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February 13th, 2015



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Valentine's Day traditions from Latin America



A group of students make Valentine's Day crafts during class at a local elementary school in Puerto Morelos, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

By Fernando Aceves tú Decides correspondent

efore Valentine's Day became the mass-marketed consumer frenzy holiday that it is today, it had its roots in ancient Roman history and traditions. There are varying accounts of how it all began, but the most-popular story claims that the holiday can be traced back to the Roman Emperor Claudius II.

The Roman ruler had banned marriage, claim-



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ing that single men made better soldiers. Ever the consummate romantic, a priest named Valentine continued to marry couples against the emperor's will until he was eventually imprisoned for his disobedience.

While in jail, Valentine fell in love with a young girl who regularly came to visit him. Right before he died, the priest wrote her a love letter, which is now referred to as the first ever Valentine.

Others believe that the tradition hails back to the Pagan Lupercalia festival, traditionally celebrated at the beginning of spring for the purposes of purification and encouraging fertility. Around 498 A.D., Pope Gelasius declared February 14th as St. Valentine's Day in an apparent attempt to "Christianize" the indulgent ritual celebration.

Nowadays, the holiday means big business in the United States and around the world as well, with stores offering every kind of gift imaginable for people to buy their loved ones, and restaurants packed with couples sharing in a romantic meal. In Latin America, however, the holiday serves as more of an excuse to share love and friendship with others instead of candy and cards.

In Mexico, February 14th is celebrated as the "Día de San Valentin," but it's more commonly referred to as "El Día del Amor y la Amistad," the "day of love and friendship." While people also commonly give flowers, candies and balloons to their romantic partners, it is also a day to show appreciation for your friends. It is a time for people to show appreciation to the people they care about in general.

The people of Guatemala celebrate a similar holiday on the 14th of February, but is known there as the "Día del Cariño." Guatemalans exchange sentimental goodies just like in the United States, but it is a broader holiday as well and encourages people to show their love for friends and co-workers too.

Other Latin American countries celebrate similar days of friendship and affection like Valentine's Day, but not necessarily in February.

Colombia, for example, celebrates Valentine's Day on September 20th when it popular to send gifts from secret admirers. Bolivia also favors September by celebrating the "Día del Amor" on September 21st in conjunction with Students' Day, Day of Spring and Children's Day.

February 13th, 2015

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Armed gun-rights advocates rally at Washington state capitol

OLYMPIA, Washington (AP)

gun-rights rally drew about 50 people, mostly armed, to the steps of the Capitol on Saturday morning for a demonstration they hoped would end with their arrest. To raise money for bail, some protesters hawked caps with "Fight Tyranny — Shoot Back" printed on them and sold out.

The plan was to walk into the Capitol after a few speeches and carry guns into the Legislature's viewing gallery, in defiance of rule changes made in January that banned the open carry of firearms there. However, the Washington State Patrol kept the gallery doors locked after the building opened to the public at 11 a.m. The crowd, including two state legislators, walked through the marble hallways, with some lining up to knock on the doors to the House gallery and Gov. Jay Inslee's office.

No one was arrested, and the State Patrol reported no disturbances. The protesters went instead to the closed gate of the governor's mansion and prayed. "What's the world coming to

when there are people who want to break the law and they won't let you do it?" said Dave Grenier, 58, of Tumwater, as his fellow pro-gun demonstrators began to file out of the Capitol.

Their complaints against state government stem from the 2014 passage

of Initiative 594 by voters statewide. It imposed new background-check requirements on several types of gun transfers, including purchases and loans, and opponents say the new law infringes on firearm rights guaranteed in the state and federal constitutions.

After protest rallies at the Capitol in December and January, leaders of the



A woman stands with a pistol strapped to her hip as parents, also armed, of a toddler sit behind during a rally by gun-rights advocates Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, in Olympia. Washington.

House and Senate prohibited the open carrying of firearms into the Legislature's viewing galleries. In the January rally, one protester among the dozen or so who carried guns into the House gallery was rebuked by the State Patrol for how he was holding his gun, and the ban was instituted days later.

Saturday morning's rally began before the Capitol opened to the public at 11 a.m.

A few visitors waiting for guided tours of the legislative building mingled with the gun-rights advocates who clustered in the portico facing Washington's Temple of Justice to get out of the rain.

State Reps. Elizabeth Scott and Matt Shea addressed the crowd. Shea, R-Spokane Valley, gave a fiery speech that included a list of more than 20 grievances against the government, including militarization of police, high taxes, surveillance programs, Sharia law and restrictions on guns. Scott, R-Monroe, opened her coat to show the crowd her pistol.

"I carry at least one gun every day," Scott said, "because a cop is too heavy and a guard is too heavy."

For Eric Devenny, 19, an apprentice mechanic from Bremerton, the rally was his first trip to the Capitol. He wore an AKS-74, a variation of a Russian assault rifle, in a sling on his back as he walked with the group into the legislative building and out to the governor's mansion gate and said he'll return for another protest.

"It's not gonna stop, and we won't let up," Devenny said.





You Decide – A Bilingual Newspaper

FAMILY —— Tips for families to get healthier together

(StatePoint)

ant your kids to eat right and get moving more? With childhood obesity being a major problem in this country, this sentiment is top of mind for many parents and guardians. But you have more power than you may realize to steer them in the right direction, say experts.

Parents have more potential than anybody else to influence their children's behavior -- including their eating habits -according to a study by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. In fact, parents outrank sports celebrities as the people most children would most like to be, according to the survey.

"You are the most influential role model in your child's life," says Kim Larson, registered dietitian nutritionist and Academy spokesperson. "Modeling healthy eating behaviors encourages children to adopt and choose healthy behaviors that will benefit them for a lifetime."

Setting Realistic Goals

Small steps add up, and Larson recommends making healthy lifestyle changes that are realistic and easy to stick with for the long-haul. Try adopting healthy changes for the entire family, such as:

• Make sure your kids know they are part of the team and that health and fitness are a family affair.

• Encourage children to help plan meals -- from developing the menu to shopping to preparing and serving the meal.

• Serve regular, balanced meals and snacks with a variety of nutrient-rich foods.

• Eat breakfast daily.

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• Enjoy family dinner together each night or as often as possible.

meal, fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. • Make at

least half of the grains you eat whole grains. • Get active.

Incorporate physical activity where you can in your day, whether taking а family walk after dinner or hitting the gym. Rememchilber. dren and teens should get at least 60 minutes

of physical activity per day, and adults should get two and a half hours per week. Focus on Overall Health, Not Weight Alone

According to the experts, good nutrition, health, and fitness fun should be the focus of your family's goals, not calorie counting, food restriction or working out.

"You don't want your kids to think that a healthy lifestyle is only about how much they weigh," Larson says. "Concentrate on delicious nutrition and fun physical activities," says Larson.

For a personalized plan tailored to your lifestyle, food preferences and the unique needs of your family, consider consulting a dietitian nutritionist. You can find one in your area at www.EatRight.org.



By get the whole family together, you can commit to a healthier lifestyle as a team.

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February 13th, 2015

— LATIN AMERICA — Mexican opium farmers expand plots to supply US heroin boom



In this Jan. 26, 2015 photo, an opium grower shows how he "milks" a poppy flower bulb to obtain opium paste in the Sierra Madre del Sur mountains of Guerrero state, Mexico.

SIERRA MADRE DEL SUR, Mexico (AP)

R ed and purple blossoms with fat, opium-filled bulbs blanket the remote creek sides and gorges of the Filo Mayor mountains in the southern state of Guerrero.

The multibillion-dollar Mexican opium trade starts here, with poppy farmers so poor they live in wood-plank, tin-roofed shacks with no indoor plumbing.

Mexican farmers from three villages interviewed by The Associated Press are feeding a growing addiction in the U.S., where heroin use has spread from back alleys to the cul-de-sacs of suburbia.

The heroin trade is a losing prospect for everyone except the Mexican cartels, who have found a new way to make money in the face of falling cocaine consumption and marijuana legalization in the United States. Once smallerscale producers of low-grade black tar, Mexican drug traffickers are now refining opium paste into high-grade white heroin and flooding the world's largest market for illegal drugs, using the distribution routes they built for marijuana and cocaine.

It is a business that even the farmers don't like. In a rare interview with reporters, the villagers told The Associated Press that it's too difficult to ship farm products on roads so rough and close to the sky that cars are in constant danger of tumbling off the single-lane dirt roads that zig-zag up to the fields. They say the small plastic-wrapped bricks of gummy opium paste are the only thing that will guarantee them a cash income.

"Almost everyone thinks the people in these mountains are bad people, and that's not true," said Humberto Nava Reyna, the head of the Supreme Council of the Towns of the Filo Mayor, a group that promotes development projects in the mountains. "They can't stop planting poppies as long as there is demand, and the government doesn't provide any help."

Villagers granted the AP access to their farms and agreed to interviews only if they were not identified, fearing it could draw attention from government drug eradicators or vengeful traffickers.

Residents say there are no local users. They hate the taste of the bitter paste, which they sometimes rub into their gums to sooth an aching tooth.

It all goes for export, a lucrative business mostly run by the Sinaloa Cartel.

According to the DEA's 2014 National Drug Threat Assessment, Mexico produces nearly half of the heroin found in the United States, up from 39 percent in 2008. While Afganistan is by far the world's largest producer, it largely sends to markets in Europe and Asia.

When the poppy plants finish flowering about three months into the winter growing season, a farmer armed with a razor-sharp, thumb-scorer and a metal scraping pan can collect 300 grams of opium paste, worth 4,000 pesos (more than \$275 USD), in a single day.

OUR FAITH — Immigrants and sexual sin

By Dr. Joseph Castleberry

udah left home and moved to Adullam, where ... he saw a Canaanite woman, the ... and he married her ... she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and he named the boy Er ... In the course of time, Judah arranged for ... Er, to marry a young woman named Tamar. But Er was a wicked man ... so the Lord took his life ... So Tamar went back to live in her father's home. Some years later Judah's wife died ... Later, Judah was told, "Tamar, your daughter-in-law, has acted like a prostitute. And now, because of this, she's pregnant." ... When the time came for Tamar to give birth, it was discovered that she was carrying twins. —Genesis 38:1-27, NLT

One of the most sordid tales of the book of Genesis had a happy ending. Judah, the immigrant, married a local Canaanite woman and had three sons. He practically assimilated into Canaanite life, in view of the details that follow. His first son, Er, married Tamar, another Canaanite, and before fathering children Er died because of his evil deeds. According to the culture and customs of Judah, his son Onan had an obligation to give Tamar a child, but he also died because of his sexual misbehavior toward Tamar. Judah unjustly divorced himself of his responsibilites toward Tamar and effectively threw her out of his home, sending her back to her family of origin.

Desperate in her barrenness, Tamar heard that Judah, now a widower, was in her town. Believe it or not, the Canaanite religion was based on fertility and its unworthy "worship" offered shrine prostitutes for those who desired to participate in its rites. Tamar dressed up as a shrine prostitute and intercepted Judah on his way. Judah approached her, offering payment to have relations with her. As a result, she conceived and bore twin sons.

The story offers neither admirable elements nor heroes. But the life of some immigrants today lacks nothing in equaling the immorality of Judah's family. Far from their loved ones and the support



of their religious community, for some people sex becomes a refuge from their lonliness; for others, a diversion from their sufferings. No one of another race or nationality has any right to point an accusing finger at them, since morality is in decay around the world. But the difficulty of immigrant life becomes even greater when sexual sin enters the picture. New generations pay the consequences, condemned to grow up in unstable homes.

Nevertheless, the rest of the story begins with the birth of the twins Perez and Zerah. Perez would beget a series of leaders in the tribe of Judah that would include many of the heroes of the Bible, including King David and the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. God made something good out of the disastrous family of Judah, and he can also make something beautiful out of the ruins of your life if you will give yourself over to God for the rest of the story.

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Dr. Joseph Castleberry is President of Northwest University in Kirkland Washington. He is the author of Your Deepest Dream: Discovering God's Vision for Your Life and The Kingdom Net: Learning to Network Like Jesus. Follow him on Twitter at @DrCastleberry and at http://www. facebook.com/Joseph.Castleberry.

Estela Ortega, Executive Director, El Centro de la Raza

didn't have any health insurance until I was 18 years old. When I got sick, I couldn't go to the doctor because my family couldn't afford it. Fortunately, I didn't have any medical scares, but not everyone is so lucky.

We all know someone without health coverage. Your brother, who lost his health plan when he lost his job. A friend's adult son, who thinks getting covered would be too expensive. A member of your church, who was turned down in the past because she has diabetes.

Having health insurance is important. It can keep you and your family healthy, and protect you from big medical bills if an accident or illness happens.

I'm pleased to say that now there's a new way to get health insurance. It's called Washington Healthplanfinder, and through February 15, you can sign up for a health plan. All the plans provide guaranteed benefits including doctor visits,



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hospitalizations, prescriptions and more. I feel passionately about helping the uninsured among us get covered so everyone can lead healthy lives. That's why El Centro de la Raza and many other organizations across the state are working with Washington Healthplanfinder to share important information with the Hispanic community about your health coverage options. The three main things to know are:

Free and low-cost plans are available on Washington Healthplanfinder.

Financial help is available to pay for coverage.

And you can talk with someone one-

on-one if you have questions or need help enrolling.

If you're concerned about signing up because some members of your family may be undocumented, don't worry. Your information will be kept completely confidential and private. It is only used to get you health coverage.

More than one million people in our state have already signed up for a health plan through Washington Healthplanfinder. At El Centro de la Raza, we've had the chance to talk with many of them.

The story of a mother and her 19-yearold daughter stands out for me. They had just moved to Washington, and neither had ever had health coverage before. They didn't have access to a computer, so they came in to speak with one of our enrollment experts. The expert sat down with them and helped them complete the application. They qualified for a free plan, and today, both mother and daughter are able to visit a doctor when they need to.

So join me and other local organizations as we connect our com-

munity to coverage. If you are uninsured, visit wahealthplanfinder.org or call toll-free 1-855-923-4633 to learn more and get enrolled. If you have a friend or family member who is uninsured, encourage them to visit one of the many experts who offer free help with signing up.

People eligible for Medicaid can sign up or renew throughout the year, but the deadline to sign up for a private plan is February 15. And under the healthcare law, if you don't get a plan you could face a fine.

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By Ana Ruiz Peralta and Michael Tuohy

ast week we took time off work and traveled four hours to Olympia to talk to our state legislators. We were representing the Tri-Cities as part of a large group of health care advocates from across the state, making sure that legislators don't forget about health care this session, as they wrestle with a very tight budget and lots of demands.

Our message was clear: continue investing in health care.

In the past, when faced with tough budget situations, health care has been a prime target for cuts, because it isn't protected like other parts of the budget. But we can't make trade-offs between health care and other essential services.

After several years of devastating cuts, the expansion of Medicaid last year brought relief to

thousands in our community and across the state. Nearly half a million people statewide are newly insured as a result. In Benton and Franklin Counties, we have nearly 20,000 people enjoying health insurance for the first time. We urged our legislators to fulfill their promise to these people.

At Tri-Cities Community Health we can literally see the relief on the faces of people who are finally covered through Medicaid. Many have had health conditions that they've known about, but haven't addressed because of worries about cost. Having a primary care doctor can be a life saver. People can now get chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure under control and avoid preventable trips to the emergency room. And many are now able to see a dentist for the first time in years, which can literally be life-changing, when you've endured constant pain or been ashamed of how your teeth look.



Ana Ruiz Peralta



Michael Tuohy

With a primary care doctor, you are no longer alone in taking care of your health. But having health insurance doesn't guarantee you can access care. Statewide there is a serious shortage of primary care providers, particularly in rural communities. Fortunately, there is a proven tool to help recruit providers to work with underserved populations and in rural areas. It's called the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program. We asked state legislators to restore funding to this program, which was dramatically cut in 2010.

Legislators representing Benton and Franklin County listened to our message and indicated support. We hope it will impact their decisions.

While most of us aren't able to travel to Olympia, we can all make our voices heard. Call, email (http://www.

savehealthcareinwa.org/), or send a letter to your legislators letting them know that health care is important to you and your community. The investments they've made in health care are paying off, and there's still more to be done.

Ana Ruiz Peralta lives in Pasco and serves on the board for Tri-Cities Community Health. She is also on the board of the Downtown Pasco Development Authority and was formerly on the WA State Commission for Hispanic Affairs. Michael Tuohy lives in Kennewick and serves on the board for Tri-Cities Community Health. He is a retired pharmacist and hospital administrator and is active in the Health Alliance and Rotary, traveling to Central America and Mexico for Rotary's international projects.

Tri-Cities Community Health, http:// www.mytcch.org/, founded in 1981, is a network of community health centers that serve a diverse population in the Tri-Cities and surrounding areas.

From my balcony

Scandal at Switzerland's HSBC bank: So much money robbed!

Dr. Lorena Barboza lorena.barboza@gmail.com

Why am I not surprised to hear about this new financial, fiscal and political scandal? Why am I not taken aback by what the world's second largest bank has done? Why does it not sound strange that thousands of wealthy people were supported by this bank only to disappoint the estates of their respective countries?

I'm not one bit surprised because it is part of economic terrorism to which we have been subjected to for a long time, and where in reality

where in reality Lorena Barboza we are all victims

of bankers who define how the world's economies should work.

What we're hearing about today is nothing new, since in November, Belgium had already accused the bank of tax fraud and money laundering, saying that the bank based in the UK was offering diamond merchants and other wealthy clients in Belgium ways to hide money and evade taxes.

The issue has finally come to the forefront because \$180 million have been stolen in just two years and in only one Swiss bank! Politicians, athletes, drug dealers, and other "famous" names appear on the "Falciani" list, surname of the former employee of the Swiss bank who stole the information, then used the French newspaper Le Monde, in coordination with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists to publicize the fiscal scandal.

Enough with privatizing profits and socializing losses! Enough of defrauding the exchequer, washing dirty money or financing international terrorism! If an offense was committed and it hurt others, make them pay with imprisonment and confiscation, at the very least.

If possible...Have a happy week, and God Bless!

Dr. Barboza invites you to visit her blog: hablandonosentendemos.podbeam.com, and to listen to "Creciendo con CBC" every Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. on "Mi Favorita" 92.5FM



Causes, impacts and solutions to climate change

By Ellyn Murphy

My mother used to tell me that people have a hard time dealing with change. As I have grown older I have witnessed people adapt to change and others be completely crushed by change.

Adaptation to climate change is about preparing and adjusting to new conditions, to reduce harm or even take advantage of new opportunities. For example, the wines produced in the Yakima Valley may be very different in a few decades than the varietals that we produce today. Viticulture is very sensitive to climate, so much so that changes in wine production have been used as a proxy to understand past changes in climate in France.

Researchers across the country are trying to develop climate-resistant crop species that can produce high yields in spite of warmer and drier conditions and more pests. In many regards agriculture may be best positioned to respond to climate change, because farmers already vary crops, sometimes annually, based on climatic conditions. New varieties of wine grapes and fruit trees; however, require more time and cost to replace.

The biggest challenge for adaptation to climate change in agriculture will be water availability in the Yakima Valley and eastern Washington in general. We rely heavily on Cascade snowpack as our primary method of water storage. This important storage mechanism is threatened as winters become warmer and more precipitation falls in the form of rain. We simply do not have the reservoir capacity to replace Cascade snowpack.

The \$5 billion integrated water resource management plan for the Yakima River Basin contains many adaptation strategies for agriculture. These include enhancing water conservation and efficiency through reduced-volume irrigation systems, on-farm water storage, and using groundwater aquifers for storage and recovery.

Aquifer storage and recovery is currently in use in Echo, Oregon by two farms irrigating more than 1,100 acres of land. The concept for aquifer storage and recovery is simple. When stream flow is high, usually in the winter and spring, water is injected into an aquifer for later recovery and use. Aquifer storage and recovery usually costs one-fourth to half as much as above ground reservoirs.

Climate change will require us to adapt, to change the way we live. How we change is up to us. If we are sensible, we will change our way of doing business now and thus limit the amount of adaptation we need to do later. Otherwise, we are simply gambling that we can adapt to whatever extremes climate change brings. My mother also had a few things to say about gambling, but I will leave them to your imagination!

Ellyn Murphy is a hydrologist who volunteers with the Tri-Cities, Washington chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby, www.citizensclimatelobby.org



HEALTH Protect your family with a health plan by February 15

Estela Ortega, Executive Director, El Centro de la Raza

didn't have any health insurance until I was 18 years old. When I got sick, I couldn't go to the doctor because my family couldn't afford it. Fortunately, I didn't have any medical scares, but not everyone is so lucky.

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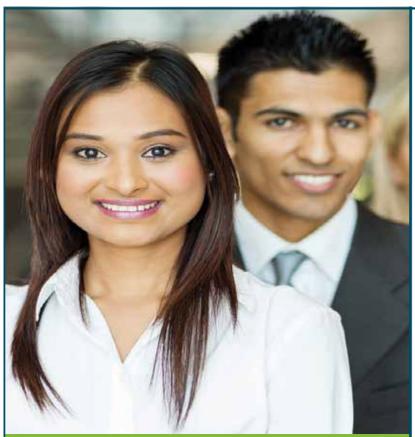
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It's time. Let's get covered.



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