

# EXTRA!

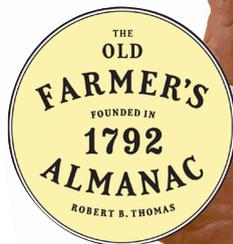
FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

TRY OUR  
RETRO GAME  
QUIZ

DOWN HOME  
TIPS FOR HEALTH

HOMEMADE  
FOOD GIFTS

FROZEN STIFF



DECEMBER 2018

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# THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

*Holidays, History, and More*

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

### 50 YEARS AGO (1968)

Dec. 4: Michael Barrowman (American swimmer)

### 60 YEARS AGO (1958)

Dec. 6: Nick Park (British director and animator)



DONNA SUMMER

### 70 YEARS AGO (1948)

Dec. 31: Donna Summer (American singer)

### 75 YEARS AGO (1943)

Dec. 28: Keith Floyd (British chef)

Dec. 31: John Denver (American singer)

### 100 YEARS AGO (1918)

Dec. 6: Harold H. Hopkins (British physicist and inventor)  
Dec. 11: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (Russian writer)

### 150 YEARS AGO (1868)

Dec. 20: Harvey Samuel Firestone (American businessman and tire manufacturer)

### 175 YEARS AGO (1843)

Dec. 11: Robert Koch (German physician, founder of modern bacteriology)

### 200 YEARS AGO (1818)

Dec. 13: Mary Todd Lincoln (U.S. First Lady)



## MOON WATCH

**New Moon:** December

7, at 2:20 A.M. EST

**First Quarter:**

December 15, at  
6:49 A.M. EST

**Full Beaver Moon:**

December 22, at  
12:49 P.M. EST

**Last Quarter:**

December 29, at  
4:34 P.M. EST

### ANNUAL EVENT

The December solstice occurs on the 21st at 5:23 P.M. EST.



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT  
MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT  
DECEMBER'S FULL MOON



## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Dec. 2: First Sunday  
in Advent

Dec. 2: Chanukah  
begins at sundown

Dec. 7: National  
Pearl Harbor  
Remembrance Day

Dec. 15: Bill of Rights  
Day

Dec. 17: Wright  
Brothers Day

Dec. 25: Christmas Day

Dec. 26: Boxing Day  
(Canada)

Dec. 26: First day of  
Kwanzaa

### MEXICAN SOUVENIR

Born on March 2, 1779, Joel Roberts Poinsett became a physician, diplomat, and amateur botanist. From 1825 to 1830, he served as the first U.S. minister to

Mexico. While in that country, he came across a striking native plant and sent cuttings to his home in Charleston, South Carolina. After Poinsett returned to the United States, he propagated the plants and distributed samples to other botanists. His discovery became known as the “poinsettia.” Poinsett passed away on December 12, 1851.

**National Poinsettia Day** is observed on this date every year, in his honor.

Poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are tropical shrubs native to southern Mexico, where they may reach 10 feet tall. They can

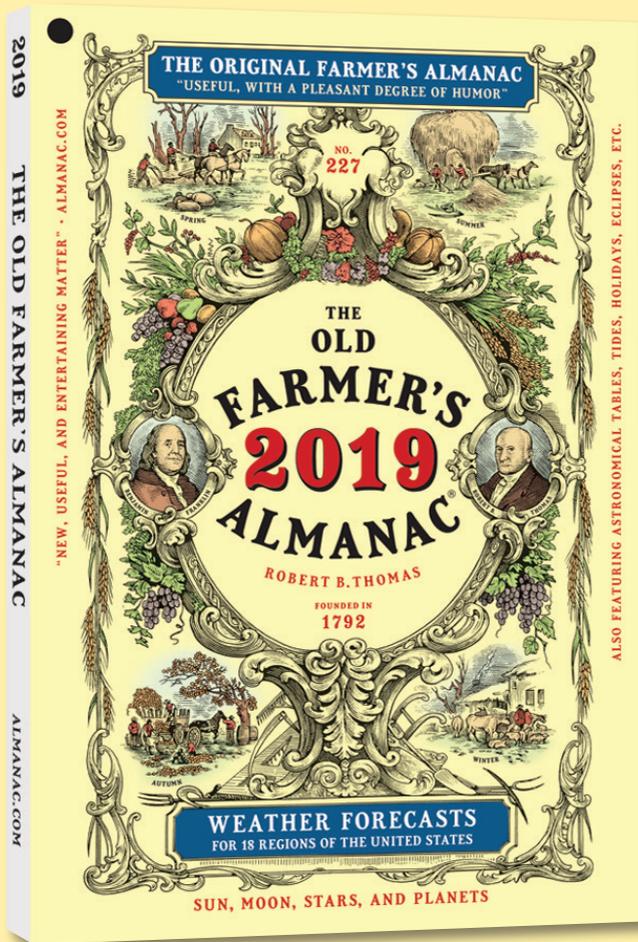
be grown outside in certain areas of the United States, such as southern California and parts of Florida, but are mostly prized as indoor plants for the Christmas season. In fact, poinsettias are the most popular potted plant in the United States and Canada, with over 100 red, pink, salmon, white, and yellow varieties available in solid, streaked, marbled, and multicolor patterns.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The colored poinsettia “flowers” are actually specialized leaves called bracts. The true flowers are the tiny yellow clusters in the center.

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## BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These December dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

### AROUND THE HOUSE

Bake: 22–24

Brew: 4, 5, 31

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 4, 5, 31

Demolish: 4, 5, 31

Dry fruit/vegetables/meat: 6, 25, 26

End projects: 6

Lay shingles: 25, 26

Make jams/jellies: 13–15

Paint: 1–3, 18, 19, 29, 30

Start projects: 8



Wash floors: 13–15

Wash windows: 16, 17

## **OUTDOORS**

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Begin logging: 8–10

Go camping: 6, 7

Go fishing: 7–22

Set posts or pour concrete: 8–10

## **IN THE GARDEN**

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Destroy pests and weeds: 16, 17

Graft or pollinate: 22–24

Harvest aboveground crops: 18, 19

Harvest belowground crops: 27, 28

Mow to decrease growth: 4, 5

Mow to increase growth: 16, 17

Pick fruit: 27, 28

Plant aboveground crops: 8, 14, 15

Plant belowground crops: 4, 5, 31

Prune to discourage growth: 25, 26

Prune to encourage growth: 16, 17

## **ON THE FARM**

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Breed animals: 4, 5, 31

Castrate animals: 11, 12

Cut hay: 16, 17

Purchase animals: 22–24

Set eggs: 1, 19–21, 29, 30

Slaughter livestock: 4, 5, 31

Wean animals: 5, 28

## **PERSONAL**

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Advertise to sell: 15, 19

Ask for a loan: 5, 26

Begin diet to gain weight: 15, 19

Begin diet to lose weight: 5, 28

Buy a home: 15, 19

Color hair: 18, 19

Cut hair to discourage growth: 1–3, 29, 30

Cut hair to encourage growth: 13–15

Get married: 1–3, 29, 30

Have dental care: 27, 28

Move (house/household): 20, 21

Perm hair: 11, 12

Quit smoking: 5, 28

Straighten hair: 6, 7

Travel for pleasure: 25, 26

Wean children: 5, 28



## GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the December dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

**PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT:** Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus

**HARVEST:** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

**BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS:** Capricorn

**CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED:** Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

**PRUNE:** Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

### THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN DECEMBER

1 Libra	9 Capricorn	17 Aries	25 Leo
2 Libra	10 Capricorn	18 Taurus	26 Leo
3 Libra	11 Aquarius	19 Taurus	27 Virgo
4 Scorpio	12 Aquarius	20 Gemini	28 Virgo
5 Scorpio	13 Pisces	21 Gemini	29 Libra
6 Sagittarius	14 Pisces	22 Cancer	30 Libra
7 Sagittarius	15 Pisces	23 Cancer	31 Scorpio
8 Capricorn	16 Aries	24 Cancer	

TAP FOR  
MERCURY IN  
RETROGRADE  
DATES

**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP FOR  
DECEMBER  
MOON PHASES

## MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

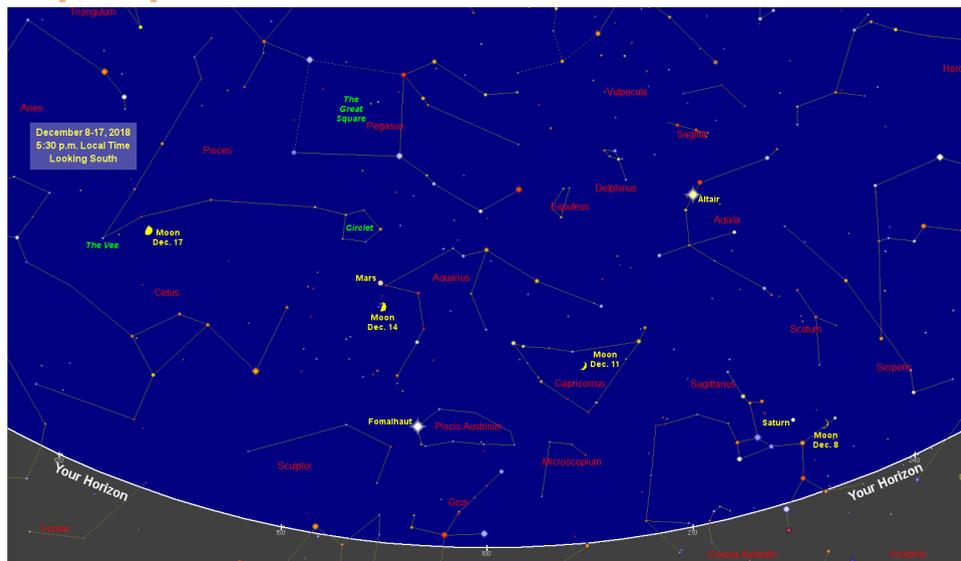
Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

**In 2018 to come, Mercury will be retrograde during November 17–December 6.**

—Celeste Longacre



## FOUR NICE NIGHTS FOR MOON WATCHING

For those of us living in the Northern Hemisphere, December ushers in a challenging season for sky-gazing. Our half of Earth is now tilting away from the Sun, bringing colder temperatures as winter approaches. It can be difficult to generate enthusiasm for spending a cold night under the stars.

On the other hand, the Sun sets early at this time of year, meaning that you don't have to wait long for the sky to become dark. In fact, for most locations in the United States and Europe, the earliest sunsets of the year occur in the first 10 days of December. In addition, the cold, dry weather at this time of year typically brings sparkling clear skies ideal for observing stars and planets.

This suggests that a good strategy is to go outside early on December evenings with a few easy-to-find targets in mind. This December, the Moon serves as a handy guidepost to

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TAP TO GET  
A PRINTABLE  
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SKY MAP

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DETRAY'S SKY  
ADVENTURES



help you find your way around the sky without getting too cold, and you can do it in just four evenings separated by three 2-day spans.

**O**ur four-night tour begins just after sunset on December 8. Look low in the southwest to find the thin, thin crescent Moon in the constellation Sagittarius, the Archer. The paper-thin crescent is a beautiful sight in its own right, but just to the upper left of the Moon lies Saturn, the Ringed Planet. Saturn is noticeably brighter than any stars in the area. The Moon is right next door at a mere 248,071 miles from Earth, close enough that 12 explorers have walked on its surface. Saturn is more than a *billion* miles distant, and only a few space probes have ever been there.

Three days later, on the 11th, the Moon has fattened up a bit and now resembles a fingernail. It's moved into the middle of Capricornus, the Sea Goat. The stars of Capricornus aren't very bright, so you'll have better luck spotting its boat-shape outline if you wait until after 7:30 P.M., when the sky will be darker. Capricornus is one of the oldest constellations, invented by Bronze Age sky-gazers more than 4,000 years ago as a mash-up of a fish and a goat.

**T**ake another 3 days to warm up before venturing out on the evening of December 14. That's when you'll find the (almost) first quarter Moon in Aquarius, the Water Bearer. Above the Moon lies Mars, the Red Planet. To the unaided eye, Mars is the palest orange, and when it's this close to the glare of the Moon, the color of Mars may be difficult to see. Compared to faraway Saturn, Mars is our close neighbor, only 111,846,814 miles from Earth on the evening of December 14.

The final stop in our 10-day lunar excursion, on the 17th, finds the Moon in Pisces, the Fishes, near the part of the constellation known as the Vee. Pisces is a large but dim constellation. Other than the Vee, its most notable feature is a distinctive ring of stars known as the Cirlet. Since our last stop 3 days ago, the Moon's shape has changed again. It's now in a gibbous phase, partway between first quarter and full.

Even though December is bound to be cold, the Moon will help you to navigate the sky quickly and easily. Stay warm out there!

—Jeff DeTray



AMUSEMENT

# Try Our Retro Game Quiz

*How well do you know the origins of toys and games?*

PHOTO: DRAZEN/GETTY IMAGES



**R**ead the anecdote about each invention and guess which product it describes.

1. Mary Carter, a well-known medium in Cincinnati in the 1940s, created a fortune-telling device that she called the “Psycho-Slate.” It consisted of a blackboard with a lid that could open and close to reveal writing (no one knew

how she did it!). Her son Al took her idea and invented this answer-giving toy.

2. Toy companies originally thought that this toy was a bad idea because it encouraged kids to play with and waste food. In 1952, it became the first toy to be advertised on television.

3. In 1952, a 13-year-old boy and his friends

were playing this game in his backyard, using a broom and a perforated plastic golf ball. His father decided that he could improve their equipment. He did, and his son helped test the creations. The father-and-son team made their first sale to a restaurant, which then sold this toy for 49 cents.

4. When the daughter of a toymaker had to bring to school a toy that fit into a matchbox, the first of these toys was produced—a small coach to honor the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952. Her assignment inspired a whole new line of toys, and eventually millions were sold.

5. Ancient Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks played with this toy. The game involves shooting (but no guns!) and is now an officially recognized

**+** TAP FOR ANSWERS

## **ANSWERS TO “HOW FUN WAS MADE” QUIZ**

1. Magic 8-Ball
2. Mr. Potato Head
3. Wiffle Ball
4. Matchbox cars
5. Marbles
6. Slinky
7. Play-Doh
8. Ant farms
9. The Game of Life
10. Twister

## AMUSEMENT



sport with its own world championship. The game has terms like “keepsies” and can be played with “cat’s eyes,” “rainbows,” “clearies,” and more.

6. Richard James, a mechanical engineer, invented this toy by accident in 1943, when it “walked” off a table. It was so popular that the

first 400 sold in minutes at Gimbel’s department store in Philadelphia!

7. This toy started out as wallpaper cleaner! Coal furnaces often left walls dirty with soot, making cleaning products popular. In the 1950s, a preschool teacher pointed out that the cleaner could be used as a toy.

8. A businessman came up with the idea for this as he relaxed beside his sister’s pool at a picnic on July 4, 1956. When some uninvited “guests” beside the pool caught his eye, he began sketching the new toy.

9. In the mid-1800s, many religious people in New England believed that games were wicked and a waste of time. A man named Milton Bradley decided to design a game involving morals. Players could seek “Happiness” while avoiding things like “Crime.” Bradley set out on his horse and buggy to sell the first editions of this game and eventually found success.

10. This body-bending game was almost discontinued soon after it came out because it was considered too risqué. It became a hit after late-night talk-show host Johnny Carson played it on his TV show.

—Alice Cary

LIVING NATURALLY



# Down Home Tips for Health

PHOTO: FATCAMERA/GETTY IMAGES



## You can't overdose on green, red, or yellow vegetables.

**M**ost Americans equate “health care” with access to professional caregivers and hospitals.

But it's hard to argue with the fact that most of the “care” that promotes health involves practices that we use on our own behalf or that of our loved ones.

I'd go so far as to say that self-care and family-based caregiving is the foundation of good health.

Here as a little holiday

gift are a few of my top self-health-promoting practices. Learned from living and backed by scientific research, none of them takes much in the way of cash.

The hard truth—at least in my experience—is that they never become habits. Each one requires daily recommitment (remembering) and daily practice (just doing it).

• **Eat lots of vegetables.** Although science doesn't identify a single vegetable, group of vegetables, or

plant constituent as the “most important” for health, piles of research confirm that the people who eat the most and greatest diversity of vegetables (and fruit, too) enjoy better all-around physical and psychological health. You can't overdose on green, red, and yellow vegetables (but go easy on the fried potatoes).

• **Exercise (almost) every day.** I aim for an hour total and don't neglect my weight training. I exercise outside as often



## Poor oral health can lead to a host of whole-body problems.

as possible and think of ways to incorporate daily life tasks as “exercise” (e.g., digging, raking, shoveling, stacking wood, stair-climbing, walking or biking as a form of basic transportation). Staying physically active makes everything else easier. It enriches every corner of my life.

### • Floss and brush.

Teeth, gums, and other tissues in the mouth are connected to the rest of the body. Poor oral health can lead to a host

of whole-body problems. (Note: Dental hygienists have taught me the importance of using correct brushing and flossing techniques. Ask yours for a tutorial.)

• **Aim for 7 to 8 hours of quality sleep most nights.** Research shows that getting around 7 hours of quality sleep every night helps to manage weight, improves memory and slows cognitive decline, reduces the risks of diabetes and heart disease, and more.

• **Apologize.** It took a long time for me to understand that when things go bad in almost any situation, I’ve usually played a big part in it. Apologizing fully and without qualification (regardless of the role another or others played in the bad situation) clears my emotional decks so that I can move on.

• **Forgive.** A closely related psychological truth that it took me a long time to absorb: Forgiving doesn’t absolve others of the consequences of their



## Feeling grateful and saying so is a good way to start the day.

actions, but it does free up the energy I expend in holding them accountable for my pain. Holding accounts means that I expect others to change before I can feel better. Forgiveness empowers me to move on.

- **Invest in high-quality relationships.** Again, an abundance of research supports the notion that cultivating close family and friendship ties promotes physical and emotional well being. Like everything else associated with health, it

takes time, energy, and knowledge to sustain healthy relationships.

- **Cultivate an understanding of many points of view.** Getting at the heart of how people develop their points of view on a particular issue, and what values and actions they attach to them, helps me to develop compassion. I've found that working on this skill has also helped me to refine my attempts to persuade others to see and respect other points of view.

- **Express gratitude.** I find the act of saying aloud or writing about something for which I'm grateful causes an immediate internal shift away from self-pity, blame, anger, and other energy-sapping emotional states. Feeling grateful and saying so is a good way to start the day or start any day over.

—Margaret Boyles



TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG



# Homemade Food Gifts

These simple culinary creations are perfect to give out during the holiday season and make excellent hostess gifts. You may even want to make these delightful treats to keep at home!

 TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# Candy Cane Bark

 SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

## CANDY CANE BARK

10 candy canes

12 ounces dark chocolate chips, melted

1/8 teaspoon peppermint extract

8 ounces white chocolate chips, melted

Line a 16x12-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.

Put candy canes in a plastic bag and crush them with a rolling pin or mallet.

In a bowl, combine dark chocolate with peppermint extract, then spread mixture evenly onto prepared baking sheet. Place in refrigerator to harden candy quickly.

Once dark chocolate has hardened, spread melted white chocolate evenly over the top of the dark chocolate and quickly sprinkle crushed candy canes over the white chocolate. Refrigerate again to harden.

Break bark into pieces and wrap in individual bags for gifts.

# Glazed Lemon Coconut Loaf



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

## GLAZED LEMON COCONUT LOAF

### LOAF:

1 cup sugar  
5 tablespoons unsalted butter,  
melted  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
finely grated zest of 1 lemon  
1 teaspoon lemon extract  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 cup milk  
2 large eggs, at room temperature  
3/4 cup buttermilk  
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

*For loaf:* Preheat oven to 350°F.  
Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan and line  
with parchment paper.

In a bowl, combine sugar, butter, oil,  
lemon zest, lemon extract, vanilla,  
and milk.

In a separate bowl, whisk together  
eggs and buttermilk until evenly  
blended. Set aside.

In another bowl, sift together flour,  
baking powder, and salt.

Stir one third of dry mixture  
into butter mixture. Add half  
of buttermilk mixture, stir until  
smooth, then add another third  
of dry ingredients, remaining  
buttermilk mixture, and remaining  
dry ingredients, stirring until smooth  
after each addition. Stir in coconut.

3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup sweetened flaked coconut

### GLAZE:

1 cup confectioners' sugar  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter,  
melted  
1/4 teaspoon lemon extract

### TOPPING:

1/3 cup sweetened flaked coconut  
lemon zest (optional)

Scrape batter into prepared pan and  
smooth top. Bake on center oven rack  
for about 50 minutes, or until a tester  
inserted deep into the center of the  
bread comes out clean. Cool in pan  
on a rack for 10 minutes. Remove loaf  
from pan and cool completely.

*For glaze:* In a bowl, combine  
confectioners' sugar, lemon juice,  
butter, and lemon extract. Whisk  
well to blend. The glaze should have  
the consistency of heavy cream.  
Adjust, as needed, with a little  
more sugar (to thicken) or drops of  
lemon juice or water (to thin).

When bread has cooled to room  
temperature, spoon glaze evenly over  
top, then immediately sprinkle with  
coconut and lemon zest (if using).

**Makes 1 loaf.**



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# Good Morning Granola

## GOOD MORNING GRANOLA

- 6 cups old-fashioned oats
- 1 cup pecan pieces or almonds (optional)
- 3/4 cup toasted wheat germ
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup unsweetened flaked coconut
- 1/3 cup ground flaxseed or whole sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup dried chopped fruit (cranberries, cherries, apricots)

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Spread oats in two 10x8-inch pans or one large roasting pan. Bake for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce oven to 325°F.

Transfer oats to a bowl. Add pecans (if using), wheat germ, brown sugar, coconut, and ground flaxseed.

In a separate bowl, combine oil, honey, and vanilla.

Pour oil mixture into oat mixture and stir to coat. Return to baking pans. Bake for 10 minutes. Stir, then bake for 10 minutes more. Remove from oven, add fruit, and lightly stir. Set aside to cool completely.

Break up granola and pack into decorative jars for gifts.

**Makes about 8 cups.**



SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

HISTORY



Jean Hilliard, center, photographed in the hospital after surviving 6 hours in  $-22^{\circ}\text{F}$  temperatures

# Frozen Stiff

A chilling tale to welcome winter (December 21),  
with five ways to avoid getting this way

**O**n December 20, 1980, 19-year-old Jean Hilliard’s car slid off a remote country road just south of Lengby, Minnesota, in the middle of the night. This was familiar territory for her, and she decided to walk to the house of a friend, cattle rancher and butcher Wally Nelson, 2 miles away.

There were, however, two major problems: One was that the temperature that night was down to 22°F below zero. Second, she was not adequately dressed for such extreme cold. She was wearing cowboy boots, a coat, and mittens.

About 15 feet from Nelson’s house, Hilliard tripped and crawled on her hands and knees to his doorstep, where she collapsed.

There she remained for the rest of the night—some 6 hours—with her eyes frozen wide open.

At about 7:00 A.M.,

Nelson looked out and saw her.

In a January 2018 interview with Minnesota Public Radio (MPR), Nelson recalled the moment: “I was so damn surprised when I saw that little hunk out in the yard. I grabbed her by the collar and skidded her into the porch. I thought she was dead. Froze stiffer than a board, but I saw a few bubbles coming out of her nose.”

With the help of his companion, Nelson immediately attempted to lift Hilliard into a car to take her to the hospital. She was frozen too stiff to bend, so he had to fit her into the back seat diagonally.

Nelson brought Hilliard to nearby Fosston hospital. Her pulse measured barely 12 beats per minute (“normal” is 65 to 80 bpm). Her skin was too stiff to be punctured by a hypodermic needle. Her body temperature was

too low to be registered on a thermometer. Her face was ashen, and her eyes were solid and unresponsive to light.

After 2 to 3 hours of gradual warming, Hilliard began to thaw out. By around noon, she was conversing with nurses and others. The miracle was that she suffered only the numbing of several of her toes and seemed to have no permanent effects. She has never had any recall of the event. “It was like I fell asleep and woke up in the hospital,” she told MPR.

### **FIVE WAYS TO KEEP FROM FREEZING (OR GETTING FROSTBITE)**

- 1. Dress in layers of loose, warm clothing.**
- 2. Wear a hat that also covers your ears.**
- 3. Wear mittens, instead of gloves, and socks, ideally with liners. Carry hand and foot warmers.**
- 4. Do not drink alcohol.**
- 5. Do exercises to keep your blood flowing.**



IF THE STARS ARE BLINKING AND FLICKERING,  
A STORM IS COMING.



## HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

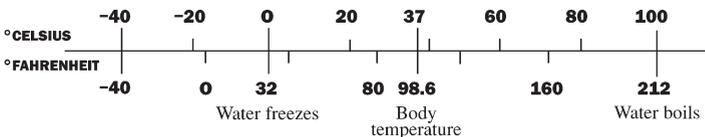


TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY



LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

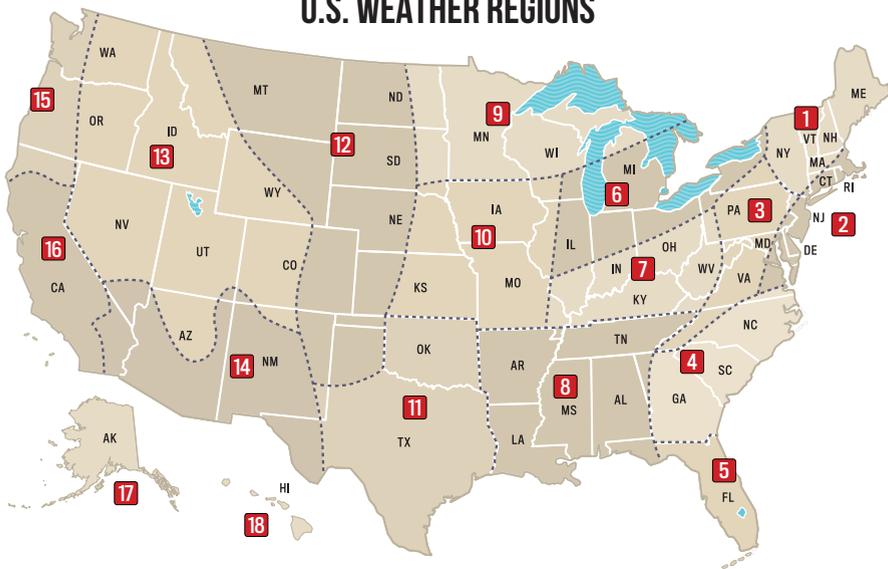
### CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



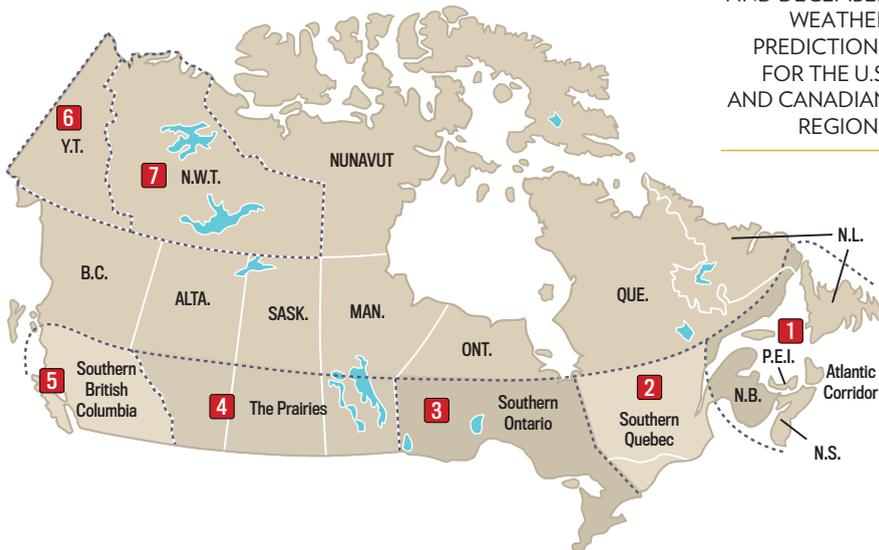


# WEATHER FORECASTS

## U.S. WEATHER REGIONS

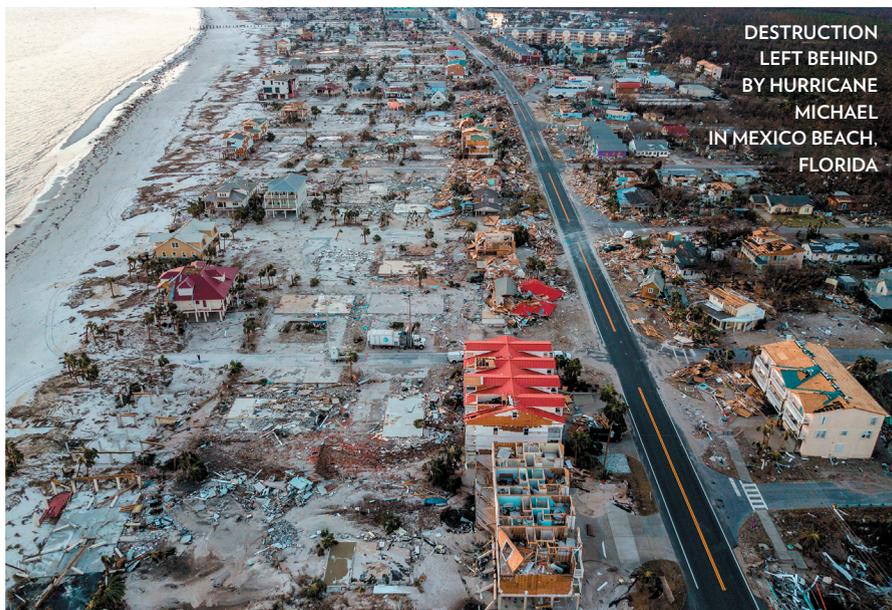


## CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



CLICK HERE TO  
FIND DECEMBER  
WEATHER  
PREDICTIONS  
FOR THE U.S.  
AND CANADIAN  
REGIONS





DESTRUCTION  
LEFT BEHIND  
BY HURRICANE  
MICHAEL  
IN MEXICO BEACH,  
FLORIDA

## DO MORE HURRICANES MEAN MORE TORNADES?

This past hurricane season was a notable one, with some very strong and unusual storms in the Atlantic/Gulf, eastern/central Pacific, and western Pacific regional basins.

In the Atlantic/Gulf of Mexico basin, **Hurricane Michael** strengthened rapidly just before it made landfall on October 9 on the Florida panhandle, with sustained winds of 155 miles per hour and a central pressure of 27.1 inches, thereby becoming the third

strongest landfalling hurricane in the United States on record. Michael then tracked northeastward to the opening of the Chesapeake Bay, and its remnants survived all the way across the Atlantic, combining with the remnants of **Hurricane Leslie** to bring heavy rain to Spain and Portugal.

Meanwhile, the eastern/central Pacific basin set a new record for its most severe overall hurricane season, beating 1992 for the highest Accumulated Cyclone Energy index



(ACE) on record there. ACE determines the contribution of each storm by multiplying its strength by its duration and then adding the contribution of each storm together to provide a measure of the total seasonal storm power.

June was an extraordinarily active month throughout the eastern/central Pacific basin, breaking the record for number of tropical cyclones (six), as well as tying the records for the number of named storms (five) and major hurricanes (two). Overall, this season's storms tied the record for most Category 5 storms (three), set a new record for the most storms of at least Category 4 (10, shattering the old record of 7), and tied the record for most landfalling storms, with six.

The most notable eastern/central Pacific storms included:

- **Hurricane Lane**, which formed in mid-August and became the first Category 5 storm of the season, and the wettest tropical cyclone on record in Hawaii.
- **Hurricane Walaka**, which became the second strongest tropical cyclone ever observed in the central Pacific and completely destroyed East Island, which was an 11-acre northwestern Hawaiian island approximately 550 miles northwest of Honolulu.

- **Hurricane Willa**, which reached Category 5 status but weakened to Category 3 before making landfall in southwestern Mexico. The remnants of Willa brought heavy rain to Texas and the southeastern states and then moved off the Atlantic coast in late October, where it became a powerful nor'easter that brought heavy rain and even some early-season snow.

In the western Pacific basin, there were 40 tropical systems reported, with at least 20 causing deaths and six Category 5 "super typhoons." Most notable was **Typhoon Mangkhut**, which killed at least 134 people and caused nearly \$3 billion in damage.

While there are many factors that play a role in the formation, intensification, movement, and effects of hurricanes, models suggest that these storms will have a tendency to be stronger and slower-moving on a warmer Earth. Although it is difficult to attribute any particular storm to a warmer Earth, this year's hurricane season was certainly consistent with that overall premise.

Some have wondered whether a warmer Earth would also bring more tornadoes.

Back in September 2001, a major tornado outbreak brought several tornadoes to Washington, D.C.,



including a violent F4 tornado, the strongest on record in that area. The U.S. Congress, concerned that if Earth continued to warm, there would be more and stronger tornadoes, appointed a committee to review the record and issue an expert opinion about the historical trend and what it might mean for the future. As one of that committee's members, I participated in the research and helped to draft its conclusions:

1. There was a definite trend of increase in the total number of reported tornadoes in the United States.
2. Not only was there no increase, but also there was a slight decrease in the number of strong to violent tornadoes (F3 to F5) reported.
3. The increase in total tornadoes was not real but was rather an artifact

due to better reporting of tornadoes as a result of higher population density, increased media coverage, and the deployment of a national Doppler radar network.

4. There did not seem to be any overall trend in either overall tornado activity or strong tornado activity, and there seemed to be no correlation with any increase in temperatures.

Nearly 20 years later, these conclusions still seem correct. Earth has warmed significantly since then, but the number of tornadoes—and especially of stronger tornadoes—has not increased. In recent years, 2017 had the least reported activity of strong to violent tornadoes in half a century, and 2018 is on track for an even lower total.

—Michael Steinberg, *Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologist*



# HUMOR ME

## GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC ARCHIVES



### AN EXPENSIVE VIEW

A city man traveling in a roadster late one afternoon came upon a New Hampshire farmer

standing atop a hill.

“Quite a view from up here,” said the man.

“Ayup,” said the farmer. “You can see a

long ways.”

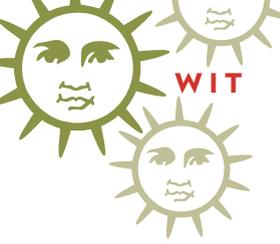
“I think I can see Boston way over there on the horizon,” said the stranger.

“That it is, but I can see much farther than Boston,” replied the farmer.

Said the man, looking around: “I don’t see how you could. I have excellent eyesight and would say that Boston is the farthest point viewable from here by anyone in any direction.”

“I would say that you are mistaken.”

“I would be prepared to wager five dollars,” said the man, peering around once again, “that you can not see anything farther away



than Boston.”

“If you insist,” said the farmer, “I accept your wager.”

“Good, then,” said the man, “name what you see.”

Said the farmer, pointing up, “The Moon.”

## JUDGMENT DAY

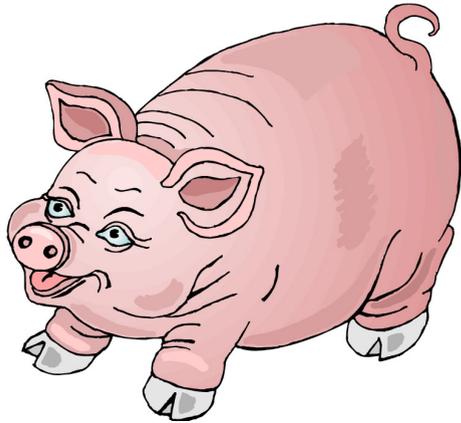
“Well, now,” said the judge to the defendant, “you are charged with stealing one of Mrs. Maloney’s finest pigs. Is that so?”

“Yes, your honor.”

“And what have you done with it?”

“I ate it, your honor.”

“So what are we to do with you? How can you live such a life? When you are brought face to face with the widow and her pig on Judgment Day, what account will you be able to give of yourself when the widow accuses you of theft?”



“Did you say that the pig would be there?”

“I most certainly did.”

“Then I will say, ‘Mrs. Maloney, there’s your pig.’”

## AUGHT REASON TO DOUBT IT

“Well, sir, people had better look out 5 years from now.”

“Why, what will turn up then?”

“The year 1900 is going to be a bad year.”

“What makes you think that?”

“Because it will be so n-aughty.”

## RISING

Have you heard about the Vermont farmer who mistook a pint of

yeast for buttermilk and ended up rising 3 hours earlier the next morning?

## SUITABLE REPLY

A Boston lawyer was forced to leave the rented office from which he had worked for many years because the tailors next door, who had been there even longer, wanted to expand.

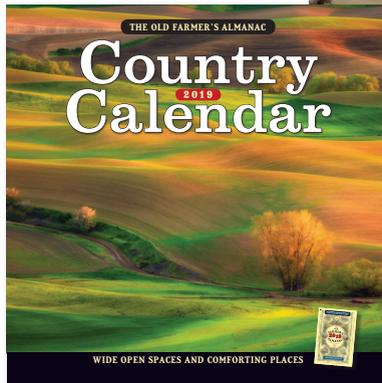
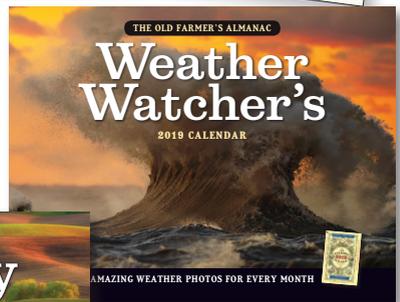
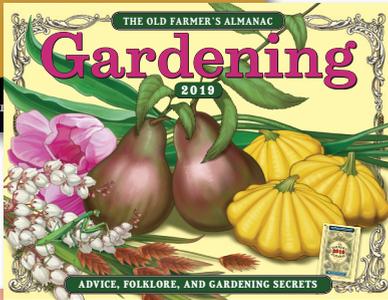
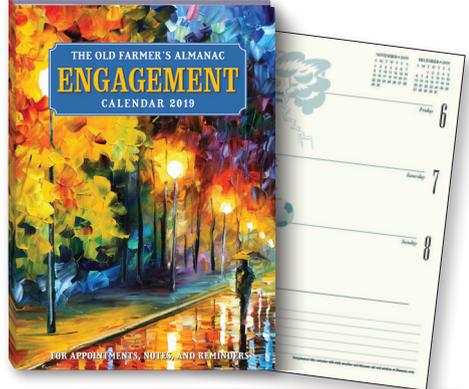
A gentleman remarked to the lawyer: “It seems that the tailors will be profiting from your departure, will they not?”

“Not to worry,” replied the barrister. “Our suits will always be in more demand than theirs.”

# 2019 Old Farmer's Almanac Calendars

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APRIL 2019

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	<p>April Fool's Day (April 1) Easter (April 15) Good Friday (April 19) Easter Monday (April 22) April 29 is a leap day, added to the calendar only once every four years.</p>				

**Quick Facts** | **Weather** | **In the Air** | **On the Ground**

**Quick Facts:** The first day of spring is the vernal equinox, which occurs on March 20 or 21. The first day of summer is the summer solstice, which occurs on June 20 or 21. The first day of autumn is the autumnal equinox, which occurs on September 22 or 23. The first day of winter is the winter solstice, which occurs on December 21 or 22.

**Weather:** The average temperature in April is 55°F. The average high temperature is 65°F and the average low temperature is 45°F. The average number of days with rain is 10. The average number of days with snow is 0.

**In the Air:** The most common bird in flight in April is the robin. The most common insect in flight in April is the housefly. The most common flower in bloom in April is the daisy.

**On the Ground:** The most common color of a flower in April is white. The most common color of a fruit in April is red. The most common color of a vegetable in April is green.

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# WHAT'S NEXT



## ASTRONOMY

Explore With Our Sky Map



## CALENDAR

January name origin, birthstone and -flower, regular and weird holidays, New Year's quiz, Rhyme Time



## LIVING NATURALLY

Grow an Indoor Salad Garden



## ANNIVERSARY

Little-known facts about Martin Luther King Jr.



## FOOD

Oh-So-Sweet Sweet Potato Recipes



## GARDENING

Beginner's Luck—and Lessons

Plus: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Best Days to Do Things • Humor • and much more in the January *EXTRA!*

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