



February 2024



GFWC Georgia Monthly Connections

Here it is—February — the second month of the new year, the shortest month (we get another day this year because it is Leap Year), and the coldest month in some areas. But we mostly think of February as the month to celebrate love, friendship, and all the special people in our lives, which means continuing to make a difference in our communities. For Georgia clubwomen, it's a month we take a relieving breath — those club reports are finished, our activities for 2023 are in the annals of history, and now those reports are in the hands of the state committee chairmen to judge during the weekend of February 17-18. It is a month filled with observances — Black History Month, American Heart Month, Presidents' Day, Teen Dating Violence and Prevention Month, Valentine's Day, and Mardi Gras. It's also a time we begin to think of spring and what that brings weatherwise and federation-wise — we begin planning for our gardens, maybe planting a tree on Georgia Arbor Day. It's also a time when our Districts and State finalize their plans for their Spring meetings and begin the transition from one administration to another, reflecting on all their accomplishments. And let's hope Punxsutawney Phil and General Beauregard Lee don't see their shadows. There's a lot happening in these 29 days!

Happy Valentine's Day!

February Awareness Months

- Black History Month
- National Burn Awareness Month
- Library Lovers Month
- Career and Technical Education Month
- National Bird Feeding Month
- Spay/Neuter Awareness Month
- American Heart Month
- National Cancer Prevention Month
- National Children's Dental Health Month
- International Boost Self-Esteem Month
- AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month
- National Goat Yoga Month
- Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month
- National Time Management Month



February is derived from the Latin word "februs" meaning "to cleanse." The month was named after the Roman Festival, Februalia, a month long festival of purification and atonement.

Stone = Amethyst Flower = Iris or Violets

What Year Did You Join GFWC Georgia?

GFWC Georgia

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Please complete and submit this 4 question form letting us know the year you joined GFWC Georgia.



[Click Here to Complete the Form.](#)

Thank you

GFWC Georgia LEADS Deadline— Feb. 1

Leadership
Education
And
Development
Seminar



February 1, 2024 — That's the deadline to submit your application to be the GFWC Georgia Candidate to the GFWC LEADS training at the 2024 GFWC Convention in Chicago, IL on June 28, 2024.

Don't delay, apply today!

[Click here for the Application.](#)

Questions?

Contact Becky Bolden at beckybolden11@gmail.com.



Stand With Survivors Day—Feb. 7

The 23rd Annual Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Event Stand With Survivors Day

Stand With Survivors Day (SWS) brings together intimate partner and sexual violence advocates, system stakeholders, and community constituents from across the State of Georgia to rally together and speak to their elected officials about legislation that effects intimate partner and sexual violence survivors, their families, and communities.

This event includes the following:

- Advocacy 101 (Webinar) — **February 6, 2024**
During this 2-hour webinar, you will learn more about our advocacy priorities, receive tips on how to talk to legislators, and be able to ask questions.
- Kick-Off (In-Person) — **February 7, 2024**
During this event, you will learn how our key legislative priorities impact survivors and their families.



Please plan to attend both events, and on February 7th, please wear purple and your name tag.

Visit the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) [Stand With Survivors Day](#) page to register for the event.

Judging Weekend & State EC Meeting

WHEN: Judging—February 17-18, 2024
State Executive Committee Meeting—February 17, 2024

WHERE: Lipscomb Cottage
Tallulah Falls School Campus

ATTENDEES: By Invitation
Judging—Committee Chairmen
State Executive Committee Meeting—Members

WHAT TO BRING: Judging—Club Reports to Judge
State Executive Committee Meeting — Pocket Change





BOGO CARDS
BUY ONE GET ONE

Valid for 10 free dozens

\$25



That's a savings of \$140

With your Krispy Kreme Card you will receive 1 FREE dozen of original glazed donuts with the purchase of any dozen.

All proceeds benefit the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC Georgia), a 501c3 nonprofit to be used for Educational Programing.



GFWC Georgia Fundraiser

A Great Gift for a Valentine's Party or a Board Meeting!

Sprinkle a little love with our Krispy Kreme BOGO Cards.

We can mail them to you or your loved ones.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will be used for educational programing for GFWC Georgia.

BOGO Cards can be purchased [here.](#)



JOIN US FOR A

Bunco

GAME NIGHT

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL!

**February 24th @ 3:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Morrow
1647 Lake Harbin Rd, Morrow**

**Hosted by Central West District
to benefit Wellspring Living**

**RSVP: Via Constant Contact or
GFWC Georgia website**

**Light Refreshments
& beverages offered**

**Clubs can register for a table
to guarantee seating with
members**

**TICKETS
\$25
TABLE
\$100**

The Month of Love

February 24, 2024

Let the Good Times Roll! Join your fellow federation sisters for an afternoon of Bunco Fun and Fellowship on February 24th in Morrow. This would be a great opportunity to bring your friends and to invite someone as a prospective member.

Register [here](#).

Goal: \$2,000

Club Events in February

THE BREMEN JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB
PRESENTS THE

DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE

PRE-K THRU 5TH GRADE
Friday February 2, 2024
Doors open at 6:30pm for pictures
Dance is from 7pm-9pm

SEWELL MILL EVENT CENTER
126 Hamilton Avenue Bremen

\$20 per couple
\$5 each additional daughter

THE BREMEN JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB
PRESENTS THE

MOTHER SON DANCE

PRE-K THRU 5TH GRADE
Saturday February 3, 2024
Doors open at 6:30pm for pictures
Dance is from 7pm-9pm

SEWELL MILL EVENT CENTER
126 Hamilton Avenue Bremen

\$20 per couple
\$5 each additional son

GFWC Bremen Junior Woman Club — February 2–3, 2024

2024 STAR

Recognition Luncheon

The GFWC Brunswick Woman's Club will honor the 2024 STAR Students and Teachers from Brunswick High, Frederica Academy and Glynn Academy at a Recognition Luncheon.

Date: February 13, 2024

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Place: Heritage Oaks Golf Club
126 Clipper Bay
Oak Grove Island
Brunswick, GA 31523

GFWC Brunswick Woman's Club—February 13, 2024

Cost: \$25 per ticket -Includes bingo cards and refreshments

Millen Bingo Bash

Thurs. Feb. 15th | 6:00 - 9:00
Millen Community House

Thank You to Our
Event Hosts!

Millen Woman's Club
District 6920
Rotary Club of Millen

GFWC Millen Woman's Club—February 15, 2024

National Cancer Prevention Month



According to the **National Institutes of Health**, nearly 1.9 million people are diagnosed with cancer each year in the United States. Nearly half of those diagnoses are breast, prostate, lung, pancreas, or colon cancers. And yet, more than 40 percent of all cancer diagnoses can be linked to a preventable cause - nearly half.

National Cancer Prevention Month focuses on the things

we can control to lessen our odds of developing cancer. Five of the top recommendations for lessening our risk include:

- Regular exercise.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.
- Eating healthy foods.
- Quitting or never starting smoking.
- Limiting alcohol use.

Other actions that help to prevent cancer or catch it early include routine checkups, treating or preventing other health conditions, and knowing your risk factors. We can't stop every form of cancer yet, but we do have the tools to decrease our risk factors.

American Heart Month and Go Red Day—February 2, 2024

Since 1963, February has been designated **American Heart Month** to remind everyone — especially women — to focus on their cardiovascular health.

How to Observe American Heart Month:

- **Wear Red on National Red Day.** National Wear Red Day® takes place on the first Friday of February each year as part of the **GoRed For Women®** campaign developed by the **American Heart Association** in 2004. National Wear Red Day falls on Friday, February 2nd, 2024. Take a picture and post it on social media.
- **Learn CPR.** Learn lifesaving CPR and first aid.
- **Practice Healthy Living.** Know that healthy eating and heart health go hand in hand. Excess belly fat can contribute to high blood pressure and unhealthy blood lipid levels. Foods high in soluble fiber—like beans, oats, barley, apples, pears, and avocados—are tasty to help lower bad cholesterol levels.
- **Get Moving.** Little changes can have a significant impact on one's daily activity levels. In fact, an activity as simple as walking briskly for 30 minutes a day can help lower your risk of heart disease. Add stretching, walking and yoga to your routine to increase physical activity.
- **Connect Dental Health with Heart Health.** Strange as it sounds, keeping those pearly whites clean and polished might aid in the fight against heart disease. Recent research suggests that gum disease may raise your risk of heart disease. The **American Dental Association** recommends brushing your teeth at least twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and flossing daily.
- **Have a Healthy Heart Day.** Designate your meeting day in February to focus on ways to maintain a heart-healthy lifestyle. Provide healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, and invite a nurse or nutritionist to speak about making better choices in the new year. Hand out promotional products to make the event more fun.
- **Know the risk factors for heart disease.** Talk to your doctor about your risk factors—high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, and smoking cigarettes.
- **Reduce Stress.** Take steps to reduce your stress levels — exercise, a good night's sleep, connecting with family, friends, and community (volunteering), meditation, and time with your pet.
- **Know the warning signs of a heart attack.**



Common Heart Attack Warning Signs

- 1 Pain or discomfort in chest
- 2 Lightheadedness, nausea, or vomiting
- 3 Jaw, neck or back pain
- 4 Discomfort or pain in arm or shoulder
- 5 Shortness of breath

A SEASON OF WELL-BEING

Try These Year-Round Stress Busters

- Take a walk in nature
- Get good sleep
- Connect regularly with family and friends
- Explore mindfulness
- Spend time with pets
- Get regular physical activity

Did You Know?

- The heart is a busy organ. It beats more than 110,000 times a day.
- It pumps an impressive amount of blood — up to 2,000 gallons daily.
- It can beat in isolation. Your heart can carry on beating even after it's been removed from your body.
- Mondays are bad for the heart — the day most heart attacks occur.
- Heart cells don't divide — the reason why heart cancer is rare.



Each February, young adults and their loved ones nationwide raise awareness about teen dating violence through Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM). This annual, month-long effort focuses on advocacy and education to stop dating abuse before it starts.

Teen dating violence is an often-unrecognized subcategory of domestic violence. Adolescents have been long overlooked as a population that suffers from relationship abuse. Although there is research on rates of crime and victimization related to teen dating violence, research that examines the problem from a longitudinal perspective and considers the dynamics and perceptions of teen romantic relationships is lacking.

Romantic relationships between teenagers are incredibly complicated. The undertaking of a relationship, very often, requires more maturity than most teens have developed. These relationships are more likely to have problems including communication, jealousy, and selflessness.

As a result, teenagers are more likely to be involved in relationships that are unhealthy, violent, and abusive. Certain behaviors should be cause for concern. Behaviors that should raise a red flag include:

- ◆ Excessive jealousy or insecurity;
- ◆ Invasions of your privacy;
- ◆ Unexpected bouts of anger or rage;
- ◆ Unusual moodiness;
- ◆ Pressuring a partner into unwanted sexual activity;
- ◆ Blaming you for problems in the relationship and not taking any responsibility for the same;
- ◆ Controlling tendencies;
- ◆ Explosive temper;
- ◆ Preventing you from going out with or talking to other people;
- ◆ Constantly monitoring your whereabouts and checking in to see what you are doing and who you are with;
- ◆ Falsely accusing you of things;
- ◆ Vandalizing or ruining your personal property;
- ◆ Taunting or bullying;

- ◆ Threatening or causing physical violence.

HOW TO HELP:

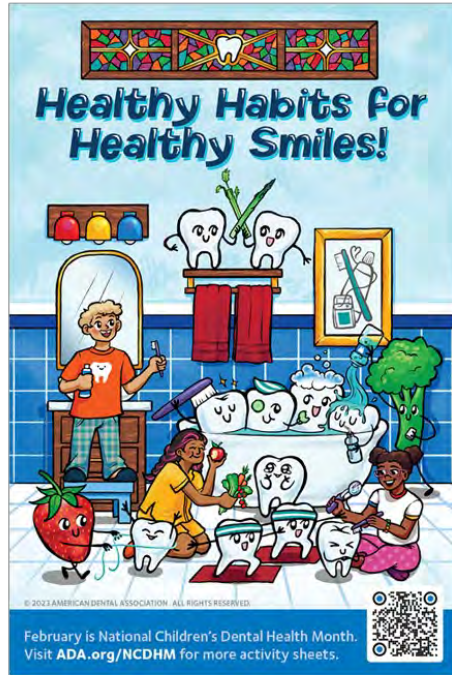
- **Know the Signs** — *the warning signs are many, from seemingly afraid to disagree with a dating partner to excessive texting, calling, emailing, and visiting a dating partner to stopping visits, calls, and activities with friends and family members to declining grades and skipping school to be with a partner to having injuries they can't explain.*
- **Be a Role Model** — *treat your kids, grandkids, and others respectfully.*
- **Be a Good Listener** — *Victims of teen dating violence need a listening ear and support. Only 1/3 of teens who were in a violent relationship ever felt safe and supported to disclosing their abusive relationship to anyone.*
- **Start Talking** to your kids and grandkids about healthy relationships before they start dating. *Talk about how the media portrays healthy and unhealthy relationships as well.*
- **Get Involved** with schools, churches, and youth organizations to discuss healthy relationships, or in efforts to prevent dating violence. *Advocate for healthy relationships courses and discussions in schools as early as elementary school.*
- **Know Where to Get Help** — *If you know of a teen or parent that could benefit from speaking to a caring, well-trained peer advocate, please connect them with the National Dating Abuse Helpline, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, at 1-866-331-9474 (TTY: 1-866-331-8453), by texting "loveis" to 77054, or through live chat at loveisrespect.org.*




National Children's Dental Health Month


February is **National Children's Dental Health Month**. Cavities—caries or tooth decay—are the childhood's most common chronic disease, yet cavities are preventable. Children who have poor oral health often miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don't.


Untreated cavities can cause pain and infections, leading to problems eating, speaking, and learning. More than 1 in 5 children aged 2 to 5 years have at least one cavity in their baby teeth. Children from low-income families are more than twice as likely to have untreated cavities compared with children from higher-income households. Medicaid and CHIP cover children's dental services — including teeth cleanings, fluoride, sealants, and fillings.




Healthy Smile Tips

 Brush your teeth 2x/day with fluoride toothpaste.

 Clean between your teeth daily.

 Eat healthy foods and limit sugary beverages.

 See your dentist at least twice a year.

ADA American Dental Association®

National Burn Awareness Month



PREVENT:

Take action to prevent burn and scalds to yourself and others.



REMOVE:

Remove yourself from danger, and remove any clothing and jewelry from the burn area.



COOL:

Place burn under cool running water for 20 minutes.



COVER:

Apply healing ointment such as Burn Free



While the whole month is designated National Burns Awareness Month, **February 4-10, 2024, National Burn Awareness Week**, is a time for organizations and educators to share an everyday burn awareness and prevention message.

The 2024 theme is *Flammable Liquids Burn*. Flammable liquids, like gasoline, can burn, release vapors, or explode, even at room temperature. According to the American Burn Association, gasoline fumes can ignite up to 12 feet away from the liquid.

Gasoline and lighter fluid should be kept out of the reach of children and never stored in your home. You should use containers specifically listed or labeled for gasoline and start charcoal grills only with fluids labeled as “charcoal starter fluid.”

Grills and gas ranges produce heat so keep your cooking area clear around an open flame. And remember that cooking oil is a highly flammable liquid. Keep your eyes open when you fry!

National Bird Feeding Month

Great Backyard Bird Count— February 16-19, 2024



Bird watching and feeding have become popular hobbies. National Bird Feeding Month is a chance for all, whether bird feeders, watchers, or anyone else feeling in the spirit, to extend a hand out to our flying friends.

The month was created to educate the public on the seasonal journeys of birds and for us to provide some aid at the height of winter when it is needed most. This month, individuals are encouraged to provide food, water, and shelter to help wild birds survive. This assistance benefits the environment by supplementing the wild bird's natural weed seeds and insect diet.

How can you celebrate National Bird Feeding Month?

1. **Put a feeder in your yard.** Consider different feeders to attract different kinds of birds. Foods birds like — loose bird seeds, seed or mealy worm cakes, meaty canned pet food, or crumbled bread.
2. **Add a place with water.** Birds struggle to get non-frozen water in the winter. If possible, breaking the ice in a birdbath, adding a heated birdbath or fountain or even a large bowl of warm water would help immensely. Birds often gather where food, shelter, and water are reliable, so try to be consistent and generous.
3. **Do some bird watching.** Monitor the birds that make a pit stop in your yard. Set binoculars near a window for better viewing. Get a bird book for identifying new or unfamiliar species.
4. **Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count.** Each February, novice and experienced birdwatchers participate by counting and recording the different species seen and heard in their respective areas.

Great Backyard Bird Count is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Easy— All participants do is count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or longer if they wish) on one or more days of the four-day

event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Who can participate — anyone who can count, from beginning bird watchers to experts. Where does it occur?— in your very own backyard, or anywhere in the world.

Each submission helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share.

When does it take place? It is from Friday, February 16, through Monday, February 19, 2024.

Interested? Then take these steps:

- 1) Go to the Great Backyard Bird Count website.
- 2) Tons of info available, including videos. Click on “How to Participate.”
- 3) Decide where you will watch birds.
- 4) Identify all the birds you see and hear in your desired location for at least 15 minutes on one of the four designated days, noting the number and kinds of birds. If you are unsure what type of birds you see or hear, download [a bird checklist](#) found in your area. Or use the [Merlin Bird ID App](#).
- 5) Submit your results. If new or inexperienced, use the Merlin Bird ID to record what birds you are see or hear. If you participated in the count before and want to record actual numbers of birds seen or heard, use the [eBird Mobile App](#) on your smartphone, or enter your bird list on the [eBird website](#) from your desktop/laptop.

That's it!





The story of Black History Month began in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard-trained

historian Carter G. Woodson, and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by Black Americans and other peoples of African descent. The group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs and host performances and lectures.

In the decades that followed, cities across the country began recognizing "Negro History Week." By the late 1960s, thanks in part to the civil rights movement and a growing awareness of Black identity, "Negro History Week" had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses.

President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

Since 1976, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme. The Black History Month 2024 theme, "African Americans and the Arts," explores the key influence African Americans have had in the fields of "visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expression."

African American art is infused with African, Caribbean, and the Black American lived experiences. In the fields of visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expression, the African American influence has been paramount. African American artists have used art to preserve history and community memory as well as for empowerment.

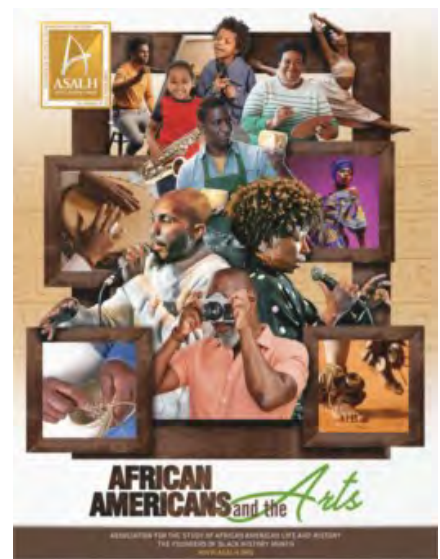
For centuries, the contributions of people of African descent to the arts and history were denied, even as their artistry in many genres was mimicked and/or stolen. However, we can see the unbroken chain of Black art from antiquity to the present, from Egypt across Africa, from Europe to the New World in the form of sweetgrass baskets. Even before the American Revolution, enslaved

Africans of the Lowcountry began their more than a 300-year tradition of making these baskets and this artistry and craft continues today.

The suffering of those in bondage gave birth to the spirituals, the nation's first contribution to music. Blues musicians such as Robert Johnson, McKinley 'Muddy Waters' Morganfield and Riley "BB" B. King created and nurtured a style of music that became the bedrock for gospel, soul, and other still popular (and evolving) forms of music. Black contributions to literature include works by poets like Phillis Wheatley.

In the 1920s and 30s, the rise of the Black Renaissance and New Negro Movement brought the Black Arts to an international stage. Members of the armed forces, such as James Reese Europe, and artists such as Langston Hughes, Josephine Baker and Lois Mailou Jones brought Black culture and Black American aesthetics internationally, and Black culture began its ascent to becoming a dominant cultural movement to the world.

The 1960s continued this thread through the cultural evolution known as the Black Arts Movement, where artists covered issues such as pride in one's heritage and established art galleries and museum exhibitions to show their own work, as well as publications such as Black Art. This period brought us artists such as Alvin Ailey, Judith Jamison, Amiri Baraka, Nikki Giovanni and Sonia Sanchez.



In 1973, in the Bronx, New York Black musicians started a new genre of music called hip-hop, which comprised DJing, MCing, Graffiti, Break Dancing and Beat Boxing. Hip-hop performers also used technological equipment such as turntables, synthesizers, drum machines, and samplers to make their songs. Since then hip-hop has continued to be a pivotal force in political, social, and cultural spaces and was a medium where issues such as racial violence in the inner city, sexism, economic disinvestment and others took the forefront.

African Americans have contributed immensely and richly to the fabric of American culture.

National Library Lovers' Month in February is dedicated to the people who love whole buildings devoted to reading, housing, organizing, categorizing, finding, studying, and otherwise loving books.

Do you know where the word 'library' came from? Its origins from the Latin word 'liber' for 'book' or 'document,' which can be found in 'libraria' for 'collection of books' and 'librarium' for 'container for books.' Libraries started with the need to organize collections of documents. The earliest form of archiving began amidst the earliest forms of writing, which consisted of clay tablets, dating back to 2600 B.C. in Sumer.

In post 500 B.C., private libraries with written books were found in Greece. Moving forward a few more centuries, in 600 A.D., the great Alexandria and Constantinople libraries came into the picture. These, amongst other libraries that were established soon after, attracted scholars from around the globe. An Arab dynasty named the Fatimids also owned many libraries by 1100 A.D. Their palace library probably held the biggest collection of literature at the time and was touted by historians as a wonder of the world. Unfortunately, throughout history, libraries were destroyed by conquerors so they could remove every record of the previous community. Thankfully, it's been a while since libraries were destroyed like this.

So, this February, let's take a moment to appreciate everything libraries have done for us, and show them some love by visiting a local library or donating books to one or a Little Free Library.

LIBRARY LOVERS' MONTH

HOW LIBRARIES ARE LOVED



THE ARTS

Visual and performing arts exhibits and programs: painting, sculpture, photography, design, digital, fiber, music, dance, and acting.



LEARNING SPACES

Study space, homework help, creative labs, and collaborative learning.



LITERACY

Early literacy skills, digital resources, test prep, coding instruction, and life-long learning opportunities.



DIGITAL ACCESS

Broadband, wireless internet, mobile hot spots, public computing, and technology hubs.



WORKFORCE AND SMALL BUSINESS

Workforce skills development, career planning programs, job-search assistance, research and resources to support small business creation.



SOCIAL HUB

Health information, social services, financial assistance, and nonprofit resources.

National Goat Yoga Month



Yes, a child's pose with a goat. In February, goat-loving yogis gather to commemorate the modest origins of merging goats with exercise. Goat yoga is performed in the same way as regular yoga; the only difference is goats are involved. Some poses require goats to sit on your back; others just involve the goats roaming around. During some sessions, instructors allow short breaks for yogis to pet the goats. The fad is growing to such an extent that goat owners now will pack up their baby goats and bring them to yoga sessions.

Where did it begin? In 2015 on a little farm in Gilbert, AZ. April Gould was training for *America Ninja Warrior*, a fitness competition TV show. During her audition process, she was inspired to place a baby goat on her back and do pushups and various yoga poses for added weight, strength, and balance. Her friend Sarah Williams ran a paddleboard yoga business and wanted to diversify and viola, goat yoga was introduced. *Namaste, goat yogis!*

Chinese New Year –Year of the Dragon

The Chinese New Year is an ancient celebration that marks the beginning of a new lunar cycle and culturally represents a rebirth, full of deep-rooted traditions and ancestral symbolism. In the Chinese calendar, the year **2024 will give way to the year of the Dragon.**

The origin of the Chinese New Year goes back to the Shang Dynasty from 1600 to 1046 BC. During this time, people held sacrificial ceremonies in honor of gods at the beginning of the year. The date of the Chinese New Year was established during the Han Dynasty from 200 BC to 220 AD. Through the years, different ways of celebrating the New Year evolved.

Although this holiday is commonly called “Chinese New Year” in the West, China is not the only country to observe it. Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is the most celebrated and longest of all Asian festivals and is observed by millions of people worldwide. Many other countries in East Asia, including Vietnam, Korea, Japan, and the Philippines, hold their own New Year celebrations at this time.

The Chinese New Year holiday is based on the lunar calendar and therefore varies each year on the Gregorian calendar. Celebrations of Chinese New Year traditionally last for **16 days**, starting from Chinese New Year's Eve (February 9, 2024) to the Lantern Festival (February 24,

2024). In 2024, the **Chinese New Year will begin on February 10.**

The festivities include colorful parades, lion and dragon dances, family reunions, exchange of red envelopes (with money inside as a symbol of good fortune), banquets with traditional dishes and the display of fireworks.



In the Chinese worldview, the dragon is not perceived as a fearsome creature, but as a divine being that bestows power and good fortune. It is associated with positive characteristics such as wisdom, vitality, nobility, and benevolence. He represents primordial strength, prosperity, courage, and renewal.

This legendary mythological being is much more than just a creature in Chinese folklore. It is believed that the emperors were descendants of the dragon, thus symbolizing imperial power. In addition, the dragon is considered to have control over natural phenomena such as rain, essential for agriculture, and is credited with the power to generate abundance and fertility in the land.

Leap Year



The year 2024 is marked by an event that takes place every four years – it is a leap year! This addition of an extra day in February results in a 366-day calendar. The practice originates from the necessity to align the calendar year with the

actual time it takes Earth to orbit the Sun, approximately 365 days and 6 hours. Without this adjustment, hours would accumulate over time, leading to a desynchronization of seasons and affecting numerous activities and calendars.

The practice of adding a leap day every four years was first initiated by the Egyptians. Later, during the reign of Julius Caesar, the Romans adopted and formalized this practice,

giving birth to the Julian calendar. Subsequent modifications to the Julian calendar led to the creation of the Gregorian calendar, which is currently in use today.

Leap years are associated with various myths and superstitions. Some believe these years bring bad luck, a belief reflected in unfortunate historical events coinciding with leap years. The Romans associated February, the month when the extra day is added, with the dead. The odds of being born on a leap day are 1 in 1,461. Approximately four million people worldwide were born on February 29, with notable cases like a British family spanning three generations born on this date, according to Guinness World Records.

In 2024, due to the leap year adjustment, spring is scheduled to arrive early, on Tuesday, March 19. The vernal equinox, which marks the commencement of spring, is a significant event. Spring characterizes transformation and optimism and brings along astronomical wonders for nature enthusiasts.

Groundhog Day — February 2

Traditionally, candles and lamps are symbols of rejoicing. Candlemas in the Middle Ages was the day the Catholic Church blessed candles for the entire year. During this blessing, a procession of worshippers would hold candles in their hands. It was believed that wherever these candles were then used, they would chase away the devil.

There was a medieval superstition that all hibernating animals came out of their caves and dens on Candlemas to check on the weather. If they could see their shadow, it meant that winter would go on for another 6 weeks and they could go back to sleep. A cloudy day meant that spring was just around the corner.

In England and France, the farmers used to watch for the stirring of the “Candlemas Bear” as a sign that springtime was coming. In Ireland, it was the hedgehog. In Germany, it was the badger.

The early German settlers, known as the Pennsylvania Dutch, brought this custom to the United States. They chose the groundhog, or woodchuck, a member of the squirrel family, as their hibernating animal to watch as a sign of spring. This tradition rooted with the Pennsylvania Dutch gave rise to the legend of Punxsutawney Phil, a groundhog in Pennsylvania.

So why February 2? Because it was the half-way mark between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. Members of the Punxsutawney Club hike up to Phil’s burrow on Gobbler’s Knob on February 2 and wait for him to

emerge. Phil is a pampered groundhog, living in a heated burrow underneath a simulated tree stump in a stage area. He’s a chubby little fellow, weighing about 15 pounds and eating goodies like dog food and ice cream. He is supposedly named after King Philip and before that he was called Br’er Groundhog.



In Georgia, General Beauregard Lee is widely considered to be the weather prognosticator of the Southern United States. Before General Beauregard Lee, the groundhog making predictions beginning in 1981 was General Robert E. Lee. Beauregard Lee made his first nationally televised appearance in 1988 and for 27 years, he resided at Yellow River Game Ranch in Gwinnett County. In 2017, he was relocated to Dauset Trails Nature Center in Jackson, where he lives in a ante-bellum style mansion known as Weathering Heights.

Who’s more accurate — Phil or Lee? General Beauregard Lee is more accurate than Punxsutawney Phil, boasting a 60% national accuracy between 2001 and 2010, compared to Phil’s 30%.



Georgia Day — February 12

On February 12, 1733 – Georgia Day– the Georgia colonists arrived at Yamacraw Bluff to begin building Savannah. Surveyed and designed by Noble Jones, Savannah became the first planned city in American history.



After years of planning and two months crossing the Atlantic, James Edward Oglethorpe and 114 colonists climbed 40 feet up the bluff from the Savannah River on **February 12, 1733** and founded the colony of Georgia.

George II granted the Georgia trustees a charter for the colony a year earlier. The trustees’ motto was *Non Sibi Sed Aliis*—not for self but for others. Georgia would be a philanthropic and military enterprise that would provide the “worthy” poor a new start and serve as a buffer between Spanish Florida and the English colonies.

The trustees prohibited slavery and large landholdings; Georgians would work for themselves on small farms. In the end, there were no debtors among them. In November 1732 Oglethorpe and the

colonists boarded the *Anne* in Gravesend, England and after stopping briefly in South Carolina, arrived safely in Georgia.

The 13th and last of the British colonies on mainland North America grew to become the largest of the United States east of the Mississippi after its founding.

Mardi Gras—February 13



The season commonly called Carnival to early Christians, it is a period from Epiphany (January 6) to Shrove Tuesday (the day before Lent). Carnival time is a time for feasting and self-indulgence that comes just before the sacrifices and fasting of the Lenten season in the Christian faith. Mardi Gras, which is French for “Fat Tuesday,” is celebrated on the last day of the Carnival season, which is precisely 47 days before Easter and one day before Ash Wednesday,

the beginning of Lent.

This holiday is celebrated around the world, but in the U.S. it's most extravagantly done in Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans, Louisiana. Popular festivities and traditions include attending parades and masked balls, lavish costumes, torchlight processions, dancing, fireworks, catching beads and doubloons, eating king cake, and general feasting and drinking. It is said that most of the Mardi Gras or Carnival traditions date back to the 14th century in medieval Europe, passing through Rome and Venice in the 17th and 18th century to the French house of the Bourbons. From there, the traditional revelry followed France to her colonies in the New World.

Laissez les bon temps rouler!

Valentine's Day—February 14

Valentine's Day, also known as Saint Valentine's Day, is a celebration of love and affection. It's a time when people express their feelings to their romantic partners, friends, family members, and even pets. Traditionally, it's associated with the exchange of cards, gifts, and romantic gestures to show appreciation and affection.

Mixed opinions prevail regarding who or what was celebrated in mid-February. Some point to martyred saints by the name of Valentine or Valentinus. The most popular story tells of the saint who defied a decree by Emperor Claudius II who outlawed marriage for young men because he believed single men made better soldiers. St. Valentine would marry them in secret. However, it may have been another Valentine who performed the marriages. Either way, at least two of them were beheaded for their actions.



Another possible origin for Valentine's Day takes us back to a pagan festival called Lupercalia. As a way to discourage participation in the fertility festival, the Christian church placed St. Valentine's Day in the middle of February.

How to Celebrate Valentine's Day:

- **Exchange Gifts**— chocolates, flowers, jewelry, or personalized presents that have sentimental value.
- **Write Love Letters** — handwritten love letters or heartfelt cards.
- **Share a Romantic Meal** — at home or at a cozy restaurant.
- **Enjoy Quality Time** — watching a romantic movie, going for a scenic walk, or planning a weekend getaway.

Georgia Arbor Day—February 16



Georgia Arbor Day is a day set aside for schools, civic clubs, and other organizations, as well as individuals, to reflect on the importance of trees in our state and across our nation. Georgia Arbor Day is in February because it is the ideal time to plant trees in our state.

Tree Tidbits:

- Trees can save you up to 25 percent on your energy bills. A shade tree can cool your home or office building by 20 degrees in the summer. Trees also serve as a windbreak in the winter.
- General Sherman, a giant sequoia in California's Redwood Forest, is the largest tree in the world. It measures 30 stories tall, is 82 feet in circumference, with 52,000 cubic feet of wood.
- Trees need water to survive, just like humans. A large tree can consume 100 gallons of water out of the ground in one day and discharge it into the air as oxygen and water vapor.
- United States forests absorb about 10 percent of the country's yearly CO2 emissions. A tree can absorb up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide each year, sequestering one ton of carbon dioxide by the time it reaches 40 years old.
- Did you know pine cones have gender? Male pine cones shed pollen and female pine cones make seeds. The wind blows the pollen from the male cones into the female cones and the seeds become pollinated.

Did You Know?

The State Tree of Georgia is the Southern Live Oak. It is an evergreen oak tree and can grow up to 80 feet tall and 100 feet wide. It's known for its broad canopy formed by dense, strong branches, adorned with dark green elliptical leaves. It thrives along the Georgia coast and islands, where it is often moss-laden.

The most famous southern live oak in Georgia is Lover's Oak, located in downtown Brunswick, and estimated to be almost a thousand years old.



February 19

On the third Monday in February, the United States celebrates the federal holiday known as Presidents' Day. The day takes place during the birth month of the country's two most prominent presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

Presidential Trivia

1. Who were the 3 Presidents who served in 1841?
2. Who were the 3 Presidents who died on July 4th?
3. Who were the 4 Presidents who were assassinated while in office?
4. Which President served two non-consecutive terms?
5. Which President also served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?
6. Who was the only President to resign from office?

Historically, Americans began celebrating George Washington's Birthday just months after his death, long before Congress declared it a federal holiday. It was not until 1879, under President Rutherford B. Hayes, that Washington's Birthday became a legal holiday, to be observed on his birthday, February 22.

Washington's birthday was celebrated on February 22 until well into the 20th century. In 1968, Congress passed the Monday Holiday Law to "provide uniform annual observances of certain legal public holidays on Mondays." By creating more 3-day weekends, Congress hoped to "bring substantial benefits to both the spiritual and economic life of the Nation."

The state dictates who is celebrated. Some celebrate Washington alone (i.e., Virginia and Massachusetts), while others celebrate Washington and Lincoln (such as Ohio and Utah). And then there are those that honor some other combination of presidents, for example Alabama celebrates Washington and Jefferson.

Answers:

1. Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler
2. John Adams, James Monroe, Thomas Jefferson
3. Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, William McKinley, John Kennedy
4. James A. Garfield
5. William Howard Taft
6. Richard Nixon

February 2024

(Click on the link for information. Dates in Black Bold are GFWC/GFWC Georgia Events.)

February 1	Deadline to submit the GFWC Georgia LEADS Candidate Application
February 1	<u>National Freedom Day</u>
February 1-7	<u>Women's Heart Week</u>
February 2	Daddy Daughter Dance—sponsored by GFWC Bremen Junior Woman's Club—6:30 P.M.—\$20/couple—Sewell Mill Event Center
February 2	<u>Groundhog Day</u>
February 2	<u>National Wear Red Day</u>
February 2	<u>World Wetlands Day</u>
February 3	Mother Son Dance—sponsored by GFWC Bremen Junior Woman's Club—6:30 P.M.—\$20/couple — Sewell Mill Event Center
February 3	<u>Four Chaplains Memorial Day</u>
February 4	<u>World Cancer Day</u>
February 4-10	<u>National Burn Awareness Week</u>
February 5-9	<u>National School Counseling Week</u>
February 5-9	<u>National Green Week</u>
February 7	<u>World Read Aloud Day</u>
February 10	<u>Chinese New Year Begins — Year of the Dragon</u>
February 10	Deadline for GFWC Success for Survivors Scholarship Application
February 11-17	<u>Random Acts of Kindness Week</u>
February 11	<u>Super Bowl LVIII (58) Sunday</u>
February 11	<u>International Day of Women and Girls in Science</u>
February 12	<u>Lincoln's Birthday</u>
February 12	<u>Georgia Day</u>
February 12	Federation Fellowship via Zoom — 7:00 P.M.
February 13	STAR Students and Teachers' Recognition Luncheon — sponsored by GFWC Brunswick Woman's Club — Heritage Oaks Golf Club—11:30 A.M. — \$25/person
February 13	<u>Mardi Gras</u>
February 14	<u>Valentine's Day</u>
February 14	<u>Ash Wednesday</u>
February 15	Millen Bingo Bash—6:00 to 9:00 P.M.—Millen Community House—\$25/includes bingo cards & refreshments—Co-hosted by GFWC Millen Woman's Club and District 6920 Rotary Club of Millen
February 15	GFWC Georgia Club President Statistical Report via Google Online Questionnaire — deadline by 11:59 P.M.
February 15	Deadline for GFWC Georgia to pay GFWC dues
February 15	<u>Susan B. Anthony Day</u>
February 16	<u>Georgia Arbor Day</u>
February 16-19	<u>Great Backyard Bird Count</u>
February 17-18	GFWC Georgia Judging Weekend — Lipscomb Cottage
February 17	GFWC Georgia Winter State Executive Committee Meeting—Lipscomb Cottage
February 17	<i>Be the Change!</i> Change Collection at Winter Executive Committee Meeting for Wellspring Living

February 2024

(Click on the link for information. Dates in Black Bold are GFWC/GFWC Georgia Events.)

February 19	<u>Presidents' Day</u>
February 22	<u>Washington's Birthday</u>
February 24	Bunco Game Night — <i>Let the Good Times Roll</i>, benefiting Wellspring Living—sponsored by Central West District—3:00 P.M.—\$25 Individual, \$100 Table
February 26-March 3	<u>National Eating Disorders Awareness Week</u>
February 28	<u>Floral Design Day</u>
February 29	<u>Leap Year Day</u>

Reminders

GFWC Georgia Club President Statistical Report
via Google Online Questionnaire
deadline February 15, 2024 by 11:59 P.M.
Report Form on [GFWC Website](#) under Reporting & Forms



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