



# Boswyk Bytes



A warm welcome to, hopefully, a warmer month! Late winter snows and freezing temperatures caused some concern, but we plough on - literally! This month brings joy back in the form of Valentines' Day, so pucker up and get those feet ready to dance again. Lots still happening at The Boswyk...Julius Renz is no longer a member of the Board so we will be seeking a replacement. He will be missed!

Jim Hinds is conscientiously searching for speakers for the coming General Meetings, so if you know someone who might fit the bill, please let Jim know soon.

Our Games Room is suffering another closure sadly, and this may take up to two weeks. That floor is someone's nemesis!

All other activities can continue in other rooms. Our lunch room is still going strong. Many thanks to Chef David for his occasional "treats" days. Attendance is fantastic, and the kitchen is fast becoming a small source of added income. Our finances remain in good shape thanks to our Finance Committee, so we managed to add a few extras including the Arts and Crafts display cabinet in the Library, and a few pieces of furniture for the lobby.

Inside this issue, there is some insight into February 29th and its significance, and I hope the references to Al Capp and his comic strip strikes a chord.

I trust everyone has stayed warm and safe through the latest efforts of the weatherman to deter us...keep on moving everyone!

Iris Todd-Lewis, editor



# Leap Year

I hope everyone realizes this is a Leap Year, which is an added day every four years, so those born on February 29th finally get to be a year older! There's quite a history to the reason for this day, and it is all due to the quirkiness of our space in the universe and how we rotate within that space. Here goes with that rationale:

A leap year (also known as an *intercalary year* or *bissextile year*) is a calendar year that contains an additional day (or, in the case of a lunisolar calendar, a month) compared to a common year. The 366th day (or 13th month) is added to keep the calendar year synchronized with the astronomical year or seasonal year.[1] Because astronomical events and seasons do not repeat in a whole number of days, calendars that have a constant number of days in each year will unavoidably drift over time with respect to the event that the year is supposed to track, such as seasons. By inserting ("intercalating") an additional day, a leap day, or month, a leap month, into some years, the drift between a civilization's dating system and the physical properties of the Solar System can be corrected.

In Ireland and Britain, it is a tradition that women may propose marriage only in leap years. While it has been claimed that the tradition was initiated by Saint Patrick or Brigid of Kildare in 5th century Ireland, this is dubious, as the tradition has not been attested before the 19th century. Supposedly, a 1288 law by Queen Margaret of Scotland (then age five and living in Norway), required that fines be levied if a marriage proposal was refused by the man; compensation was deemed to be a pair of leather gloves, a single rose, £1, and a kiss.[citation needed][c] In some places the tradition was tightened to restricting female proposals to the modern leap day, 29 February, or to the medieval (bissextile) leap day, 24 February.

The tradition of a woman proposing on a leap year has been attributed to various historical figures. One, although much disputed, was St Bridget in the 5th Century. She is said to have complained to St Patrick that women had to wait too long for their suitors to propose. St Patrick then supposedly gave women a single day in a leap year to pop the question - the last day of the shortest month.

All very interesting - let's wait and see how many proposals ensue!

# Sadie Hawkins Day

**Sadie Hawkins Day** is an American folk event and pseudo-holiday originated by **Al Capp**'s classic hillbilly comic strip **Li'l Abner** (1934–1977). This inspired real-world Sadie Hawkins events, the premise of which is that women ask men for a date or dancing. "Sadie Hawkins Day" was introduced in the comic strip on November 15, 1937; the storyline ran until the beginning of December. The storyline was revisited the following October/November, and inspired a fad on college campuses. By 1939, **Life** reported that 201 colleges in 188 cities held a Sadie Hawkins Day event

In Li'l Abner, Sadie Hawkins was the daughter of Mayor Hekzebiah Hawkins, one of **Dogpatch's** earliest settlers and the "homeliest gal in all them hills". She grew frantic waiting for suitors until she reached age 35 and was still a spinster, and her father was worried about her living at home for the rest of her life. In desperation, he called together all the unmarried men of Dogpatch and declared it "Sadie Hawkins Day". A foot race was decreed with Sadie pursuing the town's eligible bachelors. If Sadie caught one of them, he would be forced to marry her. She was specifically interested in a handsome boy named Adam who was already in a courtship with Theresa, whose father was the area's largest potato farmer. Unlike Sadie, Theresa had a number of courtship offers.

As the event became a tradition in the comic strip, Capp added more story elements. Each year, the Sadie Hawkins storyline begins with a prophecy by Old Man Mose, who gives Li'l Abner a cryptic clue about the end of the storyline, which always comes true in a roundabout, surprising way. The storyline sometimes also includes the Sadie Hawkins Eve Dance which is held on the previous evening, when the young women wear hob-nailed boots and stomp on their partners' feet, to make the bachelors run slower during the evening.

The date for Sadie Hawkins Day most commonly reported is November 13, two days before the first appearance in the comics. The date has on occasion been confused for February 29 (Leap Day), the date for Bachelor's Day according to the original Irish tradition of women being allowed to propose marriage.

Al Capp finally set the date for Sadie Hawkins Day as November 26, in his last Li'l Abner daily strip on November 5, 1977.

**Beware all single men! Any of the dates may be dangerous for your current lifestyle. Ladies, don those boots and stomp those feet. I can hardly wait my turn!**

# Dates to Remember

**February 14th** Valentine's Dance with "Sweetwater" in Community Hall. Tickets \$10 each, available after February 1st

**February 19th** Boswyk closed for Family Day

**February 22nd** General Meeting at 10:30 in Community Hall. Speaker TBA

Stay tuned for **Program Changes** which are posted on-line and in Reception area

## President's Message

Greetings to everyone. Having survived the Great Cold of January (so far), we can soon prepare for Spring. BUT before we let winter slip away, we can still build snowmen with the grandchildren, play ball with a dog in the park, and peer every day between the flakes for the first snowdrops! A neighbour was digging in his garden around Christmas! That's a new one. AS for me, I am loving snuggling with a blanket and a book by my fire (Gas, not real) and sipping cocoa.

IN a few months I will relocate to our deck, wearing less clothes and substituting a sunhat for the blanket. Same book.



The Boswyk Seniors Activity Centre is operated by The Mission Seniors Association