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PRINT VERSIONS OF TODAY'S PREP:
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< p class="western">*****</p>

WELCOME TO THE SHOW!

We had leftover pumpkin pie last night. The pumpkin was left over from Halloween, but it was still pretty good... except for the candle.

PRESIDENTIAL WIT & WISDOM ([click here to buy the book](#))

(None on the weekends or holidays.)

BIBLE VERSE OF THE DAY

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. --*Isaiah 40:28*

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God... — [John 1:12](#)

HEARTLIGHT DAILY VERSE, PRAYER & THOUGHT

(From VerseOfTheDay.com)

This is what the Lord says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland." — [Isaiah 43:16,18-19](#)

Thought: The year is gone, finished, past. We cannot reclaim it or undo it. We cannot rest on the great distance it has brought us. If tomorrow dawns, it will be another day, a new opportunity, and the time to show our faith in Jesus as Lord. Let's journey forward, knowing that God already inhabits the future and promises to provide us refreshment on our journey there.

Prayer: Lord of all eternity, please help me to learn from my mistakes this past year, but not to dwell on them. Please help me not rest on my accomplishments in this past year, but use them to further your work in me and through me. Please help me not quarrel with those who injured me yesterday, last month, or this past year. Instead, O Father, lead me in your paths and help me see your mighty works this next year. In Jesus' name and by his power I ask it. Amen.

The Thoughts and Prayers for Today's Verse are written by [Phil Ware](#). You can email questions or comments to phil@heartlight.org.

"BIRTHDAY VERSE" OF THE DAY *(The chapter and verse correspond to the month and day!)*

John 1:1 NIV = In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

TODAY IS MONDAY – JANUARY 01, 2018

(NOTE: Some holidays may be duplicated due to various calendars reporting conflicting dates)

WEIRD, WACKY, STRANGE, ZANY, ODD, BIZARRE, QUIRKY, UNUSUAL HOLIDAYS!

THERE ARE ONLY 358 SHOPPING DAYS UNTIL NEXT CHRISTMAS.

Z DAY - Honors those who end up last when placed in alphabetical order. ***Which is why we've placed it at the beginning of today's list. You're welcome.

Today is **NEW YEAR'S DAY**. (at least, according to the Gregorian calendar). ***By the way, A.D. does NOT stand for "after death" as many people think. The "A.D." stands for anno Domini, meaning "in the year of our Lord." Although, looking at the events of the past year you have to wonder if people are paying any attention to Him anymore.

Today is the first day of **GET OVER IT MONTH**, a time to let go of the past and get over whatever is bugging you.
***That sounds great... but what if what's bugging me is telemarketers?

Today is **NATIONAL SILENT RECORD DAY**, marking the invention of the silent record, played on Detroit jukeboxes in 1960. ***If you hear any dead air on the show this week, don't worry... we're just celebrating.

TODAY IS ALSO...

Copyright Law Day
Commitment Day
Divorce Monday
Ellis Island Day
Euro Day
First Foot Day
Global Family Day
Mummer's Parade
New Years Day
New Year's Dishonor List Day
Polar Bear Plunge or Swim Day
Public Domain Day
Rose Bowl Game
Tournament of Roses Parade Day
World Day of Peace
Z Day

COMING UP NEXT (*Just a list, we are not endorsing the holidays posted below. Find more holidays and link to their websites at BrownieLocks.com*)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 02

55-MPH Speed Limit Day
Happy Mew Year for Cats Day
National Buffet Day
National Motivation and Inspiration Day
National Personal Trainer Awareness Day
National Science Fiction Day
Pet Travel and Safety Day

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 03

Drinking Straw Day
Earth at Perihelion
J.R.R. Tolkien Day
Memento Mori "Remember You Die" Day
National Chocolate Covered Cherry Day

THURSDAY, JANUARY 04

Dimpled Chad Day
I Am A Mentor Day
Pop Music Chart Day
Tom Thumb Day
Trivia Day
World Braille Day
World Hypnotism Day

FRIDAY, JANUARY 05

Bird Day
National Screenwriters Day

SATURDAY, JANUARY 06

Twelfth Night
Epiphany

Armenian Christmas
National Technology Day
Three Kings Day
Fruitcake Toss Day

SUNDAY, JANUARY 07

Golden Globes
Harlem Globetrotter's Day
I'm Not Going To Take It Anymore Day
International Programmers' Day
Orthodox Christmas
National Bobblehead Day
National Tempura Day

MONDAY, JANUARY 08

Argyle Day
Bubble Bath Day
Earth's Rotation Day
National English Toffee Day
Midwife's Day or Women's Day
National Clean Off Your Desk Day
National Joy Germ Day
National Weigh-In Day
National Winter Skin Relief Day
Show and Tell Day at Work
"Thank God It's Monday" Day
War on Poverty Day

TUESDAY, JANUARY 09

Balloon Ascension Day
Law Enforcement Appreciation Day
National Cassoulet Day
National Poetry at Work Day
National Shop For Travel Day
National Static Electricity Day
Panama's Martyr Day

ON THIS DAY

1902: With Michigan leading 49-0 in history's first Rose Bowl Game, the Stanford Cardinals gave up and left the field with eight minutes still on the clock. Rose Bowl officials were so embarrassed they refused to stage another football game until 1916. For 14 years New Year's Day in the Rose Bowl featured chariot races.

1907: President Teddy Roosevelt shook hands with 8,513 people at a White House reception, the record for one-day handshaking.

1908: For the first time, a ball dropped in New York City's Time Square to signify the beginning of a new year. ***Of course, it began dropping the previous year.

1946: Kathleen Casey Wilson was born at one minute past midnight in Philadelphia, the first of almost 78 million "baby boomers" born between 1946 and 1964.

1948: In history's most infamous day of bowl games: in Fresno, Pacific beat Wichita 26-14 in the Raisin Bowl, and in Phoenix, Nevada-Reno edged North Texas 13-9 in the Salad Bowl.

1953: Singer Hank Williams Sr. died of a heart attack (apparently caused by a drug and alcohol overdose) while on his way to a concert date in Canton, Ohio. He was 29.

1960: Singer Johnny Cash did his first prison concert at San Quentin, California. One of the inmates in the audience was Merle Haggard.

1962: Both the Beatles and Brian Poole and the Tremeloes auditioned for Decca records in London. Decca chose the Tremeloes.

1984: The telecommunications giant AT&T was divested of its 22 Bell System companies under terms of an antitrust agreement.

1987: While walking home from a New Year's Eve party, Colin Duff of Weston-super-Mare, England, was robbed by two muggers dressed as rabbits. Police apparently never found either the rabbits or a gorilla who witnessed the assault.

1989: Anthony Thornton set a world record in Minneapolis by walking 95.4-miles in 24-hours... backwards. ***So, if you're walking backwards, are you actually adding weight instead of losing it?

1994: Singer Faith Hill's first single, "Wild One," hit #1 on the country charts.

1994: Microsoft executives Bill Gates and Melinda French were married on Lanai Island, Hawaii. Billionaire bachelor Bill was 38.

1999: The euro, the new single currency of 11 European countries, officially came into existence.

1999: A Netherlands family in the town of Monster had an exciting New Year's morning when someone threw a fireworks bomb into a drain leading to the sewer under their house. Nobody was injured when the explosion blew up their toilet.

2002: Two would-be Canadian thieves learned the hard way on New Year's Day that knowing how to drive a car is a prerequisite for stealing one. The pair, ages 17 and 18 tried to steal a pizza delivery man's car in Edmonton, Alberta, but neither knew how to operate a manual transmission and clutch. Police arrived before the pair could escape.

2003: The University of Southern California defeated the University of Michigan, 28-14, in the Rose Bowl.

2005: Interrogators at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, were accused of routinely using inhumane methods that could be viewed as torture.

TODAY IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

379: Early church father Basil the Great dies. Founder and financial supporter of a monastery in Annessi, which became a complex of hospitals, hostels, and schools, he also succeeded Eusebius as bishop of Caesarea. He is also known for his theological work explaining the Trinity and for healing the Antioch schism in the Eastern Church. His monastic rule remains the basis of the Rule followed by the Eastern Orthodox religious today.

1484: Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli is born at Wildhaus, Switzerland.

1519: Reformation begins in Switzerland when Zwingli takes his post at Zurich and begins preaching the Bible.

1545: King Francis I signs a decree saying Waldenses found guilty of "heresy" in France must die.

1622: The Roman Catholic Church adopts January 1 as the beginning of the year, rather than March 25.

1643: English mathematician and physicist Sir Isaac Newton is baptized at St. John's Church in Colsterworth, England. Deeply interested in religion throughout his life, Newton (known especially for formulating the laws of gravitation) acknowledged Jesus as Savior of the world, but not God incarnate.

1725: Baptism of Greenland's first Christian convert, the Eskimo Frederick Christian.

1795: President George Washington issues a Thanksgiving Proclamation for the United States.

1802: In a letter to the Danbury (Connecticut) Baptist Association, Thomas Jefferson coins the famous metaphor, "a wall of separation between Church and State." A recent exhibit at the Library of Congress has sparked argument over whether Jefferson used the term merely for political reasons or whether he meant it to explain the First Amendment.

1826: David Nasmyth opens the world's first city mission in Glasgow, Scotland. It becomes widely imitated.

1863: American President Abraham Lincoln frees all slaves in Confederate states by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. Churches throughout the North held candlelight vigils commemorating the event.

HOLLYWOOD, SPORTS AND CELEBRITY FIGURE BIRTHDAYS

- o actor (*The Perfect Holiday*, *Ladder 49*, he plays Ryan Nichols on “V”) Morris Chestnut 47
- o writer-comic (SNL’s Father Guido Sarducci) Don Novello is 74

BEE-BOP BIRTHDAYS

(Music Artist Birthdays From SongFacts.com)

1900 : Xavier Cugat

1923 : Milt Jackson

1942 : Joe McDonald ([Country Joe & The Fish](#))

1950 : Morgan Fisher ([Mott The Hoople](#))

1958 : [Grandmaster Flash](#)

SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE *(Answering questions that have plagued mankind for minutes!)*

How did the tradition of using a baby to signify the New Year begin?

The tradition of using a baby to signify the new year was begun in Greece around 600 BC. It was their tradition at that time to celebrate their god of wine, Dionysus, by parading a baby in a basket, representing the annual rebirth of that god as the spirit of fertility. Early Egyptians also used a baby as a symbol of rebirth. The use of an image of a baby with a New Years banner as a symbolic representation of the new year was brought to early America by the Germans. They had used the effigy since the fourteenth century.

How did the practice of making New Year’s resolutions begin?

The tradition of making New Year’s resolutions dates back to the early Babylonians. While popular modern resolutions might include the promise to lose weight or quit smoking, the early Babylonians’ most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.

NEWS KICKERS

(None on weekends. Want a customizable version with your specific station tag, FREE? [Email me for more information!](#))

NEW NEWS KICKERS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

NEWS KICKER EVERGREENS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

AS THE JUNGLE TURNS

(Not updated on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD TUESDAY’S EPISODE – JANUARY 2nd, 2018

OPEN: And now, FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns! Last time, the jungle animals were so busy trying to get so many things done that they didn’t have time for anything else... meetings, planning, even talking to each other! They were getting annoyed with each other – and then, all at once, the animals shouted...

CLOSE: Do the turtles have a secret to staying calm, cool, and collected? Will they share the secret with the other animals? Tune in again next time, as FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns!

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MOMENT OF DUH

A man tries to warm up his car with burning paper towels!

A German man's car wouldn't start because, he thought, it was too cold. So he decided that all it needed was a little warmth and attention to "thaw it out." But the metal box of paper towels that he lit on fire and placed under the engine and fuel tank was not a good idea. The car burst into flames and although the car did warm up, it will never start again.

TOP TEN

TOP TEN RESOLUTIONS I CAN KEEP

1. I want to gain weight. Put on at least 30 pounds.
2. Stop exercising. Waste of time.
3. Read less.
4. Watch more TV. I've been missing some good stuff.
5. Procrastinate more... starting tomorrow.
6. Spend at least \$1000 a month on hobbies.
7. Spend more time at work.
8. Personal goal - bring back disco.
9. Stop bringing lunch from home: I should eat out more.
10. Quit giving money & time to my church and charity.

THE FILES OF LAW & DISORDER

The story of the perfect crime, with the imperfect getaway!

FILE #1: Billy Franklin had his bank holdup all planned out. He walked into the bank with a knit cap pulled down to obscure his face from security cameras. He made sure the teller's window had no alarm and no exploding dye booby trap. The holdup note had no fingerprints or other identification. The bills he received were small and not in sequence. He had planned the perfect robbery. Except for one thing. He had no getaway vehicle. He simply walked away from the robbery, carrying his money in two large bags with the bank's name clearly printed on the side. A cop spotted him walking down the road and arrested him.

FILE #2: Pierre Gomez drove up to the Valley National Bank and handed the teller a hold-up note. While the teller was pretending to get the money another teller pressed the silent alarm. Before this dumb criminal even knew what was happening, his car was absolutely surrounded by cops. The reason? The Lodi police department is less than 50 yards from the bank.

FILE #3: A 19-year old in Austria robbed a store managed to elude police even though security cameras got his picture. Even when the local paper published that picture, the young man still wasn't caught. It wasn't until he showed his mom the picture in the paper to complain about how unflattering the picture was, that he got in trouble. His mom seeing the picture and what he did, turned her own son in to the police. Perhaps he'll be more pleased with his mug shots.

STRANGE LAW: Unless you have a doctor's note, it's illegal to buy ice cream after 6pm in Newark, New Jersey.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS

"This Is Your Brain On Drugs" is about people doing dumb things under the influence, but addiction is no laughing matter. If you or someone you know needs help, there's a toll free number you can call 1-800-438-0380. That's the Addiction Hope and Help Line at 1-800-438-0380.

When should the law not apply? When it is used against the police chief, of course!

While investigating a fellow female officer suspected of using drugs, police in Portland, OR, searched through her garbage. They retrieved drug paraphernalia and items to send to a lab for blood analysis. In response to public outcry about the trash search, the police chief in Portland, Oregon stated that once garbage is on the curb, it's "abandoned in terms of privacy." Seeing an opportunity, a local newspaper decided to take the police chief at his word, and dug through the garbage and recycling left outside the homes of the police chief, mayor and district attorney. The newspaper's haul included printed personal e-mail and financial statements. The mayor called the paper's actions "potentially illegal and absolutely unscrupulous and reprehensible." Someone needs to give the mayor the phone number for the chief of police.

PHONER PHUN

What are your New Years' resolutions? What do you plan to do in order to keep them?

BIBLE BRAIN BUSTER!

QUESTION: When David became king of Israel, for how many years did he reign in Jerusalem?

ANSWER: 33 (2 Samuel 5:5)

QUESTION IMPOSSIBLE

QUESTION: According to a recent survey, 44% of Americans have up to 6 of these in their house.

ANSWER: Remote controls

TRUE OR FALSE

Pay attention! If our next player doesn't answer all ten T/F questions correctly we start all over from question #1! First person to answer question #10 correctly is our winner!

1. The River Nile has never frozen over. (False... but it's rare. In living memory, it has only done so twice.)
2. If you have siderodromophobia you are afraid of objects with six sides. (False... you're afraid of trains)
3. A zeedonk is the offspring of a zebra and a donkey. (True)
4. Abraham Lincoln had no middle name. (True)
5. A squab is a rookie sailor. (False... it's a young pigeon that has not yet flown)
6. In the newspaper business, the night staff is known as the lobster shift. (True)
7. In the mining business, the night staff is known as the graveyard shift. (False... it's known as the hoot owl)
8. Arnold's pet goldfish on the TV show "Diffrent Strokes was named Lincoln. (False... it was Abraham)
9. 61% of Americans have written love letters. (False... 61% say they have NOT written a love letter)
10. Earth is the only planet NOT named after a god. (True)

TABLOID MATCH GAME

You have to match the blank in the tabloid headline with the word or phrase that has been removed!

BIGFOOT HAS THREE _____ (WIVES)

Scientists studying Bigfoot discovered that he has three fully human wives. Bigfoot is not only real and living among us, but he is married to three lovely women. Bigfoot reportedly "married" the women in the last fifteen years and the women are reportedly very happy according to Wendy Goodman, Bigfoot's first wife.

THE WAY TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING TO UNDERSTAND THE PUNCHLINE EVEN AFTER TWO CUPS OF COFFEE JOKE OF THE DAY

JOKE #1

A police chief, a fire chief, and a city attorney were traveling together by car to a municipal management conference in a distant city. Their car broke down in a rural area, and they were forced to seek shelter for the night at a nearby farmhouse. The farmer welcomed them in, but cautioned them that there were only two spare beds, and that one of them would have to sleep in the barn with the farm animals. After a short conference, the police chief agreed to take the barn. Shortly after retiring, a knock was heard on the door of the farmhouse. The party inside answered to find the police chief standing there, complaining that he could not sleep. There were pigs in the barn, he said, and he was reminded of the days when everyone called him a pig. The fire chief then volunteered to exchange with the police chief. A short time later, another knock was heard at the door. The fire chief complained that the cows in the barn reminded him of Mrs. OLeary's cow that started the Chicago fire, and that every time he started to go to sleep, he started to have a fireman's worst nightmare, that of burning to death. The city attorney, in desperation for sleep, then agreed to sleep in the barn. This seemed like a good idea until a few minutes later, when another knock was heard at the door. When the occupants answered the door, there stood the very indignant cows and pigs.

JOKE #2

Catherine, a RN, was unhappy with her job, so she submitted her resignation. She was sure she'd have no trouble finding a new position, because of the nursing shortage in her area. She e-mailed cover letters to dozens of potential employers and attached her resume to each one.

Two weeks later, Catherine was dismayed and bewildered that she had not received even one request for an interview.

Finally she received a message from a prospective employer that explained the reason she hadn't heard from anyone else. It read: "Your resume was not attached as stated. I do, however, want to thank you for the vegetable lasagna recipe."

JOKE #3

A retiree was given a set of golf clubs by his coworkers. Thinking he'd try the game, he asked the local pro for lessons, explaining that he knew nothing whatever about golf.

The pro showed him the stance and the swing, then said, "Just hit the ball toward the flag on the first green." The novice teed up and smacked the ball straight down the fairway and onto the green, where it stopped inches from the hole.

"Now what?" the fellow asked the speechless pro.

"Uh... you're supposed to hit the ball into the cup," the pro finally said, after he was able to speak again.

"Oh, great! Now you tell me," said the beginner in a disgusted tone.

USELESS FACTS

A study from researchers at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles has concluded that people whose diets are rich in fiber and fruit are more likely to be of normal weight and not get fat. ***So, do they give a suggested serving size of Fruit Roll Ups?

45% of Americans use mouthwash every day. ***The remaining 55% are already married.

FEATURED FUNNIES

The birth of our second child, a daughter, came after a long and difficult labor. But it was definitely worth it when our beautiful little girl emerged, perfect in every way.

Later, in my room, my husband looked at her tenderly, with tears in his eyes. Then as he glanced up at me, I expected him to utter something truly poetic.

Instead he asked, "What'd we decide to call her again?"

IT MUST BE TRUE BECAUSE I HEARD IT ON THE RADIO!

FLIGHTY STOWAWAY

A man stows away on an airplane in the most dangerous way possible... on the outside of the plane!

A 27-year-old Romanian refugee became a stowaway on a German flight in the most unusual way. He didn't hide in the bathroom or luggage area -- he latched onto the landing gear of the plane. Authorities said the man, whom they did not name, had scrambled undetected onto the forward tire of the aircraft shortly before the Berlin-bound plane took off and hauled himself into the gear shaft. The pilot was unable to retract the gear and decided to abort the flight and return to Munich. Meanwhile, the stowaway managed to survive the 23-minute flight by holding onto the landing gear of a Boeing 737. He was taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia. ***MARLAR: On the plus side, he didn't have to sit next to any screaming babies.

INSPIRATIONAL INSPIRATION

HOLY DIAL TONE!

A true story about how God works in mysterious ways... sometimes using the phone!

On a Saturday night several weeks ago, this preacher from The Almighty God Church was working late, and decided to call his wife before he left for home. It was about 10:00PM, but his wife didn't answer the phone. The preacher let it ring many times. He thought it was odd that she didn't answer, but decided to wrap up a few things and try again in a few minutes. When he tried again she answered right away. He asked her why she hadn't answered before, and she said that it hadn't rung at their house. They brushed it off as a fluke. The following Monday, the preacher received a call at the church office. The man that he spoke with wanted to know why he'd called on Saturday night. The preacher couldn't figure out what the guy was talking about. Then the guy said, "It rang and rang, but I didn't answer." The pastor remembered the mishap and apologized for disturbing him, explaining that he'd intended to call his wife. The man said, "That's OK. Let me tell you my story. You see, I was planning to commit suicide on Saturday night, but before I did, I prayed, 'God if you're there, and you don't want me to do this, give me a sign now.' At that point my phone started to ring. I looked at the caller ID, and it said, 'Almighty God'. I was afraid to answer!"

DRIVE TIME DEVOTIONAL

Remember back in 1999 when everyone was freakin' out that the end of the world was about to happen via the Millennium Bug?

All of our computers would suddenly stop working and the world itself would come to a halt -- making all of us fly off into space. (Okay, so that last part I just made up.) I remember one joke coming out of all of the pre-Y2K fears saying the solution to the problem was to replace every personal computer with an Etch-A-Sketch. With that accomplished, there wouldn't be any technical glitches to deal with in January, 2000 -- and people could stop wasting their time playing computer Solitaire. Got a question? Just ask the Help Desk:

Q: What is the proper procedure for rebooting my Etch-A-Sketch? A: Pick it up and shake it.

Q: What's the shortcut for Undo? A: Pick it up and shake it.

Q: How do I delete a document? A: Pick it up and shake it.

Q: How do I save my document? A: Don't shake it!

It worked for a laugh, but of course would likely not have solved the problem if the Millennium Bug had been as bad as they were expecting it to be. It was a complex problem of locating and rewriting deeply embedded, date-sensitive computer codes that could've caused major glitches when 1999 became 2000.

In our own hearts, we have our own kind of faulty code which has already caused chaos in our relationship with God. It's called sin, and we often kid ourselves about how to deal with it. "I can quit whenever I want to," we say. "Next week I'll change for sure," we tell ourselves. "As soon as I get back to school, things will be different." But without an adequate solution for an inner change, we're in the same league with the "pick it up and shake our Etch-a-Sketch" folks.

The gospel of Christ is good news because it says that Jesus can rewrite the computer code of our hearts and change us from the inside out. Hebrews 10:16 says, "I will put My laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." That's a new beginning only God can program.

LEFTOVERS

Why is January 1st the day we begin a new year?

"Happy New Year!" That greeting will be said and heard for at least the first couple of weeks as a new year gets under way. But the day celebrated as New Year's Day in modern America was not always January 1.

The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring).

The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary.

The Babylonian new year celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own particular mode of celebration, but it is safe to say that modern New Year's Eve festivities pale in comparison.

The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun.

In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But tampering continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the new year. But in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun, Caesar had to let the previous year drag on for 445 days.

LIFE... LIVE IT

NEW YEARS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD AS IT PERTAINS TO FOOD

There are numerous traditional ethnic and regional New Year food traditions that exist in the world today. Overall, traditional New Year foods are thought to bring luck. Many cultures believe that anything in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle," completing a year's cycle. For that reason, the Dutch believe that eating Olie Bollen, a donut-like fritter, will bring good fortune.

- Many parts of the U.S., especially Southern regions, celebrate the New Year by consuming black-eyed peas. These legumes are typically accompanied by either hog jowls or ham. Black-eyed peas and other legumes have been considered good luck in many cultures. The hog, and thus its meat, is considered lucky because it symbolizes prosperity.
- Cabbage is another "good luck" vegetable that is consumed on New Year's Day by many. Cabbage leaves are also considered a sign of prosperity, being representative of paper currency.
- Also from Southerners--eating cornbread will bring wealth.
- Eating noodles at midnight is customary at Buddhist temples in Japan. It is a Cuban tradition to eat 12 grapes at midnight to signify the last 12 months of the year. German folklore says that eating herring at midnight will bring luck for the next year, and for those of Polish descent, eating pickled herring will bring good luck, also.
- Black-eyed peas, fish, apples, and beets are eaten for luck at the Jewish new year's celebration (not celebrated on the first of January).
- Boiled cod is a must in Denmark. And in the Philippines, it is important to have food on the table at midnight in order to ensure an abundance of food in the upcoming year.

JUST FOR FUN

FLEA CIRCUS COURT

A court has been closed due to a flea infestation. But using bug spray has made the situation worse!

I guess you could call it the bubonic briefs. A court had to be closed after officials were bitten by fleas. The infestation was made worse when someone sprayed the courtyard with anti-flea disinfectant - because that drove the insects to the inside of the building. The fleas are believed to have been taken into the court by stray cats that are attracted by rats in the building. The court will remain closed until the fleas - and rats - have been driven out and killed.

***MARLAR: They aren't trying to kill all of the pests though, as courts do need lawyers.

FUN LIST

THE MALE'S RULES

We always hear "the rules" from the female side. You know... that list of rules that tells us men how we're supposed to behave and act all the time - not allowing us to be the males that God created us to be? Well... I'm tired of seeing those lists and being told to get in touch with my "feminine side". So here are the rules from the male side. These are our rules!

- Learn to work the toilet seat. You're a big girl. If it's up, put it down. You can handle it. We need it up, you need it down. You don't hear us complaining about you leaving it down, do you?
- Crying is nothing more than a lesser form of blackmail - it's immoral to use that against us.
- Ask for what you want. Let me be clear on this one. Subtle hints do not work! Strong hints do not work! Obvious hints do not work! Just say it!
- YES and NO are perfectly acceptable answers to almost every question.
- Come to us with a problem only if you want help solving it. That's what we do. Sympathy is what your girlfriends are for.
- Anything we said 6 months ago is inadmissible in an argument. God forgives and forgets - you should aspire to be more like Him in this area. In fact, all comments should become null and void after 7 days.
- If you think you're fat, don't ask us. We love you regardless and asking that question will do nothing but hurt everyone's feelings and ruin everyone's day.

- If something we said can be interpreted two ways, and one of the ways makes you sad or angry, we meant the other one.
- You can either ask us to do something or tell us how you want it done. Not both. If you already know best how to do it, just do it yourself.
- Whenever possible, please say whatever you have to say during commercials.
- ALL men see in only 16 colors, like Windows default settings. Peach, for example, is a fruit, not a color. Pumpkin is also a fruit. We have no idea what mauve is, nor do we care to learn.
- If we ask what is wrong and you say "nothing," we will act like nothing's wrong. We know you are lying, but it is just not worth the hassle.
- If you ask a question you really don't want an answer to, don't ask the question. If you do, expect an answer you don't want to hear.
- I am in shape. ROUND is a shape.
- Thank you for listening. Yes, I know, my wife is likely listening and I'll have to sleep on the couch tonight, but did you know men really don't mind that? To us, it's like camping.

MORE SHOW PREP STUFF...

CLAP ON... CLAP OFF...

It was real popular a few years ago... and may still be... it's the Clapper! You know, that device that you hook up to the lights in your house so all you have to do is clap your hands for them to turn on? (I still think it'd be hilarious to hook up the clapper to my church's sound system. Every time someone clapped during a song everything would go dead). Anyway, a New York appeals court rejected a woman's lawsuit against the company that makes the Clapper. She claimed that she hurt her hands because she had to clap too hard in order to turn her appliances on. The judge determined that it's her fault because she failed to adjust the sensitivity controls on her "Clapper".

OTHER STUFF I WANT TO CRAM INTO TODAY'S PREP

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

SOUL-GLO

(Feel-good stories! Only posted as new stories come available. Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

TOTALLY OUTRAGEOUS!

(Only posted as stories come available. Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

AND I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS THOUGHT

As you sit there today pondering all that happened over Christmas and perhaps thinking of the bills, look at it this way -- think of all the garage sales you helped provide merchandise for.

THE TICKET Movie Reviews with MARIE ASNER

Marie Asner has been reviewing films for over 35 years. Her outlets include radio, print and Internet. For more in-depth movie reviews of the following films, visit www.Tollbooth.org. Ratings from 1 (Low) to 5 (High).

DECEMBER 22-25, 2017...

Bright---How about living in a fantasy world where humans and fantasy creatures have co-existed for eons. This is an alternate Earth, and policeman Will Smith and his Orc partner, Joel Edgerton, are on duty. However, there is evil afoot and they have to find a magic wand before anyone else. Also in the cast are Noomi Rapace and Lucy Fry. "Bright" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Downsizing---Bet you thought this term mean problems in the work force. Think again. In this film, it concerns shrinking people (shades of "The Incredible Shrinking Man.") There is a purpose in this movie, though, and that is if you want to control populations and have the environment last, make the people smaller. Hmm, does that mean family

pets, too? One swipe of that paw and....! To begin the experiment, a group of people are purposely shrunk to four inches and live together, but then problems come forth. Stars are Matt Damon, Christoph Waltz, Udo Kier and Kristen Wiig. "Downsizing" is rated PG 13. Rating of 2 for fans.

Happy End---This is a depressing film about a family with poisoning and suicides in their past. The story centers on a teenage girl named Eve (Fantine Hardoin) with a troubled past and uncertain future. She eventually lives with her aunt (Isabelle Huppert) and still has problems. Others in the cast are Toby Jones and Jean-Louis Trintignant. French language film. "Happy End" is rated R. No rating.

Father Figures (also called "Bastards")---This film stars Owen Wilson and Ed Helms as fraternal twins. Their Mom is Glenn Close and they, as adult, find she doesn't know who their biological father(s) are. What to do? The search is on. Also in the cast are Christopher Walken and J. K. Simmons. "Father Figures" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Hostiles---Christian Bale stars in this western as an army officer in 1892, who agrees to escort a Native American tribal chief and his family back to their family ground. Of course, there are problems along the way with outsiders and weather. The cast includes Wes Studi, Adam Beach and Rosamund Pike. "Hostiles" is rated R. No rating.

Pitch Perfect 3---This is supposed to be the last film in the series, but then everyone says that. The group goes separate ways after winning their championship. Trouble is, they are bored, so along comes a chance to join the USO and entertain troops abroad. But, of course, they get into trouble. The stars include Hailee Steinfeld, Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Ruby Rose and Elizabeth Banks. "Pitch Perfect 3" is rated PG 13. No rating.

The Greatest Showman---Hugh Jackman is quite the performer, from "Wolverine" to Broadway. Here he takes on the role of P. T. Barnum and how he put together his wonderful circus. There are animals, clowns and trapeze artists, which brings us to singer, Zendaya, who plays Anne Wheeler. She is a trapeze artist who falls for P. T. Barnum's partner, played by Zac Efron. Zandaya did most of her own stunts in this film. Also in the cast are Rebecca Ferguson and Michelle Williams. Music by John Debney and Justin Paul. How to put a show together? The Big Top has it all. "The Greatest Showman" is rated PG. Rating of 2 for fans. For children over age ten.

The Phantom Thread---Daniel Day Lewis submerses himself in his acting roles. From "My Right Foot" to "The Last of the Mohicans" and now a fashion designer in "The Phantom Thread." Lewis has said that this is his final film and then he will retire from acting. However, sometimes a tempting role does come along... A phantom thread is a part of fabric/design in which, if you have the right thread, can unravel the garment. Much like a government, in which one small detail can bring the house down. In this film, set in the 1950's in London, Daniel Day-Lewis is a couture fashion designer to nobility, along with his sister (Lesley Manville) and they have a structured life. Enter the outspoken, Alma (Vicky Krieps) who gives new fashion inspiration to Daniel, but his sister begins to see the facade crack and doesn't know how her brother will handle, perhaps, love? Jonny Greenwood composed the score and the film was written and directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. "The Phantom Thread" is rated PG-13. Rating of 3 for fans of fashion and the stars.

DECEMBER 29, 2017...

Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool---An odd title for a movie, but then this film isn't about your usual actress. It is about Gloria Grahame, an actress in the 1950's who won a Best Supporting Actress Award for "The Bad and the Beautiful." Other memorable roles were in "Oklahoma," "Sudden Fear" and "It's A Wonderful Life." Annette Bening takes on the role of Gloria Grahame, whose regular life was more colorful than her screen life. She had several husbands and married her step-son, here played by Jamie Bell. Also in the cast are Vanessa Redgrave and Julie Waters. "Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool" is rated R. Rating of 2 for fans.

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WARNING: Don't believe anything you read on the Internet or email (including stuff you read here) unless you can confirm it with another source, and/or it is consistent with what you already know to be true. The opinions in this publication are not necessarily those of Darren Marlar, Marlar House Entertainment, OnAirPrep.com, or any company or organization affiliated with aforementioned. (Regardless of how stupid you may think those opinions are. So there - nyah!)

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