FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

On Feb. 14, sweethearts of all ages will exchange cards, flowers, candy, and more lavish gifts in the name of St. Valentine. But as a [historian of Christianity](https://dornsife.usc.edu/bitel-homepage/), I can tell you that at the root of our modern holiday is a beautiful fiction. St. Valentine was no lover or patron of love.

Valentine’s Day, in fact, originated as a liturgical feast to celebrate the decapitation of a third-century Christian martyr, or perhaps two. So, how did we get from beheading to betrothing on Valentine’s Day?

## Early origins of St. Valentine

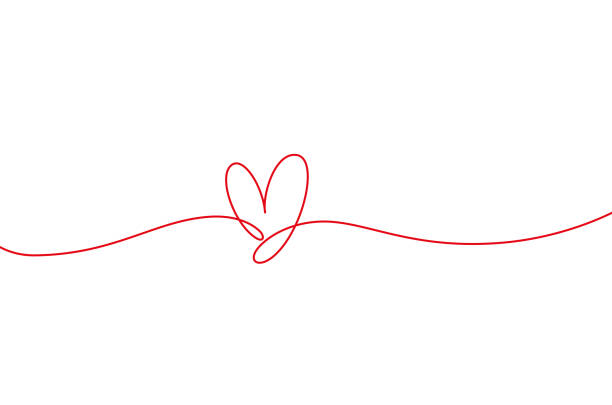
Ancient sources reveal that there were several St. Valentines who died on Feb. 14. Two of them were executed during the reign of [Roman Emperor Claudius Gothicus](https://archive.org/stream/scriptoreshistor01camb/scriptoreshistor01camb_djvu.txt) in 269-270 A.D., at a time when persecution of Christians was common.

How do we know this? Because, an order of Belgian monks spent three centuries collecting evidence for the lives of saints from manuscript archives around the known world.

They were called [Bollandists](http://www.bollandistes.org/thebollandists-hist0.php?pg=hist00) after Jean Bolland, a Jesuit scholar who began publishing the massive 68-folio volumes of [“Acta Sanctorum,”](http://acta.chadwyck.co.uk/) or “Lives of the Saints,” beginning in 1643.

Since then, successive generations of monks continued the work until the last volume was published in 1940. The Brothers dug up every scrap of information about every saint on the liturgical calendar and printed the texts arranged according to the [saint’s feast day](http://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/p/saint-of-day.html).





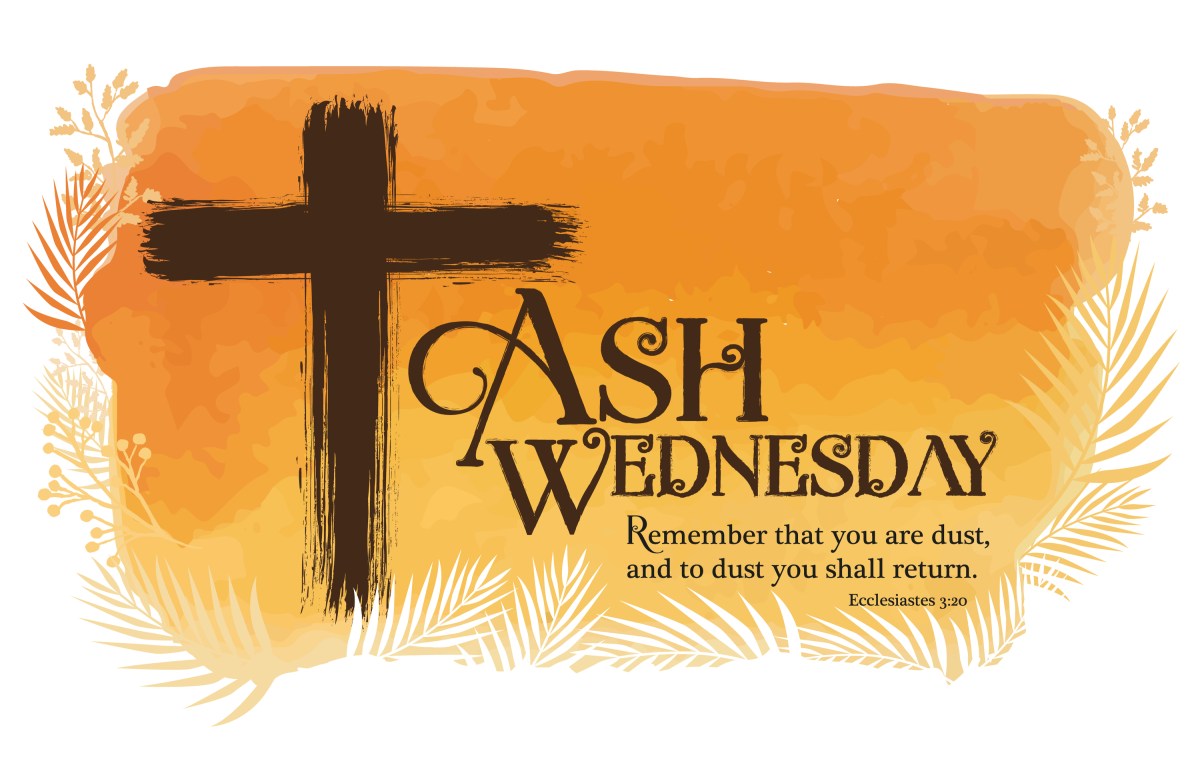


When is Presidents’ Day? **Presidents’ Day is Monday, February 19, 2024**! Is Washington’s birthday the same as Presidents’ Day? Which presidents do we celebrate on Presidents’ Day? When was George Washington’s actual birthday? Get answers to these common questions—and the truth about a few common George Washington myths.

### Is This Holiday Called Presidents’ Day or Washington’s Birthday?

Although the holiday is most often called “Presidents’ Day,” the observed federal holiday is officially called “**Washington’s Birthday**.”

Neither Congress nor the President has ever stipulated that the name of the holiday observed as Washington’s Birthday be changed to Presidents’ Day. Additionally, Congress has never declared a national holiday binding in all states; each state has the freedom to determine its legal holidays.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. Although Ash Wednesday has ancient roots, it does not appear in the rituals of The United Methodist Church or our predecessor denominations until the 20th century.

Ash Wednesday emphasizes two themes: our sinfulness before God and our human mortality. The service focuses on both themes, helping us realize that both have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Ashes are an [ancient symbol](https://www.umc.org/en/content/why-ashes-connecting-to-who-we-are-and-who-we-can-be). In Genesis, we read that God formed human beings out of the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). After expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the first human beings are told by God, “you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19 NRSV). The Hebrew word translated dust, is occasionally translated ashes elsewhere. Throughout scripture, ashes are part of rituals when people seek forgiveness and mourn their sin (see Numbers 19:9, 17; Hebrews 9:13; Jonah 3:6; Matthew 11:21, and Luke 10:13, among others).

The imposition of ashes on the heads of Christians to mark the beginning of Lent can be traced at least to the 10th century. Marking the forehead with the sign of the cross is a more recent adaptation.

As the ashes are placed on the forehead, words such as these are spoken: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," recalling God's words to Adam in Genesis 3:19, or “Repent, and believe the gospel” recalling the message of both John the Baptist and Jesus (Mark 1:15).

 LOCAL NEWS

* Are you in need of grocery delivery service? Call 620-228-5570 for more information on this new service.
* La Harpe Days T-Shirts available at City Hall.
* Don’t forget, we have a community food box in front of City Hall…. Take what you need, leave what you can.

**If you need assistance after-hours please call the Iola Dispatch Center at (620) 365-1437, they will notify the proper personnel.**

 *HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL LAHARPE CITIZENS CELEBRATING A BIRTHDAY THIS MONTH!!!! MAY YOUR DAY BE AS SPECIAL AS YOU ARE TO US!*



**ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH:**

* Every Tuesday Chair Exercise at City Hall from 10:00am – 10:30am. Exercise those legs while having a visit with a friend, all indoors and out of the weather!
* February 7th and 21st, Yoga starting at 5:30pm
* February 11th, come make a Valentines craft for that special someone! Free to all, crafting starts at 6:00pm.
* February 18th, Crockpot workshop! Free to all, starts at 5:30pm.

*You can follow our health & wellness director on Facebook: La Harpe Health & Wellness. Kathy will share weekly brain teasers, hygiene facts and healthy quick meals. Don’t have access to Facebook, please let us know and we will find a way to get you the information.*

**Dates to remember:**

A group of people sitting around a table

Description automatically generated with low confidence February 14th: Council Meeting at City Hall at 7:00 pm

A picture containing text, lined

Description automatically generated February 19th: PRIDE Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiI3_mmgoLLAhVW9mMKHe22Ar8QjRwIBw&url=http://www.paymentus.com/industry-utilities.html&psig=AFQjCNF-5ANx5SktbJug46KiWwMehsjzzw&ust=1455908868261283) February 28th: **Past due Utility shut off date.**

*If you can’t pay your account in* ***full*** *at this time then you must submit your reasoning to the City Clerk* ***BEFORE*** *February 27th.*

**CITY COUNCIL NEWS**

**CITIZENS CALL FOR BUSINESS**

1. Chad Smith and Sarah Lassman approached council requesting beer to be allowed at a fundraiser they are hosting for Aaron Mann on January 27th. Sharlyn Thompson stated she was worried about the beer and the reflection on the city. Sarah stated this fundraiser is for a good cause and people will be very respectful. Danny Ware Jr suggested we find out our coverage for this request. Mayor Crowell stated we will find out and let you know.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No business discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Swearing in newly elected council members and mayor – Danny Ware Jr was sworn in as a council member and Ella Mae Crowell was sworn in as mayor. Both were sworn in before the meeting. The clerk will swear in Austin Lee at a later date.
2. Cox Communications – Megan Bottenberg attended by phone but had 3 representatives in the audience; Jesse Lazzers, John Taylor and Tara Albin to answer any questions. Megan stated that Cox has been a family-owned company for the past 125 years, we strive to take care of the communities we serve. Cox committed $4 million in private dollars to bring broad band to Kansas. We have over 10,000 miles throughout Kansas with the majority being fiber and Cox is wanting to bring fiber to La Harpe at 2G speed. Cox offers Internet, voice, video and business services with all very affordable programs. Cox deploys fiber lines in the city right-of-ways and any work will be restored, which is required by state law. In 2022 Cox was approved by the KCC to build in La Harpe. In the franchise agreement, Megan noted, you will see the right-of-way rules and processes. La Harpe can choose a franchise fee of up to 5%. Danny suggested the council discuss the franchise fee later in meeting. Mayor Crowell thanked all Cox representatives and told them the city would be in touch.
3. Meter maintenance fee: West – Ray Maloney asked the council if they would consider taking the $20.00 fee off of them stating if it’s a city line to serve Gas or Gas to serve La Harpe then that’s who needs to be responsible for the line. Sharlyn Thompson mentioned, this isn’t set in stone, if something does change, we can always reevaluate the fund. Danny Ware Jr reminded Ray the fee does not come to the city. Only way city uses that money is to repair a break. He stated, if later in the future you all decide to go to Gas for water, the fee will be refunded back to the customer. Ray asked if the city will know if they are losing water on that line, Mayor Crowell stated a master meter will be installed at city limits to help recognize any discrepancies.
4. BCBS 125 Flex Plan – Mayor Crowell stated she need a motion to authorize her to sign this form. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to authorize the mayor to sign the renewal. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
5. Wings of Warrior Sponsorship – No action taken.
6. Shredding – Joe asked for permission to shred more documents. Sharlyn Thompson granted his request, not to exceed $300.00. Danny Ware Jr. seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
7. Employee Handbook – Mayor Crowell stated some minor verbiage needed to be changed in thew handbook regarding overtime pay and holidays. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to make changes as presented. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

1. Fred Works, City Attorney – Absent from meeting.
2. Roy Caler, Water Representative – Nothing to report.
3. Joe Stotler, Police Chief – Shared his monthly time cards. Had nothing else to report.
4. Penny Miller, Code/Animal Control –Shared her monthly reports. Had nothing else to report
5. Marc Waggoner, Fire Chief- Absent from meeting. Danny Ware Jr asked where we were with the fire hydrants and do we have all the parts. Mayor Crowell stated there were 8 to 10, according to Dereck, they are workable just need new parts. Mayor Crowell stated the city will fix them as Dereck and Larry were taught how to do so.
6. Maintenance Department –The workorders and Dereck’s progress report were shared. Mayor Crowell stated Dereck is requesting poles, he stated we were down to 6 poles, and looking at about $500.00 a pole with shipping. I would like to give him $7,500.00 to get the poles needed. Danny Ware Jr asked why the council didn’t get a bid, I’m not comfortable knowing what $7,500.00 will get us. Some companies will give discounted rates on ordering more poles at one time. Ron Knavel suggested Dereck get pricing on poles needed and Michelle can email the quotes to us to decide if he needs them before next meeting. Cynthia Carr asked if the bucket truck was fixed. Mayor Crowell said the truck needs new knuckles which would be around $4,000.00 but they’re about 6 weeks out.
7. Michelle Altis, City Clerk – Nothing to report.

**DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS –**

Mayor Crowell requested a motion to go into executive session on non-elected personnel. Danny Ware Jr made a motion to go into executive session for 15 minutes on non-elected personnel with Joe invited. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Danny Ware Jr made a motion to stay in executive session for an additional15 minutes on non-elected personnel with Joe invited. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

After returning to regular session, Danny Ware Jr made the motion to make the franchise fee for Cox Communications 5%. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.



***Mayor****: Ella Mae Crowell (620) 496-6219*

***City Attorney****: Fred Works*

***City Municipal Judge****: Patty Miklos*

***Police Chief****: Joseph Stotler*

***Fire Chief****: Marc Waggoner*

***Assistant Fire Chief****: Dennis Sidebottom*

***City Clerk****: Michelle Altis*

***Assistant Clerk****: Teresa Driskel*

***City Treasurer****: Audra Riggins*

***Maintenance Staff****: Dereck Ranes, Larry Laird & Gentry Dougherty*

***Code & Animal Control****: Penny Miller*

***City Council Members:***

***Austin Lee (496-2323) Danny Ware Jr. (496-2156)***

***Cynthia Carr (496-7500) Sharlyn Thompson (496-3348)***

***Ron Knavel (496-2508)***

***Laharpe City Hall Hours: Monday-Friday***

902 S. Washington 8:00-12:00 & 1:00-5:00

P.O. Box 10 Ph. (620) 496-2241

Laharpe, KS. 66751 Fax (620) 496-2240  *CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE; CITYOFLAHARPE.ORG* ** *Follow us on Facebook*

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# Simple Taco Soup

## Ingredients

* 2 pounds ground beef
* 1 envelope taco seasoning
* 1-1/2 cups water
* 1 can (16 ounces) mild chili beans, undrained
* 1 can (15-1/4 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
* 1 can (15 ounces) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
* 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) stewed tomatoes
* 1 can (10 ounces) diced tomato with green chiles
* 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chiles, optional
* 1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix

## Directions

* **1.** In a Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink, breaking it into crumbles; drain. Add taco seasoning and mix well. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally.



# Buffalo Chicken Dip

## Ingredients

* 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
* 1 cup chopped cooked chicken breast
* 1/2 cup Buffalo wing sauce
* 1/2 cup ranch or blue cheese salad dressing
* 2 cups shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese
* French bread baguette slices, celery ribs or tortilla chips

## Directions

* **1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spread cream cheese into an ungreased shallow 1-qt. baking dish. Layer with chicken, wing sauce and salad dressing. Sprinkle with cheese.
* **2.** Bake, uncovered, until cheese is melted, 20-25 minutes. Serve with baguette slices.

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# Basic Banana Muffins

## Ingredients

* 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
* 1 cup sugar
* 1 teaspoon baking soda
* 1/2 teaspoon salt
* 3 medium ripe bananas
* 1 large egg, room temperature
* 1/3 cup vegetable oil
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Directions

* **1.** In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients. In another bowl, mash the bananas. Add egg, oil and vanilla; mix well. Stir into the dry ingredients just until moistened. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups half full.
* **2.** Bake at 375° for 18-22 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes; remove from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.



# Almond-Pecan Date Truffles

## Ingredients

* 1/3 cup apple juice
* 1 package (8 ounces) chopped dates
* 1 cup finely chopped pecans, toasted
* 1-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
* 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
* 1 cup ground almonds, toasted

## Directions

* **1.** In a microwave, warm apple juice. Stir in dates; let stand 5 minutes to soften, stirring occasionally. Remove dates from apple juice; discard liquid. Transfer dates to the bowl of a food processor fitted with the blade attachment; process until smooth. Add pecans and spices; pulse just until combined (mixture will be thick).
* **2.** Shape mixture into 1-in. balls; place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet. Refrigerate, covered, 30-60 minutes.
* **3.** Roll date balls in almonds.