

February 1, 2016

The Westport Wave

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Shaping the Future of the Westport Village Society

Thad Van Bueren, President

The Westport Village Society recently met on Saturday January 16, 2016 to consider the role of our nonprofit organization in the community. The WVS was created in 1992 to acquire and manage the Headlands Park in Westport and support the community in other ways. We remain committed to that worthy charter and are pondering ways to promote a sense of community and make our organization more relevant. Our long-term interest is to pursue programs that serve and inspire the participation of local folks and visitors alike.

We've posted some initial thoughts on this topic in various places that you can access on-line. Our primary outlet is on our website's home page at: <http://www.westportvillagesociety.org/>. You can also follow us on Facebook to find out about the latest local news and events and comment at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/westportvillagesoc>

www.westportvillagesociety.org/ We'd love your thoughts on activities that bring us together for fun, education, and economic benefits like local markets while retaining our strong focus on land conservation and promoting local coastal access. Please contact us at wvs@westportvillagesociety.org or share a post on our Facebook page. We'd like to hear your ideas for building Community in Westport!

WMAC Considers Wildfire Protection Plan February 2nd

Thad Van Bueren

Have you noticed the radar speed warning signs at both ends of town? They were installed recently because the Westport Municipal Advisory Council asked for them based on community input about six months ago. The WMAC wrote Caltrans and they agreed to install those modest improvements. This is just a small example of what your input can accomplish.

The February 2nd WMAC meeting will be held at the Westport Church starting at 7:00PM, whether the groundhog sees his shadow or not. The meeting will be largely devoted to listening to input on the revision of the County's Wildfire Protection Plan, a project that is presently underway. The plan was last updated in 2012 and copies of the old plan and a draft of the new plan are both available on the "Next Meeting" tab of the WMAC web site at:

<http://www.westportmac.org/>. The Mendocino County Fire Safe Council is preparing the update and wants input on fire protection actions that will benefit our community. MCFSC Director Madelin Holtkamp will attend. The Westport Volunteer Fire Department's Chief Frank Maurice will also be present. We look forward to hearing your suggestions.

Next month, the WMAC meeting on March 1st will focus on what can be done to follow through with non-motorized (bicycle/pedestrian) trail improvements along the Highway 1 corridor in our local area. Several planning studies have demonstrated the need for such improvements. Those studies have set the stage to fund "shovel ready" projects. Although a WMAC grant application was not funded, other options may exist. Our partners at the Mendocino Council of Governments and Caltrans tentatively plan to meet at 5:30 PM at the Westport Church to discuss options with our community. The WMAC meeting will follow at 7:00PM to act on any ideas that are generated. New Bicycle survey data will be posted on the WMAC "Next Meeting" page before those March meetings.

Westport Hotel Re-Opens on February 11th

The **Westport Hotel** will re-open for their 2016 season on Thursday, February 11th, and will accept reservations seven days a week. However, **The Old Abalone Pub** will **not** re-open, as the Hotel staff is still looking to hire a qualified Chef. So put the word out in Fort Bragg and beyond for culinary talent!

Dorine will do a Valentine-themed tea on Saturday, February 13th, from 3:00PM to 5:00PM. The Hotel will also be serving a Valentine Champagne Brunch, open to the public, on Sunday, February 14th, from 9:00AM to 1:00PM. Please call them at [707-964-](tel:707-964-3688)

[3688](tel:707-964-3688) or email them at westporthotel@mcn.org for reservations.



Valentine Making at the Westport Community Recreation Center February 11th

Sarah Mathias

We'll be opening up the **Westport Recreation Center** for Valentine making on **Thursday, February 11th from 3:30PM to 5:00PM**. Anyone is welcome to attend. We'll have paper, doilies, glitter, a variety of accents, and ideas. Please bring anything else you'd like to use or share!

WVFD Fire Extinguisher Recharge Program for the Westport Community February 20th

Frank Maurice, Fire Chief, WVFD

The Westport Volunteer Fire Department has arranged through a private grant to give all Westport and close surrounding area residents the opportunity to recharge their fire extinguishers at no cost to them. On Saturday, February 20th from 10:00AM to 4:00PM we will have Ukiah Oxygen Company recharging your fire extinguishers at the Westport Fire Station at 37551 North Highway 1, right next to the Westport Recycling Center. That way, you can recycle and dump your trash on that day and also get your fire extinguishers charged with just one stop!

If your fire extinguishers are over 12 years old, they will go to Ukiah for hydro-testing (canister-strength testing), then filled and returned in about one week. We can only recharge dry-style extinguishers. If yours is a liquid type or you want to purchase a new dry-style extinguisher, there will be new ones for sale by Ukiah Oxygen at the WVFD Fire Station that day. Please mark your extinguishers with your name and phone number, so that we don't mix them up.

Home fire extinguishers are your best defense to quickly keep a small house fire from destroying your entire home. Without them, you can be helpless in those critical first minutes when a fire starts. Countless homes have been saved in this way, so it really pays to keep your fire extinguishers handy, functioning, and up-to-date at all times. Please take advantage of this great opportunity to make sure your home is as fire-safe as possible! Please call me (Frank) on my cell phone (707) 357-1866 if you have any questions, since our Fire Station phone is currently awaiting repair.

Kids' Movie Night February 20th

Sarah Mathias

This month's Movie Night will be on Saturday, February 20th. We'll be watching *Home*. Doors will open at 6:00PM, with the movie starting when the popcorn is ready (usually by 6:20). Bring pillows and blankets/sleeping bags for the kids and a comfy chair for yourself. All are welcome to enjoy the movie!

The next Movie Night will be in April (March weekends will be filled with the Spring Market, my son's Birthday, and Easter, leaving no room for a Movie Night that month).

Spring Market in March

Sarah Mathias

Our local Westport Markets will continue in March with a Spring Market on March 13th from 12:00PM to 4:00PM. The Market will be on the Westport Headlands, unless weather prevents it. In the case of rain we will move it to the Westport Recreation Center and Church. If we are outside, bring whatever you have to sell, be it handmade goods or flea market items. If we have to move it inside, space will be limited to 1-2 tables per vendor (depending on the number of vendors we get). If you are interested in being a vendor, please contact Sarah Mathias at 962-0181 or westportcafleamarket@gmail.com. You may also check in on the markets on Facebook by connecting with the Westport Markets page.

Our next market after March will be in May with our Annual Westport Spring Yard Sale. This sale is held on the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend from 9:00AM to 3:00PM on the Westport Headlands. After that this year, we'll once again hold the Westport Flea Market on the last Sunday of each month from June to September. Last year, these ran from 11:00AM to 2:00PM on the Headlands.

Local Information for Newcomers

Sarah Mathias

A "Welcome to Westport!" information packet has been created for distribution to anyone new to the community. The packet contains information about the WVS, WVFD, Recreation Center, Church, local businesses, and more. If you are interested in receiving a packet, or if you'd like one to be sent to someone, please contact Sarah Mathias at 962-0181 or sarah@huntersplayground.com.

Please note our *Westport Wave* email address! We're now at westportwave@gmail.com, so please make a note of it, and keep those terrific articles and photos coming in!



The Westport Community Church

Westport Community Church February Calendar

Founded in 1880, the **Westport Community Church** is pleased to offer a variety of experiences to help us discover ways to become more in touch with our spiritual heritage. We are doing our best to nurture a tradition of having weekly gatherings at the Church (which is at the end of Abalone Street on the left) to explore various spiritual paths. All suggestions and participants for services are welcome at the Westport Church – and we welcome all denominations to hold services here!

The 2nd and 3rd Sundays of each month currently have a regularly scheduled focus. The 1st, 4th, and occasional 5th Sundays are open for community members to suggest other speakers and topics for these days. Please contact Church President Millie Saunders at 964-3030 to discuss your ideas and see how you can help the Westport Community Church.

2nd Sunday, February 14th, 10:00AM – Carolyn Cathey, Mendocino Center For Spiritual Living, on “Love”

Carolyn Cathey, Student Practitioner of the Mendocino Center for Spiritual Living, will present a deeper study of "Love". Love is what we are and what we are about. Love is also the most challenging when living in the physical, with all of its drama and infighting and negative reactions to people and

events. One of the greatest challenges might be loving yourself. This Sunday's exploration discusses why love is crucial for your happiness, and what might be blocking you from loving yourself as God loves you – unconditionally and without judgment – so that then you may love others as you love yourself. A Divine Message says no matter the question, love is always the answer. But how do we do that when we feel caught in an unloving world?

3rd Sunday, February 21st, 10:00AM – Our Monthly Quaker Worship Group

Katherine White is helping us to establish an ongoing Quaker Worship Group meeting on the third Sunday of every month. The format is a simple, quiet meditation for 45 minutes followed by Katherine reading Quaker passages and a shared discussion of our experience including sharing of any of our thoughts or readings that one is inspired to bring to the group. This has been and will continue to be a very peace-filled and nurturing experience.

Court-Ordered Community Service Opportunities In Westport

Gary Quinton

Do you need to serve court-ordered Community Service or serve in a Sheriff's Department Work Release program? Why not serve it in your community? We would value your time!

There are several places and varied types of work in Westport where you can provide your hours and get credit towards the satisfaction of your court order, including work for the Westport Volunteer Fire Department, Westport-Ten Mile Cemetery District, and the Westport Village Society. Jobs include grass/weed cutting, painting, handyman work, and more.

Please call us and tell us about your work skills, and let's see if we can match your skills to work that needs to be done. That match-up will be a benefit to you and your Westport Community at the same time, and your work can be confidential and non-judgmental. We can also help you with the registration paperwork and compliance/completion documents. If you are interested, please call Gary Quinton at 964-7073.



Pete Masolini and the Wages Creek Valley after a lot of rain in 1964-65!

whales have also arrived early. And of course many of us are attuned to the succession of mushrooms because we collected edible varieties.

Looking through the historic photo archive of the Westport Village Society, I recently ran across this image Pete Masolini taken in the Wages Creek Valley during the impressive storms that hit our coast between December 18, 1964, and January 7, 1965.

Let It Rain, Let It Rain, Let It Rain

Thad Van Bueren

Are you singing in the rain? I am! I measure it every day back in the Howard Creek Valley and find it interesting that my totals are always higher than folks living on the coastal verge. I guess that makes sense because the clouds drop more of their payload when they bump into the abrupt mountains that surround our place.

My rain gauge is a simple tube with tick marks on the side in tenths of an inch. After wasting money on electronic rain gauges that soon became nonfunctional, I'm back to that tried and true method again. It is easy to incorporate into my daily practice. I step out on the deck while the morning coffee is brewing, get spritzed if it's still coming down, see what has accumulated, and towel off the cats as they come from the great outdoors.

Our normal average rainfall for the year is about 45 inches and as of the end of January we've measured 41.02 inches at our place. I now enjoy reading the signs of plentiful rain on walkabouts. The budding/sprouting of vegetation is early this year because it's warmer than usual. Migrant birds and

We haven't had that kind of deluge since then, but I'm still keeping my galoshes handy. Meanwhile, let it rain, let it rain, let it rain!

Sheltered Fuel Breaks

Tom Kisliuk

Forest Fuels and Wildfire hazards are hot topics in Mendocino County and other areas. Current policy is primarily emergency response to wildfires. Should we just cross our fingers and hope Mother Nature doesn't decide to ignite our forests? Managing forests in consideration of fire is becoming a more widespread practice and I thought it might be of interest to share how this is being done.

The idea of a Sheltered Fuel Break is to remove the most flammable forest fuel, so it is unlikely to sustain wildfires while retaining a vibrant forest of primarily the largest trees.

The pictures accompanying this article are courtesy of Tom Schott who is a Forester with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The contractor for this project is H&M Logging from Fort Bragg. The project occurred on private lands proximate to Highway 20 and the State Forest and is part of an EQIP project (Environmental Quality Improvement



Before Sheltered Fuel Break treatment.

Program). Grant Funding paid well over 50% of the cost of this project.

The objectives of a Sheltered Fuel Break are to:

Remove overstocked dense low growing vegetation, primarily surplus small trees.

Slow the spread of wildfires

Reduce firefighting costs and environmental effects of wildfires

Protect homes and property from wildfires

Like most Mendocino County forest areas, this forest was significantly overstocked with an estimated total of more than 1,000 trees per acre. Nearly all of the saplings removed were in the smallest diameter groups. When natural forests develop, many small trees which are in shade may live for many decades before they die due to being out-competed for sunlight.

Methods used in this project to treat fuels included mechanical chipping near roads, piling and burning (used in areas that could not be chipped), and lopping, or cutting down the material so it is close to the ground,

which results in the material decaying at a faster rate and also reduces ladder fuels which can exacerbate wildfires.

Removal in this instance was firewood-sized wood close to the road which the landowner will use. Frequently, mechanical masticators are used instead of the more labor-intensive method of men using chain saws, which was the method of this project.

For the landowner, his or her property is now much more defensible and quite likely to slow the rate of a potential wildfire and offer a starting point for any fire suppression efforts. A healthier forest is an additional benefit as there is less competition for sunlight, water, and nutrients.

One of the contract objectives is to make the project more park-like; as a result the landowner's property is visually stunning in areas close to the road.

The Westport area has many fine homes that abut or are amid forestlands. We are also in an area of epidemic mortality in the Grand Fir population. Large woody debris and abundant snags are fertile conditions for wildfires.

Sheltered Fuel breaks create a healthy and beautiful forest that has a greatly increased resiliency to wildfires.



Sheltered Fuel Break Treatment nearing completion.

El Niño vs. The Blob III – Godzilla Awakens!

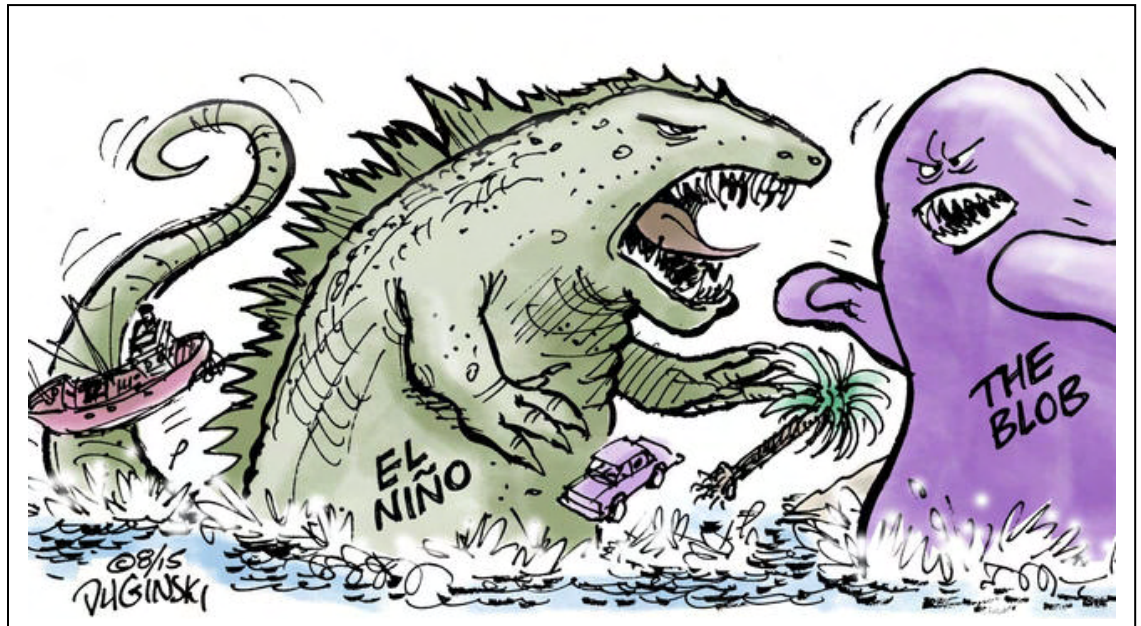
Steve Brigham

One wreaks havoc on our planet via ferocious storms, while the other brings crippling drought. This is the third installment of the continuing 2015-2016 saga of Godzilla El Niño and The Blob

(see the August 2015 Westport Wave for Part One and the November 2015 Westport Wave for Part Two).

When last we left off (on November 1st) three separate regions of unusually warm water in the Pacific Ocean were threatening the good people of planet Earth. The rain-producing* **Godzilla El Niño** was establishing its mighty presence in the equatorial Pacific, and had completely demolished the prevailing tradewinds there. Meanwhile, the drought-producing* **Blob** remained entrenched off the coast of Alaska, and had also spawned **The Son of Blob** off the coast of California. Although Westport has now had two wet months in a row, many of the stormy winter predictions for areas south of here have yet to come true, and some people are even wondering if Godzilla is gone and much of California will get no rain. What the “h” is happening? Well just be patient, since according to most experts, the real show is just now beginning! What’s going to happen in February and March, and what does that mean for Westport rain in the next two months? Well, read on and find out!

Yes, boys and girls, Godzilla is still alive, and it’s predicted that he is just beginning to awaken. Which means that this is still an El Niño year – but keep in mind that every El Niño is a little different (particularly when Blobs are around). So now let’s review what’s happened in the past three months, and while we’re at it I’m going to give you some local rainfall comparisons to the big El Niño year of 1997-



1998 to show you how we’re doing compared to that much-publicized event.

In November 2015, with The Blob still blocking storms from the north, we had a fairly dry month in Westport, with just 3.76” of rain (as measured here on Pacific Avenue**). That’s over 1.5” short of our average, and only about a third of the 10” we got in the El Niño month of November of 1997. However, somewhere around the beginning of December, The Blob weakened in strength enough (helped by an errant western Pacific typhoon, just like December 2014) to let all of the northerly storms reach us. And it rained! December 2015 brought nearly 15 inches of rain here on Pacific Avenue, which is around 165% of normal – almost exactly what we got in December 2014 and also in December 1964 when the Eel River flooded. Three wet Decembers for Westport (1964, 2014, and 2015) – all from El Niño, right? Well, not exactly. In fact, *none* of them were directly related to El Niño! What about the real El Niño December of 1997? It was actually drier than average here at a little over 6”, and it was very dry in Los Angeles too!

The plain and simple truth is that most El Niños seldom really kick with lots of rain until January here, and often not until February in Southern California. Sure, there may be warm Godzilla and Blob water all over the place in the fall, but rain does not come from the ocean – it comes from the air! And it takes a while for that warm water to translate into strong atmospheric flows. Although the non-El Niño Januaries of 1965 and 2015 that followed very wet

Decembers here were actually quite dry, in the Super El Niño January of 1998 (also after a dry December), Westport had over 22" of rain! This year, we finally had a wet January (just over 13" of rain in January on Pacific Avenue, another 165% of normal) to follow a wet December. So it must be El Niño, right?

Well again, not exactly. It's not even a full-blown El Niño yet, at least as far as rainfall patterns go. El Niño is *supposed* to be when Southern California gets rain and the Pacific Northwest is dry (Westport is always somewhere in the middle, but we're used to that). So far this fall and winter, the Pacific Northwest has been wet and Southern California has been dry. Our storms here in Westport have been all from the north, not the south, and although we've done very well with getting lots of rain compared to most places in California, it's so far been more like a normal wet winter for us, not an El Niño one. However, I think we saw the beginnings of a change in January. Although not full-blown El Niño yet, the storms finally started coming not just from Alaska but from directly west, right from the central Pacific, and by the end of January they were just a little warmer and wetter. Watch for Godzilla to really get going both here and elsewhere in February and March!

Real El Niños are not necessarily famous for more storms in California, but they are famous for more southerly storms, and more rain each time there is a storm. Right now, we're right at 33 inches of total rain since last July 1st here on Pacific Avenue. With another 10 inches by June, we'll be up to "normal" for the rainy season, but I think we'll do at least 10 inches better than that, and finish at around 55 inches. Or maybe more – if we start getting a real subtropical connection going with some of our storms in February and March, our rainfall totals could jump in a hurry. The last time Godzilla visited our area (1997-1998), Fort Bragg had 79.12" of rain for the year. That kind of total this year would be a real stretch, but don't pack away those umbrellas just yet!

** In California, El Niño is noted for its rain-producing effects, while The Blob is most famous for blocking storms and causing drought. But in other parts of the world, they can even have the opposite effects. Please see a weather map near you for specific weather and climate change in your global region.*

*** My rain gauge on Pacific Avenue in Westport is very close to the ocean – think of it as a Headlands measurement. Areas up in the nearby hills and canyons often get substantially more rain than I do here on the water, as do areas higher up in our coastal slopes and mountains.*



Doggie Treats For Valentine's Day!

Marty Anderson

Hi again everybody! You may remember me from a column I wrote recently for the December 2015 *Westport Wave*. Well, your Editor liked it so much that he has invited me to be a regular columnist, and I am only too happy to oblige. He is a nice man, and Dog knows he needs some help with this rag.

As this month celebrates Valentine's Day, I know that all you dog owners will want to do something special for your K-9s. So why not give them something they'll really like? You guessed it – TREATS! The recipe which follows is easy to make – and of course it's Marty-approved! You will need:

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- ¾ cup cornmeal
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 beef or chicken bouillon cubes
- 2 cups boiling water

* If desired, you can also mix in crunched-up crisp bacon strips, bacon drippings, or a pinch of garlic.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

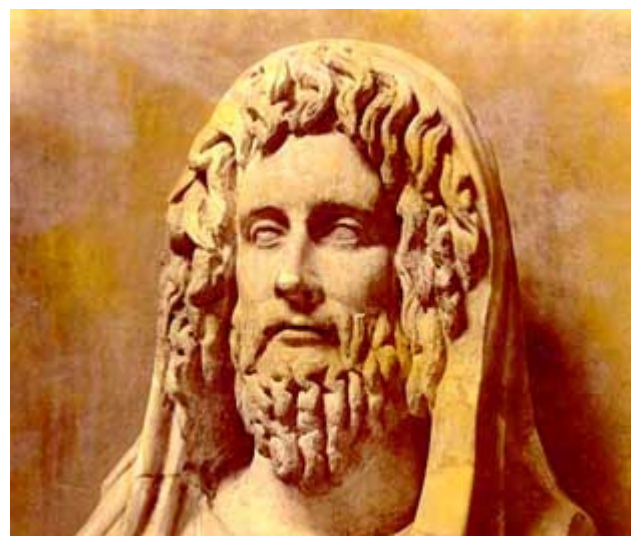
1. Combine first four ingredients and mix well.
2. Dissolve bouillon cubes in the boiling water.
3. Add bouillon to flour mixture and mix to make a stiff dough.
4. Roll onto a floured surface.
5. Cut out heart shapes with a cookie cutter or round shapes with an inverted glass.
6. Bake in pre-heated oven at 300 degrees F. for 30 minutes.
7. Let stand overnight to harden.

Now all dogs love these treats, but I'm not too sure about cats, since they have a reputation for being rather finicky. Don't get me wrong – some of my best friends are cats – so give them a treat on Valentine's too, with a some tuna, salmon, or turkey sprinkled over their dinner. Or just forget about their regular dinner and feed them the tuna, salmon, and turkey instead. Come to think of it, I have that too!

Are You Reading This In Color?

If you're reading a black-and-white print edition of *The Westport Wave* right now and you've been seeing it in color, you've got quite an imagination! Don't miss out on all the great color photographs that accompany the terrific articles in your *Westport Wave*! Find a computer, tablet, or smart phone and go to www.westportvillagesociety.org, where you can read and download all current and past issues of *The Wave* in living color, and even sign up for free e-mail delivery each month. In fact, you don't even have to do that much anymore – just type "Westport Wave" into your search engine box (in other words, google it), and you'll be instantly transported to the most recent 4-plus years of *Waves*! Do it today, tell your friends, and save a tree!

Did U Know Dept.: According to our current calendar, the year 2800 will be a leap year. Except in Greece. Their system won't have a leap day that year, but instead they have one scheduled for the year 2900 (which we do not).



King Numa, who invented February.

Why A Lot Of People Never Liked February, and What Some People Did About It

Steve Brigham

I've never been a big fan of February. I mean, Christmas is over (I guess we'll finally have to take our Christmas Tree down), it's too early to plant much, and everyone has a cold anyway. It turns out that I'm not the only one who doesn't like February. Back in *really* Ancient Rome (around 700BC), they obviously didn't like February either, since they didn't even *have* a February. They only had 10 months, but then King Numa Pompilius was pressured into making two more months by farmers who wanted more of a lunar-type calendar. Numa didn't quite have enough days left for February (which became the 12th month), so it ended up with 28 days (later, Julius Caesar and then Pope Gregory decided that having leap years would be fun, so it eventually became 29 days in February every fourth year except for years which are divisible by 100 but not by 400 and years when "w" is a vowel.) Back in King Numa's day, they actually had a Lent-type festival in February which was a real drag, so no one wanted to have too many days in February anyway. That's the real reason why February is a short month!

Ground Hog Day

In the movie *Ground Hog Day*, the characters repeat the same day (February 2nd) over and over for what

has been estimated by movie buffs to be almost 34 years (which is even longer than it takes to read this article). This would *really* be a drag if you didn't like February. Actually, Groundhog Day is just one way that humans (especially Northern European ones) have traditionally tried to figure out how long winter is going to last (February 2nd is the exact mid-point of winter, and by then many people especially in Germany are sick of winter and just wish it would go away, probably along with the whole month). Now in terms of predicting the weather, our ancient ancestors were very smart – I mean, who needs weather satellites when you have... a *Ground Hog*!

While we're on this topic, why would the Ground Hog seeing his shadow mean 6 more weeks of winter? If there's a shadow, that means it's sunny out, and wouldn't that mean a mild winter? Some people think that it must be because a sunny winter day is usually a colder day in Germany, which means a worse winter, so there'll be more winter eventually (this may not work too well in California). Actually, I've always noticed that there often is a break in the weather in many parts of the USA around February 2nd (including right here this year), but then winter gets going again right afterwards, so it all sorta does make a lot of sense to me. (To my knowledge, I am the only person to ever come up with this explanation, but believe me, it wouldn't be the first time). But it all hardly matters, since the Ground Hog has only ever been right 39% of the time anyway.

Here in Westport, we don't have Ground Hogs, so I always use Kitty-Cat (who looks a little like a Ground Hog, and is nearly as big). By the way, Kitty-Cat likes to point out that there are always 6 more weeks of winter on February 2nd, since the Spring Equinox isn't until March 19th. (Come to think of it, that's actually more than six weeks. Better call King Numa on that one.)

Candles

Back to the Germans. They love candles, and they always used to light a bunch of them on February 2nd, when (I think I already mentioned this) they were sick and

tired of winter. Not to be outdone, the Catholic Church ended up doing their own rendition of Candlemas by using those candles to bless people's throats. Now this also makes a lot of sense really, since February is flu season and people couldn't get their flu shots in the olden days, mainly because there were no flu shots. And no Co-Advil either. You can still get your throat blessed at a Catholic Church on either February 2nd or February 3rd (check your local listings). With all the nasty respiratory stuff going around, it wouldn't be a bad idea.

A Big Global Party This Month!

Wow! February so far sounds like a real bummer of a month! But a few days ago when I was doing the Westport February Calendar, I realized that it really isn't anymore, and especially this year. It turns out that humans have been fighting back at February for centuries, by gradually stacking the calendar with lots of fun things to fight all that bummer stuff. And this year, nearly all those fun things are happening on the same first weekend of February! It all starts with Carnival in Brazil, which has already started, as well as its sister-celebration Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Both of these giant celebrations were designed to "party hearty" right before Lent, since Lent is the time when you're supposed to give up lots of stuff (like booze). So why not live it up right now? (just be done before Lent starts on February 10th!)



There'll be some Monkey business going on – Chinese New Year ushers in the Year of the Monkey on February 8th!

Not to be outdone in the war against the February Blues, the USA invented the Super Bowl 50 years ago. This year, the Super Bowl occurs at the same time that the folks in Brazil and New Orleans are already getting pretty wasted (but of course having a terrific time!) I'm sure that they'll be doing plenty of that at the Super Bowl this year too, but since it's being held in Silicon Valley, I'm not sure if they're allowed to drink beer (maybe fancy cocktails, or a nice California wine?)

You don't need to care about football to celebrate Chinese (Lunar) New Year, and they've been celebrating it every year in China for a *lot* more than 50 years. Believe it or not, this is actually a *bigger* deal than the Super Bowl! These days Chinese New Year is more of a global thing than it ever used to be, and this year it happens right on the same weekend as everything else. It doesn't happen so neatly every year, but this year, February is one giant global party!

Valentine's Day and Leap Day

Hey, maybe someday February will turn out to be our best month! (King Numa would be amazed.) And there's more fun still to come! – Valentine's Day on February 14th is a very nice holiday that among other things features a whole lot of flowers and chocolates (hope you didn't give chocolates up for Lent!), and President's Day is the day after (so you'll have a day off to "rest up" after Valentine's Day).

Of course, everyone could always use an extra day, and to finish off February 2016, you'll get just that in the form of Leap Day! This extra day happens every 4 years because if it didn't, in 700 years Christmas would be in summer for us (but it would be in winter for Australia, which should really please them, and I'm surprised that they ever went along with the whole thing). In any case, on February 29th, a woman can traditionally propose marriage to a man without penalty. Now this being the 21st Century, I don't see why that couldn't happen on any other day. But here's the catch – according to real medieval laws, if a man says "no" on February 29th, he has to give the woman 12 pairs of gloves! So why not give it a try – and if needs be, tell him to give you some nice, sturdy gloves, so you could use them working around the yard or something! (All this because 2016 is divisible by 4 but not by 100 [except by 400], and "w" is not a vowel this year!)

February 2016 Westport Calendar

- February 2nd** – Ground Hog Day
- February 2nd** – WMAC Meeting, 7:00PM, Westport Community Church
- February 4th** – Bookmobile, Store, 9-9:30AM
- February 7th** – Super Bowl 50
- February 8th** – Lunar New Year
- February 8th** – New Moon, 6:38AM
- February 8th** – Westport Village Society fundraising meeting, 7:00PM, Westport Hotel
- February 9th** – Mardi Gras
- February 10th** – Ash Wednesday
- February 10th** – Westport Volunteer Fire Department Monthly Meeting, 6:00PM, Firehouse
- February 13th** – Westport County Water District Monthly Board Meeting, 10:00AM, Firehouse
- February 14th** – Valentine's Day
- February 14th** – Carolyn Cathey, Mendocino Center For Spiritual Living, on "Love", 10:00AM, Westport Community Church
- February 15th** – Presidents' Day
- February 15th** – WVS Ducky Race organizing meeting, 7:00PM, Westport Hotel
- February 17th** – Westport Ten Mile Cemetery District Quarterly Board Meeting, 10:00AM, Westport Community Church
- February 18th** – Bookmobile, Store, 9-9:30AM
- February 20th** – Kids' Movie Night, 6:00PM, Westport Recreation Center
- February 21st** – Third Sunday Quaker Worship Group, 10:00AM, Westport Community Church
- February 22nd** – Full Moon, 10:19AM
- February 28th** – Westport Community Church Board Meeting, 11:30AM, Westport Church
- February 29th** – Leap Day
- March 1st** – Public meeting with Caltrans/MCOG at 5:30 PM followed by WMAC meeting at 7:00PM, Westport Community Church

The Westport Wave is a free monthly community newsletter published by the **Westport Village Society**, a non-profit community-benefit organization (<http://www.westportvillagesociety.org/>). Contributions for our March 1st, 2016 issue are due by February 25th, and should be sent to editor Steve Brigham at westportwave@gmail.com, or P.O. Box 237, Westport, CA 95488.