

Entertainment

Valentine's Day, Uncut

By Sarah Stover
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

People once believed that birds, particularly love birds, began to mate on the 14th of February. Back in the pagan days, February 14th was celebrated in anticipation of the love rites of spring. Tradition held that on this day, doves coupled and owls paired. In ancient Rome the festival of the Lupercalia was celebrated on February the 15th. Lupercalia was a festival in honor of the ancient god Lupercus, protector of flocks against wolves. The ceremony involved fertility rites of the Roamns and honored the two Roman gods Juno and Pan. Lupercus watched over shepherds and their flocks; Faunua (like the Greek/Roman god Pan) was a god of flocks and productiveness. The day became a celebration intended to ensure the fertility of flocks, fields and people. The festival of Lupercalia essentially celebrated the coming of spring (in the old Roman calendar February was observed later in the year than it is today).

During the celebrations of Lupercalia in Roman conquered territory now known as France, the first Valentine-like cards may have been exchanged. Apparently a container in which woman had placed their names (possibly accompanied by love notes) was used in a lottery. Men drawing a woman's name would either seek or were guaranteed — this detail seems obscured by time — a woman's "favors" for the year.

Another of the rituals involved the youths of noble birth to run through the streets with goatskin thongs. Young women would crowd the street in the hope of lashing the sacred thongs as it was believed to make them better able to bear children. The goatskin thongs were known as the *februa* and the lashing the *februatia*, both coming from a Latin word meaning to purify. The name of the month of February came from this meaning.

Legend has it that the holiday of Lupercalia became Valentine's Day after a priest named Valentine who lived in Rome at the time when Christianity was a new religion. The Emperor at that time, Claudius II, ordered the Roman soldiers not to marry and to break all engagements off. Claudius believed that as married men, his soldiers would want to

stay home rather than fight his wars. Valentine defied the Emperor's decree and secretly married the young couples. He was eventually arrested, imprisoned and put to death. Valentine was beheaded on February 14th, the eve of the Roman holiday Lupercalia.

History also claims that while Valentine was in prison awaiting execution, he fell in love with the blind daughter of the jailer, Asterius. Through his faith, he miraculously restored her sight. He signed a farewell message to her "From Your Valentine," a phrase that is still used today.

After his death, Valentine was named a saint. As Rome became more Christian, the priests moved the spring holiday from the 15th of February to the 14th - Valentine's Day. This change occurred approximately two centuries after Valentine's death, after Christianity has a strong hold over much of the western world.

In modern times it is customary to exchange cards, candy, flowers and other similar gifts with loved ones, close friends, and family members on February 14th. Traditionally, Saint Valentine has been regarded as the patron saint of lovers.

The modern celebration of Saint Valentine's Day probably grew out of an old tradition that started in about the 14th century. The first written valentine is usually attributed to the imprisoned Charles, Duke of Orleans. In 1415, Charles fought his lonely confinement by writing romantic verses to his wife. By the sixteenth century, written valentines were so common that St. Francis de Sales, fearing for the souls of his English flock, sermonized against them.

Beginning in the 1300s, young people in France and England would get together on Saint Valentine's Eve. Each person became the "valentine" of the one whose name was drawn from a valentine box.

Today, Valentine's cards are surpassed only by Christmas cards in quantity and Valentine's Day is one of the most commercial holidays of the year. So, this February while you are buying your candy and choosing your cards, remember where this all started, with a little festival that took place in Rome hundreds of years ago.

Optimize Your "Love Day"

By Sarah Stover
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Being in school with all sorts of bills to pay and being involved in a relationship can get costly. So, here are some fun and cheap things you can do for your sweetheart or hopeful sweetheart this Valentine's Day. Remember, the best presents do not necessarily have to cost a bundle. If they come from the heart, then the heart is what really shows. No amount of money can compete with that.

1. Surprise your sweetheart by putting a single rose under the windshield wiper of his/her car with a little love note.

- Approximate cost: \$5.00

2. Call a radio station and request his/her favorite love song to be played (around Valentine's Day, all stations do this) and make sure your sweetheart is around to listen for it.

- Approximate cost: FREE

"If you're into having fun and possibly making a fool out of yourself, then buy one of those HUGE bows and wrap the ribbon around you ..."

3. Be artistic, buy some art materials (such as construction paper, lace, sparkles, etc.) and make your own Valentine's card. A card actually made by hand means more than a store bought card ever could.

- Approximate cost: \$5.00-10.00

4. If you're not artistic with your hands, then be creative with your words. Write your Valentine a love poem or a short story that expresses your feelings. Again, something that you write means so much more than simply signing your name to a prewritten poem inside a Hallmark card.

- Approximate cost: FREE

5. If you have access to the internet, then why not send your sweetheart an electronic card, and the best part is that it is free! You can choose from different styles

and write your own personal message. One favorite site is <http://bluemountain.com>

- Approximate cost: FREE

6. If you have a good voice, or even if you don't, then why not sing a song for your sweetheart? Choose a song that shares meaning for the two of you, or write your own song. Either way, your Valentine is sure to be touched by your performance.

- Approximate cost: FREE

7. Take a bunch of old pictures of the two of you and make a collage of your relationship. This requires a little bit of skill and the pictures will probably need to be cut and trimmed so that they all fit together nicely. This makes a great present, and you can arrange the pictures any way you like.

- Approximate cost: \$10.00-20.00

8. If you are a half decent cook, then arrange to prepare your sweetheart's favorite meal. You can make the evening as casual or as exquisite as you like. Surprise your sweetheart with a Valentine's lunch or dinner. (If you're not great with dinners, even a batch of cookies would be a great gift, especially if you made them yourself.)

- Approximate cost: varies

9. Why not take your sweetheart to a romantic movie, or better yet rent one and make it a cozy night on the couch? Guys, even if you hate them, the majority of women are bound to love the mushy movies. So, take her to a romantic movie, or make it a Blockbuster night.

- Approximate cost: \$5.00-20.00

10. Last but not least, you can make yourself the present. If you're into having fun and possibly making a fool out of yourself, then buy one of those HUGE bows and wrap the ribbon around you (whether you're wearing anything underneath the ribbon is up to you) and walk yourself up to your sweetheart's front (or back) door. He/she will definitely be surprised.

- Approximate cost: cost of ribbon plus cost of bail for public nudity if you are caught.

Movie Review:

"Shakespeare in Love:" Like You've Never Seen Him

By Jenna Montgomery
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Shakespeare in Love (R) 4 stars

Smart, sharp, and extremely witty. Yes, I am talking about "Shakespeare In Love." Amazingly enough, the cut and dry lines we all must trudge through in lit class become so much more enjoyable when performed, especially by such radi-

ant actors as in this romantic comedy.

Joseph Fiennes portrays William Shakespeare as a young, struggling playwright. He seeks a muse for inspiration and to unlock his writer's block. Gwyneth Paltrow is stunning as his love interest, Viola. Viola yearns to act; but women are forbidden on the Elizabethan stage, and so she resorts to crossdressing.

She captures her coveted role, and the heart of a poet.

The passion and desire of Viola and Will is a sight to behold, but alas, Viola is betrothed to another man. And so the pair become star-crossed lovers, akin to Romeo and Juliet, which, coincidentally is the very play being staged. Of note, cast as Mercutio is Ben Affleck, who clearly demonstrates his acting

range.

This self-reflective film captures the Shakespearean time period, with its lavish dress and drunken brawls. It brings alive the language of the day and the subtleties of Shakespeare's humor play out very well. The film certainly can not live up to Shakespeare's own work, but it is entertaining nonetheless. Get thee to the theater!