

FEBRUARY

By Vera Blaine

The month of February may be the shortest month of the year with only 28 days, but it has good holidays and celebrations. We always remember Abraham Lincoln's birthday on the 12th of the month and George Washington's on the 22nd. Each year Presidents' Day is a holiday on the third Monday of the month. This year Presidents' Day falls on February 21st. Valentine's Day on the 14th is the most popular for all ages and has been for many years.

Every year between February 3rd and March 9th, Mardi Gras is celebrated throughout the world with feasts and masquerades. The dates depend on calculations made by the Catholic Church, always 49 days prior to Easter Sunday. Each year in New Orleans this celebration goes on for days featuring parades with elaborate floats and costumes, exotic dances, and their famous kingcakes baked with small dolls or beans hidden in the cake. This year Mardi Gras in New Orleans starts February 25 with float parades and will end on March 8th. The most famous Mardi Gras is held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

If you were born in February and are interested in astrology, your sign of the Zodiac would be Aquarius. Some of the personal traits on the positive side of an Aquarius are: original and inventive; you are independent and like to be different. On the negative side, some of your traits are: intractable and contrary; chaotic and rebellious.

Each February since 1877 the Westminster Dog Show is a 2-day event held in New York City on the second Monday and Tuesday of the month. It is often referred to as the "World Series" or "Super Bowl" of the dog world. February 24th is National Pancake Day and on that day the IHOP restaurant will give you a free short stack of pancakes. all you need to do is make a donation to the local children's hospital.

For the month of February the gemstone is amethyst and the flower is violet.