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CIES Nole News

The Frederick L. Jenks
Center for
Intensive
English Studies
at The Florida State University

The Weekly Publication for the FSU Center for Intensive English Studies

Volume 12, Issue 2



It's Groundhog Day!

A Uniquely American Holiday

If you look on a calendar for the first week of February, you'll notice that Thursday February 2 is called Groundhog Day. This is a holiday that is well-known by Americans, but it is mostly a fun holiday.

A groundhog is an animal that lives in the ground and is related to the squirrel. They are found in colder places, and they spend the winter months **hibernating**. People developed a **legend** over the years which said that groundhogs could predict the weather.

It is believed by many that if the groundhog emerges from the ground on February 2nd and sees his shadow, then there will be six more weeks of winter. However, if the groundhog doesn't see his shadow, then there will be an early spring!

Groundhogs do not live in Florida, but there are some towns in the northern part of the United States and Canada where the town will gather in the morning and watch a groundhog leave his hole in the ground. This is a tradition that dates back hundreds of years and is still celebrated by many.

Groundhog day isn't a very serious holiday, but it is a holiday that is

uniquely found in America and something that many children find fun. (Based on the recent cold winter weather, the groundhog might predict six more weeks of winter this year.)

February Activities

Museum of Florida History

There is a neat museum in downtown Tallahassee that tells all about the history of Florida as well as the United States. You can learn about wars, battles, ships, as well as important people in history. There are also many exhibits about nature in Florida (things such as old plants, animals, and rock formations). On **Friday February 3rd**,



we will be going to the museum. You will have time to eat a quick lunch on Friday, and we will meet at **1pm** to walk over. It is not a long walk, but make sure you wear comfortable shoes.

Valentine's Day Party

Valentine's Day is one of the most enjoyable holidays in America. It is a day where we celebrate being in love and those we love. There is information

about Valentine's Day in the culture questions in this newsletter. On Valentine's Day (**Tuesday February 14**), we will meet downstairs during lunch and there will be fun decorations as well as wonderful food, snacks, and delicious Valentine's Day desserts.

**** CIES Talent Show ****

Our big event in February will be the CIES Talent Show. To celebrate the end of Spring I session, we will be having our second ever talent show. The last day of class will be Thursday, February 23, and the talent show will be on **Friday, February 24**. Please mark your calendars now! The show will start at **9:30** and we'll be done by noon. There will be a delicious barbeque lunch served afterwards.

Some of you have talents that your classmates might not know about. No matter what you do, we want to see you!

Acting, singing, performing karaoke, playing an instrument or anything else are all possible talents. Don't be shy! If you have questions on what to do or perform, talk to either Jen Dickinson or



Rebecca Turk. This is an event you'll definitely remember!

February Birthdays!

Be sure to wish a happy birthday to everyone celebrating a birthday this month. February is a special month which features not only our director's birthday but also your terrific Nole News editor.

Naief Alemtairy (February 2)

Andrew Wilson (February 5)

Norah Alali (February 6)

Basil Qasem (February 10)

Dr. Patrick Kennell (February 18)

Bader Alahmad (February 25)



Culture Question

Question: What is the history of Valentine's Day?

Answer: Valentine's Day is also known as St. Valentine's Day. It began as a holiday to remember a Christian **saint**. However, about 800 years ago, the holiday started being associated with romance and being in love. As a result, it

isn't really considered a religious holiday by most modern Christians. It is celebrated in countries throughout the world. Roses, chocolates, and hearts are all associated with Valentine's Day in the United States. A symbol of Valentine's Day is **Cupid**. Cupid is actually the Roman god of love. He traditionally has wings and flies around shooting people with an arrow to make them fall in love.

Question: Who celebrates Valentine's Day in the US?

Answer: Every year Valentine's Day seems to become more and more popular. Although anyone can celebrate Valentine's Day, it is popularly celebrated by those who are in a relationship as well as children.

Children in school will exchange candy and small cards with each other on February 14th. Not every child participates in this tradition, but most kids enjoy the opportunity to eat, have a celebration, and read nice things that their friends have to say.

For adults, Valentine's Day is a holiday for those who are in a romantic relationship. It generally involves buying a box of chocolates, getting a card, or exchanging a gift. Couples will usually try to go out for a nice dinner on Valentine's Day. As a result, it is hard to get a table at a nice restaurant on Valentine's Day.

Language Question

Question: When can I use 'few' and when can I use 'a few'?

Answer: Both 'few' and 'a few' are quantifiers used with **count-nouns**. 'A few' is very commonly used, and it refers to a small number of something – more than two but still a small number. (Examples: I had a few cookies for dessert. I have a few pairs of shoes.) Using 'few' without an article is not as common and has a different meaning. Saying 'few' means that there is not a **sufficient** amount of something. Using 'a few' is neither good nor bad. Using 'few' is generally a bad thing.

- **I have a few friends. (I have a small number of friends.)**
- **I have few friends. (I have a small number of friends, and it isn't enough.)**

Quote of the Month

Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.

- Mother Teresa



Center for Intensive English Studies

634 West Call Street

Tallahassee, FL 32306-1127

Phone: (850) 644-4797

Fax: (850) 644-7417

Email: cies@admin.fsu.edu

www.cies.fsu.edu

www.facebook.com/CIES.FSU

Nole News Editor: Andrew Wilson

This issue's vocabulary:

hibernate (verb) – when an animal sleeps for a long time during the winter

legend (noun) – a story or belief that goes back many years (often an imaginary or fictional story); a famous person

saint (noun) – a person considered holy and very religious

Cupid (noun) – the Roman god of love and a popular symbols for Valentine's Day and those in love

sufficient (adjective) – having enough or a good amount