

## Editor's notes:

September 2004, Volume 21-1

Summer has come and gone in a blink and the daily rhythms are gearing up in anticipation of the new school year. This month also marks the 20th anniversary of this newsletter. What started off as a bit of minor strategy to highlight the Helix name has become an enduring mainstay. Thanks to everyone for your enthusiastic feedback and support.

Here are some other observances for this month:

**Two provinces join Canada, September 1** -- In 1905, the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan joined the Canadian Confederation after the purchase of an area known as Rupert's Land. Alberta is named after the fourth daughter of Queen Victoria; Saskatchewan is derived from Cree for "swift flowing river."

**Labour Day, September 6** -- This holiday honours the nation's workers and marks the last long weekend of summer. For kids and their parents, it means back to school.

**International Literacy Day, September 8** -- this day is sponsored by the United Nations' Scientific and Cultural Organization, which estimates that, worldwide, one in five adults (the majority of whom are women) cannot read. The aim is to foster awareness of the problem, as well as to celebrate the teachers and volunteers who work hard to bring learning opportunities to others.

**National Grandparents Day, September 13** -- It is celebrated annually on the first Sunday after Labour Day, to pay tribute to grandparents. The observance gives children an opportunity to know the strength, wisdom and guidance that older people have to offer.

**Discovery of planet Neptune, September 23, 1846** -- Galileo first spied Neptune in 1612 but mistakenly believed the eighth planet to be a moon of Jupiter. When it was correctly identified more than 200 years later, its discoverers named it after the god of the seas. Later astronomers found that it was an apt name because Neptune has an inner rocky core covered by vast oceans of water and ice.

**Start of Fall, September 22** -- The autumnal equinox arrives at 2:00 p.m., EDT, on this day. The word "Fall" was first used by early settlers in North America. They borrowed the term from the natives who spoke of the time of the "Fall of the Leaf."

The season's other name, autumn, comes from "autumnus" meaning to turn or change and increase or harvest.

**Yom Kippur, September 24** -- The "Day of Atonement" begins at sunset and lasts until nightfall of the following day.

Orthodox Jews do not work and refrain from eating and drinking during this time. Many wear white -- to symbolize purity -- and attend synagogue to pray and repent for their sins of the past year.

**Harvest Moon, September 28** -- This is the full moon that is nearest the autumnal equinox, which falls on September 22 this year. This moon is unique in that it rises for several days near sunset and is often a brilliant orange colour when on the horizon.

**National Biscuit Month, September 1-30** -- This celebrates one of the oldest varieties of baked goods. The word comes from the French words "bis" and "cuit" which mean "twice baked" from the practice of baking them first, then returning them to the oven to dry. This prevented mouldiness and made them a popular staple among sailors at sea.

## Autumn Colours Around the Corner

Clear days and cool nights set the stage for the beautiful autumn colours that will appear on trees in many parts of the country in just a few weeks.

Leaves are green during the summer because of the presence of chlorophyll, the substance in plant cells that uses sunlight to produce food for the tree. Shorter days and cooler nights prompt trees to prepare themselves for winter dormancy by withdrawing sugar and minerals from their leaves. As the food making process slows, the chlorophyll breaks down and reveals other colours previously masked by its green pigment.

An early frost will weaken the colours. Drought can kill the leaves before they have a chance to turn.

## Helix "Messenger" Newsletter turns 20

Can it be? Yes, the 'Messenger' is officially 20 years old. In 1984, my wife Chrystyna volunteered to publish a monthly newsletter for Helix and the 'Messenger' was born. Now, so many years later, she is still at it. She has never wanted recognition for her efforts, but I think it's time that I acknowledge what she has done for us. For all that you do every month to inform us and make us laugh, THANK YOU! So, Chrystyna, now the secret is out.

Your biggest fan,

Sieg Pedde, President, Helix Courier Limited

# Bits and Bites

## The History of Marbles

Marbles -- the small, round objects used in games -- date back 3,000 years. The first such were round stones, nuts, or pieces of fired clay and pottery. Many have been found on North American Indian grounds and in the Egyptian pyramids. The Marble Collectors Society of America speculates that marbles were so named because early on they were made from marble. The group also says that George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were avid marble collectors of what were referred to as "small bowls" in those days. Glass marbles didn't appear until 1860; they were hand-made in Germany.

In 1905, American inventor Martin Christensen developed a machine to make perfectly round glass marbles, making them superior for rolling games. In the last few years, marbles have seen a resurgence in popularity.

## Hair Parting and Personality

Some social scientists subscribe to the notion that the way people part their hair reflects their personalities. A part on the left indicates a logical, mathematical bent; a right part signifies a freer, more artistic air. Those who part their hair in the middle or are bald are generally viewed as balanced and trustworthy.

In general, men normally part their hair on their left; women on the right. People who stray from these norms may do so because of their unique natures or jobs. Hillary Clinton and Margaret Thatcher both part their hair on the left. Most U.S. presidents have parted their hair on that side, too.

## Words of Wisdom from Will Rogers

*Need some to give some quick advice to someone who's off to school, or even to someone who has graduated -- well, you can't go wrong with the following:*



- "Never miss a good chance to shut up."
- "If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging."
- "The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back in your pocket."
- "Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment."
- "Live your life so that whenever you lose, you're ahead."

## Origins of Oreo Cookies

Since their introduction in 1912, more than 490 billion Oreos have been sold, making them the country's best-selling cookie. The first Oreos -- two embossed chocolate wafers with creme filling in between -- were quite similar to today's most popular version.



They were originally called Oreo Biscuits by the National Biscuit Company (Nabisco), supposedly named from the "re" of the "creme" filling and the two "o's" in "chocolate." Another theory holds that they're derived from the French word "or," which means "gold," the colour of the early packaging. "Oreo" is also Greek for "mountain," and some

believe that early prototypes were hill-shaped. Still others contend that the name is nothing more than a marketing invention because it's catchy and easy to remember.

In addition to the standard vanilla creme filling, Nabisco has introduced fudge-covered Oreos, Oreos with peanut butter and chocolate fillings, Halloween Oreos with orange-coloured filling, Christmas Oreos with red and green filling, Hanukkah Oreos with blue filling, mint and cream fillings, coffee and cream fillings, and double-stuffed and reversible versions.

## Have a Ball!

*Did you know that . . . ?*

- the first golf balls were made out of leather and stuffed with feathers.
- an official baseball has 150 yards of wool yarn inside.
- the earliest billiard balls were ivory.
- a croquet ball weighs one pound.
- the average life of an official basketball is 10,000 bounces.
- the first ping pong balls were made out of cork.

Now that the summer holiday season is mostly over, our customers get busier. As they get busier, so do we. We're ready. We're rested. We're rarin' to go. Do you have a special courier or messenger need that we could help you with? Call **453 0501** and speak to Sharon. Or email her at: [sharon@helixcourier.com](mailto:sharon@helixcourier.com).