

Not the End of the World



In May of 1910, much of the world was in a panic. Halley's Comet—the celestial nomad that passes Earth every 76 years or so—was right on schedule to make its appearance. But its 1910 pass was forecasted to be especially close, so close that Earth would pass right through the comet's tail. Comets have long been considered harbingers of the end of the world, and 1910 was no different despite advancements in scientific thought and reason.

Much of the blame for the doomsday predictions has fallen on the French astronomer Camille Flammarion. When he spotted the comet in September of 1909, he published his observations thus: "The comet's tail is composed of deadly cyanogen and other gases, including hydrogen. If the earth should pass through his tail, either the hydrogen will ignite, blasting earth asunder in a gigantic explosion, or the comet gases will sweep aside our own atmosphere, reacting with the nitrogen to form the familiar laughing gas, nitrous oxide, and suffocating all animal life in a ghastly parody of death."

Flammarion was not alone in his dire predictions. Another astronomer worried that the comet "would cause the Pacific to change basins with the Atlantic, and the primeval forests of North and South America to be swept by the briny avalanche over the sandy plains of the Sahara, tumbling over and over with houses, ships, sharks, whales, and all sorts of living things in one heterogenous mass of chaotic confusion."

Of course, when Halley's Comet did make its closest approach to Earth between May 14 and 22, none of these fantastic catastrophes manifested. Instead, telescope sales skyrocketed, and Earthlings enjoyed spectacular views of the famous comet. One misfortune that did occur was the uncanny death of Mark Twain. Born under the appearance of Halley's Comet in 1835, he predicted his own death with the reappearance of the comet in 1910. Sadly, on April 21 of that year, his morbid prognostication came true.

May Birthdays

In astrology, those born from May 1–20 are Bulls of Taurus. While Taureans enjoy the comforts of luxury, they are unafraid of hard work and dedicate themselves to the tasks at hand. Their steadfast nature makes them reliable. Those born from May 21–31 are Twins of Gemini. With a feeling that something or someone is always missing, Twins forever seek new friends and opportunities. They are curious, intelligent, and sociable communicators, which makes them valuable colleagues and empathetic friends.

DORIS CALLARD	MAY	1 ST
WILL MOHLIS	MAY	7 TH
MARY MORTENSON	MAY	10 TH
JANIS SMITH	MAY	20 TH
<i>Bing Crosby (singer) – May 3, 1903</i>		
<i>Salvador Dalí (artist) – May 11, 1904</i>		
<i>Henry Fonda (actor) – May 16, 1905</i>		
<i>Sally Ride (astronaut) – May 26, 1951</i>		
<i>Bob Hope (entertainer) – May 29, 1903</i>		

Calling all party planners



Did you enjoy hosting get togethers for family and friends? Do you have fun ideas for festive events at Prairie Meadows? Do you like to help others? Come check out our new party planning committee. Each month we'll come together and you will decide the events we celebrate and the things we do. Not sure you want to be involved? Come anyway to the first meeting and see if it is right for you.

May 6th at 1pm.

Prairie Chronicle

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Celebrating May

Creative Beginnings Month

Meditation Month

Physical Fitness & Sports Month

Lemonade Day May 2

Teacher Day May 4

Cinco de Mayo May 5

Mother's Day (U.S.) May 9

International Nurses Day May 12

Ride a Unicycle Day May 16

NASCAR Day May 21

Victoria Day (Canada) May 24

Memorial Day (U.S.) May 31

Garden of Weedin'

Weeds. The bane of every carefully manicured lawn and garden. Once weeds take hold, their removal may require hours of backbreaking, frustrating, and never-ending work. Yet some gardeners actually encourage weeds to grow amongst their prize flowers and shrubs. After all, what is considered a weed and what is considered a desirable plant all depends on your point of view. During May, Gifts from the Garden Month, consider the benefits that some weeds bestow upon your garden.

Weeds have been defined as "plants growing in the wrong place." Ralph Waldo Emerson famously stated that a weed is a "plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered." Others take a harsher tone, worrying that weeds are competitive superplants that outcompete and overwhelm the flowers or shrubs we prefer because they grow so vigorously. The truth seems to lie somewhere in the middle. Yes, weeds are aggressive. But it also turns out that some savvy gardeners have uncovered their Emersonian virtues.

Dandelions are often the first weed we learn to recognize. It is one of many weeds that are edible. The plant's leaves, flowers, and roots are not just edible; the root is also considered medicinal. Furthermore, dandelion roots loosen hard-packed soil while accumulating essential nutrients like potassium, phosphorus, and magnesium. White clover acts in a similar fashion, showing up wherever soil lacks nitrogen, a molecule necessary for plant growth. White clover transfers nitrogen from the air to the soil. The flowers of clover also attract pollinators and other insects beneficial to the garden. The broadleaf plantain weed, once called the white man's foot by Native Americans because it seemed to grow wherever European colonists stepped, also accumulates nutrients in the soil. Of course, many of these weeds produce massive amounts of seeds, so while they do benefit the garden, they may soon overrun your more desirable flowers. Weeds have benefits, but they must be managed and cared for, just like any other garden flower.

The Hart of the West

Billy the Kid. Jesse James. Wyatt Earp. America's Wild West has plenty of memorable names, but few of those names belong to women. History has largely forgotten the name Pearl Hart, even though she staged the last stagecoach robbery of the Wild West on May 30, 1899.



Pearl Taylor was born in Ontario, Canada, to a respectable family that provided her with a good education, but not good enough to keep her from falling in love with a gambler named Frederick Hart. She ran away to marry Hart at age 17 and endured years of abuse. The couple's drinking, gambling, and joblessness drew them to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 in search of work. Instead, Hart found Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and was enamored of the cowboy lifestyle.

What we know of Hart's life is spotty, but sometime after her experience in Chicago, she ended up in the mining town of Globe, Arizona, where she met another drifter, named Joe Boot. Hart and Boot were both broke, so they decided to rob the Globe-to-Florence stagecoach. Armed with a .38 revolver and dressed like a man, she made off with \$431, after returning one dollar to each traveler so they could buy something to eat once they reached Florence.

After her capture, Hart regaled reporters with a dramatic retelling of her exploits. Her fans begged for autographs, and she obliged them, signing as the "Bandit Queen." Hart was sent to Yuma, the nearest city with jailing facilities for women, but it took just a few days for her to sweet-talk some accomplices into helping her escape. Hart was later found in New Mexico and returned to the Yuma prison. When she became pregnant a year later, Hart was released with a pardon from the Arizona governor, who hoped to avoid a scandal. The rest of Hart's life is a mystery. Some say she may have joined the vaudeville circuit. Others say she settled down with a rancher and lived out her days as a law-abiding citizen. Either way, Hart's wild life story has earned her a place in the fabled history of America's West.

Better Nature

May 28 is Bermuda Day, a celebration to encourage civic and cultural pride in Bermudian ways of life. Bermuda Day marks the unofficial beginning of summer and is celebrated with parades featuring decorated floats, a half-marathon, and plenty of music and dancing.

Bermuda Day also marks the start of Bermuda shorts season. Is there anything more symbolic of Bermuda than Bermuda shorts? They are the official national dress for men, worn three inches above the knee with knee socks, tasseled loafers, a jacket, and tie. They are worn as business attire, evening wear, and are even part of Bermuda's police uniform. The shorts originated with the British Royal Navy. Soldiers working desk jobs in the tropics were issued lightweight shorts and knee socks. Civilians in Bermuda first started copying the military style in the 1920s. Unfortunately for businessmen beyond Bermuda, the shorts never caught on as business attire. But for casual occasions, like celebrating Bermuda Day on May 28, Bermuda shorts are a must.

Friday Happy Hour!

Come down early for supper on Friday and enjoy a fun happy hour with specialty beverages like wine, beer, soda, punch and a pre-dinner appetizer.



Crafty Corner



These ladies enjoy all kinds of fun to make projects. Are you interested in joining our crafting group? Check out Relay for life crafting or crafting circle in the merry month of May for some really fun and simple projects you can do!



What cute spring décor!



The Old Ball Game

On May 2, 1908, songwriters Albert von Tilzer and Jack Norworth submitted their song "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" to the United States copyright office, unaware it would come to be called America's second national anthem. Even though the song's chorus is sung by millions, few know the rest of the lyrics or their feminist inspiration: the celebrity vaudeville star and outspoken suffragette Trixie Friganza.

Norworth was dating Friganza when he wrote the lyrics. While riding the New York City subway, he saw a sign that read "Baseball Today—Polo Grounds." Inspiration so overwhelmed Norworth that he scribbled the lyrics on the back of an envelope that is now on display at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. The star of Norworth's tune is a woman named Katie Casey, a baseball superfan who "Saw all the games / Knew all the players by their first names." She even "Told the umpire he was wrong, / All along, / Good and strong." This outspoken female fan in the song was undoubtedly modeled after his progressive girlfriend, the indomitable Trixie Friganza.

Honoring Mother Ocean



Good sons and daughters will remember that May 9 is Mother's Day, a day to shower mom with love and appreciation. But will we also remember that May 10 is

Mother Ocean Day? Just as our mothers gave us life and nurtured us, so too do our oceans sustain life on planet Earth. Oceans produce half of all the world's oxygen and absorb massive amounts of carbon dioxide. Covering 70% of Earth's surface, our oceans are also responsible for regulating climate and weather patterns. Preserving the health of our oceans is our first line of defense against a rapidly warming planet. On this day, perhaps you can visit the beach for a local cleanup or watch a documentary about undersea life.