. When the boat's leaving the dock, if a cat begins to purr, fishermen are pleased: It's said that cats love fish and can smell them from afar.

Similarly, when a cat tries to ankle-polish a grizzled fisherman who is seaward-bound, his haul will be bountiful.

A black cat on the deck of a ship of its own free will is considered good luck. However, many commercial fishermen claim that a cat carries a gale in its tail or can excite a storm by licking its coat the wrong way.

Superstitious fishermen refer to small ripples on the surface of the ocean as “cat’s paws,” while a great disturbance of the water is called “cat’s skin.”

Birds are not necessarily a fisherman’s friend. Dreaded is a crow flying across the bow.

Many skippers are superstitious about setting out. Leaving the dock on a Friday can mean bad luck.

And a ship that is watched until it is out of sight may bear the worst kind of luck: It may never be seen again.

Never board a fishing vessel with a suitcase or wearing gray gloves: All hands may be lost.

However, if possible, drop a cake of ice overboard when preparing for a trip: It means good luck and a big catch. Another item to toss overboard is a penny: It will bring the wind.

If at all possible, avoid letting a boat captain spit in the water ahead of him. He will drive away the fish. But spit into the mouth of your first catch, and you’ll greatly increase the day’s haul.

When baiting a hook, you can double down on your luck by reciting this ditty while doing it:

*Fish, fish, fish, come bite my hook;
You’ll be the captain and I’ll be the cook.*

When you do catch and cook your “captain,” do not consume it from tail to head: That’s unlucky on land or sea.

—adapted from work by
Charles V. Mathis

TAP TO LEARN
THE BEST DAYS
FOR FISHING
AND MORE
FISHING TIPS



“Everything you need to plan your vegetable garden”

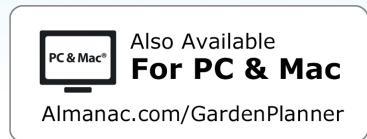


Plan Your Garden the Easy Way

Draw your ideal garden layout

Access detailed growing advice for each plant

View your personalized planting calendar
& receive planting reminders by email



WEATHER



All Aboard the Weather Temp Roller Coaster!

It's always a trip to follow the
ups and downs of world temperatures.

WEATHER

1895: “Geologists think that the world may be frozen up again.”
–*The New York Times*

1912: “The human race will have to fight for its existence against cold.” –*Los Angeles Times*

1912: *Titanic* strikes an iceberg and sinks. “An ice age is encroaching.” –*The New York Times*

1923: “The Ice Age Is Coming Here” –*The Washington Post*

1923: “Scientist Says Arctic Ice Will Wipe Out Canada and Parts of Europe and Asia, and Switzerland Would Be Entirely Obliterated” –*Chicago Tribune*

1930s: Searing heat and drought turn the nation’s midsection into a “Dust Bowl.”

1933: “America is in longest warm spell since 1776, with temperatures in a 25-year rise.”
–*The New York Times*

1939: “. . . weathermen have no doubt that the world, at least for the time being, is growing warmer.” –*TIME*

1951: Receding permafrost in Russia is reported as proof that the planet is warming.

1952: Melting glaciers are the trump card of global warming.
–*The New York Times*

1960s: Brutal cold prevails worldwide.

1970s: The chill continues. *TIME* and *Newsweek* magazines report on the coming ice age.

1974: Climatologists forecast crop failures and starvation due to global cooling.

1976–79: The United States and many other parts of the Western Hemisphere experience the coldest contiguous winters on record.

1979: “Plan for the Study of Dome Over Town Is Approved” [Winooski, Vermont; to protect the city from cold] –*The New York Times*

1980: A brutal summer heat wave occurs in much of the United States. (Residents of Winooski realize that they would have fried to death under a dome.)

WEATHER

1980–2000: Temperatures rise globally, interrupted only by the cooling effects of major volcanic eruptions: El Chichón in Mexico (1982) and Pinatubo in the Philippines (1991).

1988: Record heat and drought in the eastern and central United States cause over \$40 billion in crop losses.

1991: “Volcano’s Eruption in Philippines May Counteract Global Warming” —*The New York Times*

1997–98: A super El Niño results in the warmest temperatures on record worldwide.

1998: “Earth Temperature in 1998 Is Reported at Record High” —*The New York Times*

2007: A bitter cold spell sweeps across the Southern Hemisphere, as Australia records its coldest June ever and Chile experiences its toughest winter in 50 years. Johannesburg, South Africa, gets its first significant snow in a half-century. Despite the bitter cold throughout much of the Southern Hemisphere, NASA expert James Hansen declares 2007 the second-warmest year in a century.

2007: “First Major Snow in Buenos Aires Since 1918” —*International Herald Tribune*

2008: “Snow Day in Baghdad” —*International Herald Tribune*

2008: The coldest weather since 1964 hits the Middle East, while China experiences unusually heavy snow and freezing temperatures.

2009: NOAA reports the 2000–2009 decade as warmest on record.

2010: Snow has to be trucked in for the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, B.C. Lowest volume of Arctic ice on record.

2010: “Snowmageddon” buries Philadelphia and Baltimore.

2010: Russian heat wave kills 55,000.

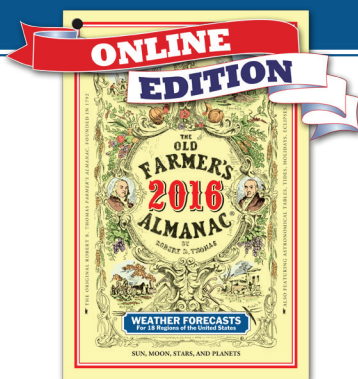
2014–15: Globally, December–February is the warmest on record since 1880.

2016: January is the warmest January ever recorded.

—*adapted from* The 2009
Old Farmer’s Almanac

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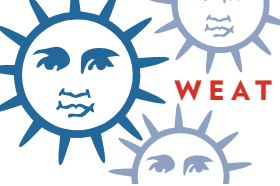
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WEATHER FORECASTS

WHO DOFFS HIS COAT ON A WINTER'S DAY
WILL GLADLY PUT IT ON IN MAY.



TAP TO FIND
OUT THE
WEATHER
HISTORY OF
THE DAY



LOVE ALL
THINGS
WEATHER?
TAP FOR THE
WEATHER
FOLKLORE
OF THE DAY

HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

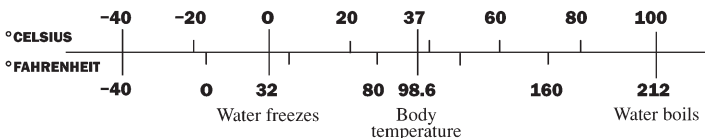
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

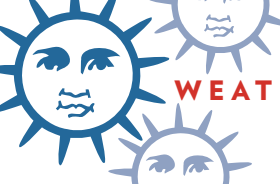
Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE

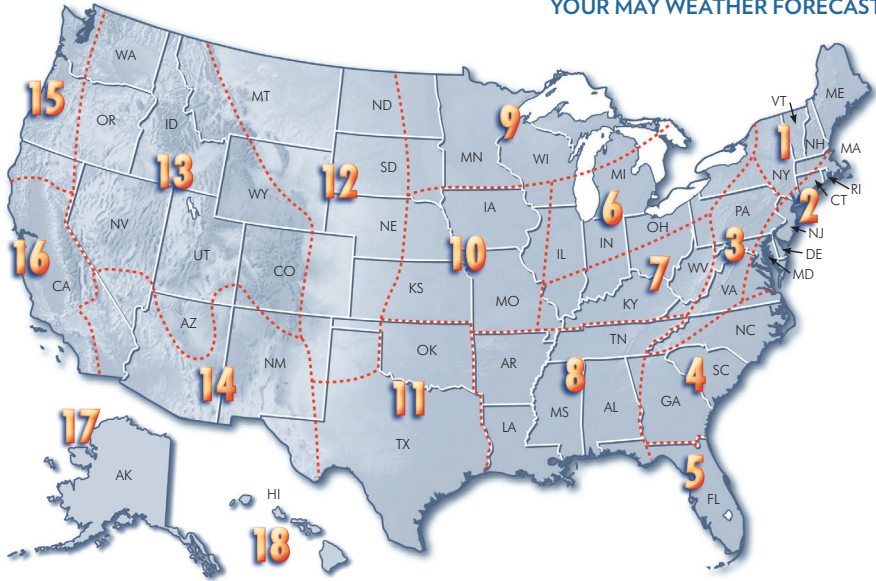




WEATHER FORECASTS

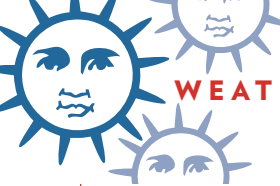
MAP OF U.S. WEATHER REGIONS

CHECK YOUR REGION TO SEE YOUR MAY WEATHER FORECAST.



MAP OF CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS





WEATHER FORECASTS

WHO DOFFS HIS COAT ON A WINTER'S DAY
WILL GLADLY PUT IT ON IN MAY.

U.S. FORECASTS MAY 2016

REGION 1: **NORTHEAST**

Temp. 56° (1° above avg.); precip. 2.5" (1" below avg.). 1–5 Sunny, warm. 6–10 Showers, then sunny, cool. 11–14 Sunny, warm. 15–20 Showers, cool. 21–31 Sunny, then a few showers, cool.

REGION 2: **ATLANTIC CORRIDOR**

Temp. 62° (avg.); precip. 4" (avg. north, 2" above south). 1–3 Rainy periods, cool. 4–5 Sunny, warm. 6–11 Rainy periods, cool. 12–20 Scattered showers, turning warm. 21–23 Rainy, cool. 24–31 Scattered t-storms, turning hot.

REGION 3: **APPALACHIANS**

Temp. 61° (1° above avg.); precip. 6" (2" above avg.). 1–4 Showers, cool. 5–13 Rain, then sunny, turning hot. 14–20 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 21–23 Rainy, cool. 24–28 Sunny, warm. 29–31 T-storms, hot.

REGION 4: **SOUTHEAST**

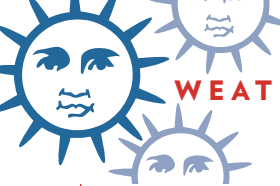
Temp. 71° (avg.); precip. 4" (0.5" above avg.). 1–9 A few t-storms, cool. 10–13 Sunny, warm. 14–20 Scattered t-storms, warm. 21–24 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 25–31 Sunny, turning hot.

REGION 5: **FLORIDA**

Temp. 78° (1° above avg.); precip. 3" (1" below avg.). 1–4 Sunny, warm. 5–8 T-storms, warm. 9–17 Sunny, hot. 18–26 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 27–31 Scattered t-storms.

REGION 6: **LOWER LAKES**

Temp. 57.5° (0.5° below avg.); precip. 3" (0.5" below avg.). 1–5 A few showers, cool. 6–11 Sunny, very warm. 12–20 Showers, cool. 21–24 Sunny, nice. 25–31 Scattered t-storms, very warm.



WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 7: OHIO VALLEY

Temp. 63° (avg.); precip. 2.5" (2" below avg.). 1–9 A few showers, turning warm. 10–13 Sunny, warm. 14–22 A few showers, cool. 23–31 Scattered t-storms, turning very warm.

REGION 8: DEEP SOUTH

Temp. 69° (2° below avg.); precip. 4" (1" below avg.). 1–6 Isolated t-storms, turning cool. 7–15 Sunny, nice. 16–24 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 25–31 Scattered t-storms, warm.

REGION 9: UPPER MIDWEST

Temp. 54° (1° below avg.); precip. 4" (1" above avg.). 1–3 Sunny, nice. 4–7 Showers, then sunny, warm. 8–11 Showers, warm. 12–18 Rain, then showers, cool. 19–22 Sunny, nice. 23–26 Showers, cool. 27–31 T-storms, warm.

REGION 10: HEARTLAND

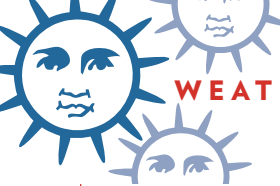
Temp. 64° (avg.); precip. 4" (0.5" below avg.). 1–6 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 7–10 Sunny, warm. 11–17 Rainy periods, cool. 18–23 Sunny, cool. 24–31 Scattered t-storms, turning warm.

REGION 11: TEXAS-OKLAHOMA

Temp. 73.5° (0.5° above avg.); precip. 4" (1" below avg.). 1–6 Scattered t-storms, turning cool. 7–10 Sunny, nice. 11–20 Scattered t-storms, warm. 21–31 Scattered t-storms north, sunny south; warm.

REGION 12: HIGH PLAINS

Temp. 57° (1° below avg.); precip. 2" (0.5" below avg.). 1–7 Scattered showers; warm north, cool south. 8–13 Showers, then sunny, cool. 14–17 Rainy, cool north; sunny, warm south. 18–21 Sunny, warm north; showers south. 22–26 Rainy, cool north; showers, hot south. 27–31 A few showers.



WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 13: INTERMOUNTAIN

Temp. 56° (1° below avg.); precip. 1.5" (0.5" above avg.). 1–3 Sunny; warm north, cool south. 4–12 Showers, then sunny, cool. 13–17 Showers, then sunny; warm north, cool south. 18–22 Rainy periods; warm north, cool south. 23–28 Rainy north, sunny south; cool. 29–31 Sunny.

REGION 14: DESERT SOUTHWEST

Temp. 77° (3° above avg.); precip. 0.5" (avg.). 1–3 Sunny, cool. 4–9 Showers, then sunny, cool. 10–17 Sunny, cool. 18–22 Scattered t-storms, cool. 23–31 Sunny, cool.

REGION 15: PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Temp. 54° (1° below avg.); precip. 2" (avg.). 1–4 Sunny, turning hot. 5–13 Showers, cool. 14–16 Sunny, nice. 17–25 Showers, turning cool. 26–31 Showers, cool.

REGION 16: PACIFIC SOUTHWEST

Temp. 61.5° (2° below avg.); precip. 0.8" (0.3" above avg.). 1–9 Sunny, warm inland; A.M. clouds and sprinkles, P.M. sun coast. 10–16 Sunny, cool. 17–22 Showers, cool. 23–26 Sunny, cool. 27–31 Sunny, turning hot inland; A.M. clouds and sprinkles, P.M. sun coast.

REGION 17: ALASKA

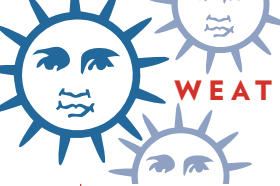
Temp. 22° N, 48° EW (1° above avg.); precip. 0.6" N, 2.5" S (avg. N, 0.5" below S). 1–17 Flurries N+C, showers S; cool. 18–25 Showers, cool. 26–31 Showers, mild N+WC: sunny, turning warm EW.

KEY: Panhandle (P), Aleutians (A), north (N), central (C), south (S), west-central (WC), east-central (EC), south-central (SC), elsewhere (EW)

REGION 18: HAWAII

Temp. 77.5° (1° below avg. E, 2° above W); precip. 0.2" (0.5" below avg.). 1–11 Isolated showers; cool, then warm. 12–31 Brief showers C+W, rainy periods E; cool C+E, warm W.

KEY: east (E), central (C), west (W)



WEATHER FORECASTS

HE WHO MOWS IN MAY
WILL HAVE NEITHER FRUIT NOR HAY.

CANADIAN FORECASTS MAY 2016

REGION 1: ATLANTIC CANADA

Temp. 8.5°C (1° above avg.); precip. 80mm (40mm below avg.). 1–6 Scattered showers, seasonable. 7–14 Rainy periods, then sunny, warm. 15–21 Scattered showers, seasonable. 22–31 A few showers; warm, then cool.

REGION 2: SOUTHERN QUEBEC

Temp. 13.5°C (1°C above avg.); precip. 85mm (20mm above avg.). 1–5 Sunny, warm. 6–14 Showers, warm. 15–21 A few showers, turning cool. 22–26 Sunny, cool. 27–31 Showers, cool.

RÉGION 2: QUÉBEC DU SUD

Temp. 13,5°C (1°C au-dessus de la moy.); précip. 85mm (20mm au-dessus de la moy.). 1–5 Ensoleillé, chaud. 6–14 Averses, chaud. 15–21 Quelques averses, avec refroidissement. 22–26 Ensoleillé, froid. 27–31 Averses, froid.

REGION 3: SOUTHERN ONTARIO

Temp. 12.5°C (avg.); precip. 105mm (40mm above avg.). 1–4 Generally sunny, warm. 5–10 Scattered showers; cool, then warm. 11–21 Isolated showers, cool. 22–25 Sunny, cool. 26–31 Showers, turning warm.

REGION 4: THE PRAIRIES

Temp. 11°C (1°C above avg.); precip. 30mm (10mm below avg.). 1–6 Sunny, warm. 7–15 A few showers, turning cool. 16–20 Scattered showers; somewhat cool east, warm west. 21–31 A few showers, seasonable.

REGION 5: SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Temp. 11°C (avg.); precip. 50mm (avg.). 1–5 Sunny, warm. 6–14 A few showers, cool. 15–22 Scattered showers, mild. 23–31 Scattered showers; cool coast, warm inland.



CANADIAN WEATHER FORECASTS

REGION 6: YUKON

Temp. 7°C (avg.); precip. 60mm (30mm above avg.). 1–7 A few showers, mild. 8–19 Rain and snow, then a few showers; cool. 20–31 Isolated showers, seasonable.

REGION 7: NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Temp. 4°C (1°C above avg.); precip. 14mm (avg.). 1–11 Snow, then sunny, turning warm. 12–20 Flurries north, showers south; seasonable. 21–31 Snow, then flurries, cold north; sunny, warm south.



THE YEAR AHEAD

Now that winter is over, it's time to look ahead to see our most likely weather over the next 12 months. The key to our upcoming weather is that Solar Cycle 24 is now well into its declining phase after reaching double peaks in late 2011 and early 2014. Despite having two maxima, this cycle is the smallest in more than 100 years.

As solar activity continues to decline from these low peaks toward

its expected minima in early 2019, we expect temperatures in much of the nation to be hot this spring and summer. With the strong El Niño of this past winter transitioning to a La Niña in the coming summer, we are looking at an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season, with the winter of 2016–17 much colder than this past winter in most locations.

The western third of the nation will have a warm and mostly dry spring,



WITH THE STRONG EL NIÑO OF THIS PAST WINTER TRANSITIONING TO A LA NIÑA IN THE COMING SUMMER, WE ARE LOOKING AT AN ABOVE-NORMAL ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON THIS YEAR.

which will increase the danger of wildfires as we move toward summer. In the nation's eastern two-thirds, the north will be ideal for outdoor activities, but above-normal temperatures and below-normal rainfall will raise concerns about drought in some areas; the south will be cooler and rainier than normal, with above-normal tornado activity.

The summer will bring above-normal temperatures to most of the nation, although portions of the south will have below-normal temperatures and above-normal rainfall.

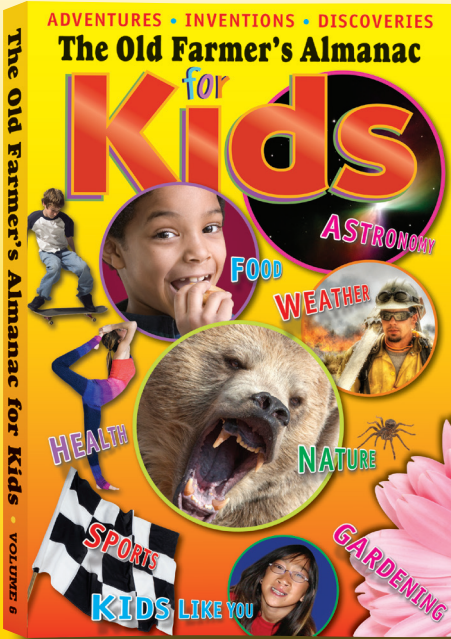
Hurricane season will be more active than it was last year, with threats along the Atlantic and Gulf regions. The best chance for a major hurricane strike will be in early July in Florida and from late August to mid-September along the Texas and Louisiana Gulf coasts.

Winter temperatures will be much colder than last winter—but still above normal—in much of the eastern two-thirds of the nation. The

only exceptions will be in a swath from North Dakota to Maine, which will have below-normal temperatures. Most of the Pacific states will have below-normal temperatures, with above-normal temperatures in the Intermountain region and Desert Southwest. Snowfall will be above normal from southern New England and western New York southwestward through the Appalachians; from eastern Minnesota eastward to the UP (Upper Peninsula) of Michigan and southward to St. Louis, Missouri; and from central North Dakota westward to the Pacific coast. We expect below-normal snowfall in most other places that normally receive snow.

Precipitation will be below normal across most of the southern two-thirds of the nation and above normal in the north, with the primary exceptions being above-normal rainfall in northern California, southern Oregon, portions of the Midwest, and Florida.

—Michael Steinberg, *Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologist*



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HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC

World History According to Schoolkids

“SOLOMON HAD 300 WIVES AND 700 PORCUPINES”

- “Moses led the Hebrew slaves to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandments. He died before he ever reached Canada.”

- “The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. He was born in the year 1564, supposedly on his birthday. He never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He wrote



tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameter. Romeo and Juliet are an example of a heroic couple. Romeo’s last wish was to be laid by Juliet.” *[Editor’s note: We are certain that*

this young writer meant “laid to rest.”]

- “Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote Donkey Hote.”

- “Thomas Jefferson, a Virgin, and Benjamin Franklin were two singers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin discovered electricity by rubbing two cats together backward and declared, ‘A horse divided against itself can not stand.’ Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.”

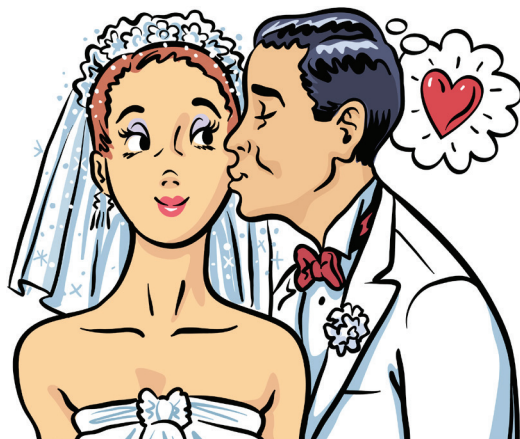
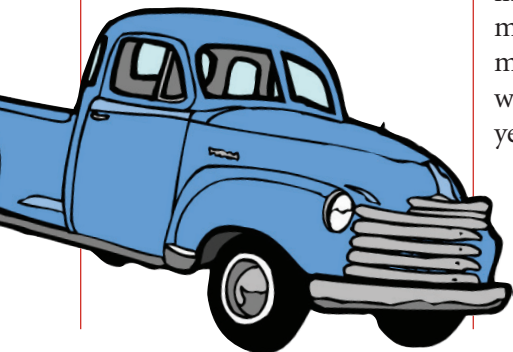


QUITE A (TRUE) PICKUP LINE

A woman went into her local newspaper office to write the obituary for her recently deceased husband. The editor informed her that the fee for a submitted obituary was one dollar per word, aside from the name and address. She paused, reflected, and then said, “Well, then, let it read, ‘Billy Bob died.’”

“Sorry, ma’am,” replied the editor, “but I’m afraid there’s a seven-word minimum on all submitted obituaries.”

Somewhat flustered, the woman thought for a minute and then instructed the editor to write, “Billy Bob died. 1983 pickup for sale.”



ONE WAY TO HAVE A LONG MARRIAGE

At a meeting of the church men’s group in a small New England town, the upcoming 50th anniversary of Brother Ralph came up. The minister asked Ralph to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all those years.

Brother Ralph replied, “Basically, I treated her with respect and spent money on her,

but mostly I took her traveling on special occasions.”

“Like to where?” asked the minister.

“Well, for our 25th anniversary,” said Ralph, “I took her to Beijing, China.”

“Wow! What a terrific example you are to all the members of our group,” said the minister. “Can you tell us what you’re doing for your 50th?”

Brother Ralph: “I’m going to go get her.”

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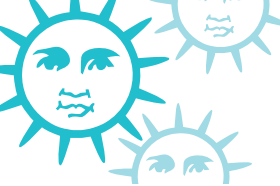
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Flag Code, summer
solstice



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Summer," 1816



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