

What's the Buzz at Reformation?

Feb. 3, 2019

Dates

Feb. 5	Tues.	Chinese New Year (year of the Pig/Boar)
Feb. 9	Sat.	Breakfast at Tee Jaye's Brice Rd. 8am
Feb. 14	Thurs.	Valentine's Day
Feb. 18	Mon.	Presidents' Day, also Ronald McDonald House

Snowmen, Snowwomen, Snow forts, etc.

When you build a snowperson, you are taking part in a ritual that has been around since the Middle Ages. The earliest documentation of a snowperson is found in a Book of Hours (book of prayers) from 1380, now in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (a library) in The Hague, Netherlands.

Experience might have taught you that some snow is better for packing than others. According to Wikipedia, the best time to build is the first warm afternoon following a snowfall with enough snow to make your snow creation.

In music, "Frosty the Snowman" sung by Burl Ives is a classic. The theme song "Walking in the Air" from the Raymond Briggs movie *The Snowman* and "Do You Want to Build a Snowman" from the movie *Frozen* are lovely. There are several movies and books featuring snowmen, and not all of the snowmen are benevolent.

Name	Medium	Naughty or Nice?
<i>Frosty the Snowman</i>	movie	nice
<i>Jack Frost</i>	movie 1996	naughty, scary
<i>Jack Frost</i>	movie 1998	nice
<i>The Snowman</i> (Briggs)	movie or book	nice but bittersweet
<i>Snowmen in Freeze</i> (R.L. Stine)	book	naughty, killers
<i>Olaf in Frozen</i>	movie	nice
<i>Snowman</i> , Hans Christian Andersen	fairy tale	nice but sad
<i>Snowman in Paradise</i>	book	nice

The largest snowperson to date was a snowwoman 122 ft. high, 12 feet at the base. A 16-25-ft. family-friendly Snowzilla is built every year in Anchorage, Alaska in the yard of by Billy Ray Powers. In spite of cease-and-desist orders from people worried about traffic slow-downs, Powers insists that the heart of snow he saves in his freezer from the previous year's Snowzilla, ensures that Snowzilla will return.

Source: Wikipedia, Snowzilla.org

Cherries in the Snow

This is especially pretty served in glass containers so you can see the layers.

1 8-oz package or tub cream cheese (fat free or regular)

1 cup sifted powdered (confectioner's) sugar

**12 oz. carton or tub non-dairy whipped topping, thawed if frozen
(If you use 8 oz real dairy whipped cream, stir in a Tbs of sugar after whipping,
and serve it right away.)**

8 cups angel food or other white cake, cut into 1" cubes

1 10-oz. can cherry pie filling, regular or low-calorie

In a bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Slowly add powdered sugar, mix til blended. Gently fold in whipped topping.

In a large glass bowl or in individual glasses, layer half the cake cubes, then half the cream cheese mix, then half of the cherry pie filling, then repeat the layers. Serve right away if you used real whipped cream, otherwise you can cover it and put it in the refrigerator for an hour or two.

What's the Buzz at Reformation?

Feb. 10, 2019

Marriage Proposal Mishaps (don't worry, they all turned out OK)

One gal was on the phone to her mother, who was yelling at her to break up with her boyfriend. Meanwhile, her boyfriend asked her to marry him. So there was mom in her left ear and her boyfriend proposing marriage in her right ear.

Another guy flew his girlfriend to Dubai, but at each romantic spot, he chickened out. He didn't propose until three hours before her flight home, in the hotel room.

A certain lady's boyfriend told her to look under the Christmas tree for her present. She couldn't find it, gave up, stood up, and answered a call on her cell phone. The whole time she was searching & then talking on her phone, she didn't notice that her boyfriend was on bended knee, waiting for her to hang up so he could propose.

One man planned to propose at a fancy restaurant to propose, but an unexpected October snowstorm left them snowbound. He ended up proposing over Domino's.

A guy launched into a long, romantic speech. His girlfriend didn't realize he was leading up to a proposal, so she asked him to scratch her back. He obliged, then got down on bended knee so she would figure it out.

In Dec. 2014, in the Dutch town of Ijsesselstein, a man planned to have a crane lower him into his girlfriend's garden so he could propose. Unfortunately, the crane arm crashed into the house, damaging the house and forcing the evacuation of the neighboring houses. Then the rescue crane buckled, causing even more damage. Nobody was hurt, & hopefully the video made some money to pay for the repairs!

Another boyfriend took his date out on an old boat. After a few minutes, the boat motor died, and they had to be towed back to shore by a rubber dinghy.

A DJ who was an experienced public speaker and a radio personality, prepared an eloquent speech. Trouble was, he got so emotional that he couldn't say it. The dance crowd (and his future bride) loved it, though.

One guy got so flustered, he asked his girlfriend, "Will you be my husband?"

Sources: TheKnot.com, Wedding proposals gone wrong!
AJC.com, "Dutch man crashes crane into house during marriage proposal" video

Feb. 10, 2019 (p. 2)

Chocolate-Dipped Strawberries (or other fruit)

7-8 oz. chocolate of choice or dipping chocolate

about 36 strawberries or other fresh fruit OR dried apricots. For fresh fruit, rinse & dry it off, cut it up if too big. Hint: Cortland apples won't turn brown

1 long skewer

Line baking sheet with waxed paper.

Melt chocolate over low heat. Remove from heat.

Using a long skewer, skewer the fruit and dip about halfway into the chocolate.

Place the dipped fruit on the waxed paper, leaving about 2" between them.

What's the Buzz at Reformation?

Feb. 17, 2019

Scott Joplin (1868-1917)

Scott Joplin was born in Texarkana< texas. His family loved music. His mom played the banjo, dad played the violin, and his neighbor let Scott play on the piano. Soon Scott's dad saw how talented Scott was, and bought a secondhand square piano. An old German music teacher gave him lessons in music reading and harmony for free.

When his mother died, Scott was only 14, but he was able to earn a living playing the piano. When he was 17, he moved to St. Louis, Missouri. In addition to taking courses in harmony and composition at the George Smith College for Negroes, he began playing in the Maple Leaf Club. It was at the club that he met a music publisher named John Stark. Joplin played a piece he had written called "the Maple Leaf Rag." Stark liked it so much, he offered Joplin \$50 plus royalties if he could publish it. Their collaboration began in 1899, and by 1907, Stark had published more than 50 of Joplin's piano rags.

Joplin then began to write an opera called *Treemonisha*. He and his wife moved to New York and did everything they could to stay afloat, including taking in boarders and giving music lessons. His opera was to be his crowning glory. Unfortunately, when he showed the score to Stark, Stark refused to publish it, and their friendship and business relationship ended. Joplin spent his life's savings to see the opera produced, playing the piano because he couldn't afford an orchestra, but *Treemonisha* was not a success. Heartbroken, he fell sick and was put into Manhattan State Hospital in 1916. He tried to compose even while he was in the hospital, but died on April 1, 1917, just five days before the US entered into WWI.

The plot of *Treemonisha* is as follows: a baby girl is found under a tree by a woman named Monisha. As she grows up and seems to always want to play under the tree, the mother renames her *Treemonisha*. *Treemonisha* is lucky enough to become educated, and emerges as a leader. The opera finally met with success in Atlanta in 1972, and again in Houston in 1975.

Most Americans became familiar with Joplin's rag "The Entertainer" through the 1973 movie "The Sting," which starred Paul Newman and Robert Redford. Marvin Hamlisch scored the music.

Source: "Ragtime is Scott Joplin," , pulished my Man and His Music, NW, 1976.

Feb. 17, 2019 (p. 2)

What does an Italian term Straciatella have to do with Scott Joplin? Well, stracciatella means "rag" in Italian! The Italians have straciatella, soup, cake, cookies, etc.

Straciatella Soup (Italian egg drop soup)

Time: about 10 minutes

Serves 4 as a soup/side dish, 2 as a main course

4 cups chicken broth, lightly salted

1 egg

4 tsp. finely grated Parmesan cheese

optional - 1 T. panko breadcrumbs or semolina flour (or ground puffed rice if you want something gluten free)

1 pinch freshly ground black pepper

1 handful of ribbon-sliced spinach or other tender leaves such as arugula, sorrel, or chard

Simmer the stock. In a medium bowl, mix egg, Parmesan, and pepper.

Once the stock is simmering, stir in sliced spinach, crumbs if using, and egg-cheese mixture. Simmer about 1 more minute, then serve.

Turning the Other Cheek (and Other Ways of Dealing with Today's World)

Q: What can you do when you can't remember somebody's name?

A: Sometimes honesty is the best policy. If you've been talking for a while, you can ease into the confession by saying you got caught up in the conversation and forgot the person's name.

Q: If you are already talking to Fred, and a person approaches who should be introduced to the Fred, but you can't remember their name?

A: Say to the newcomer, "Have you met Euphemia?" Hopefully, the newcomer will introduce himself. If not, fess up. Maybe they will think it's funny.

Q: You've been standing there waiting for somebody to introduce you, and nobody has done so. You're beginning to wonder if the people are being snobs?

A: Just introduce yourself, and if they don't act friendly, at least nobody can say that YOU were a snob. Maybe there's a friendly person who was too shy to introduce himself/herself. At least open the door to conversation.

Q: If you haven't written a thank-you note/apology/birthday card, and it's really late/you have crummy handwriting, or you don't know what to say.

A: Better late than never. Write one, send an email, or send a free e-card from Punchbowl or another websites-- they have the messages already in them or you can edit Or call and leave a message at a time when they're not home, if you're too embarrassed to talk in person.

Q: You're embarrassed to ask the host/waitstaff/guard the location of the restroom.

A: Ask your wife/girlfriend or any female over the age of 20. She will probably know within 5 seconds of entering a room (Non-scientific fact: most women are equipped with restroom-sensing- superpower somewhat like bats' echolocation), or else she will ask for you. Or, just walk up to the guard with an embarrassed look on your face, and they will usually point you the right way without your having to say a word.

Q: You can't get a jar open, and Arnold isn't around.

A: Method 1, tap the base of the lid (near the neck of the jar) on the edge of the counter, rotating the jar so you tap it in at least 3 places to break the seal. If that doesn't work, wrap 1 layer of rubbery shelf liner (or a thin damp towel) over the lid (for traction) and use your superhuman strength.

Q: There's a bee buzzing around, not in a friendly way.

A: Brooke Astor recommended holding a flower for the bee to check out, then get up and toss the flower in the bushes.

Q: You are invited to a celebration, you can't attend, it says RSVP.

A: RSVP. Any disappointment the hosts might have over your not attending will be lessened, because they won't have to shell out money for your uneaten dinner.

Q: You haven't been to the gym in a while, and there's a new machine or piece of equipment you have no idea how to use.

If you're too shy to ask, make sure somebody is nearby because you might need them to help you or call 911. The first time I used a treadmill, I intended to set the speed at 3.5 mph, but mistakenly entered 35 mph!