

## Editor's notes:

Far in the woods, these golden days,  
Some leaf obeys its Maker's call;  
And through their hollow aisles it plays  
With delicate touch the prelude of the Fall.

-- Henry David Thoreau

As always, summer passes too quickly. Although we are still cherishing the warm, sunny days, our attentions are already diverted by preparations for the coming school year, as well as September's cooler weather.

September is named after the Latin word "septem," meaning "seven." It was the seventh month until 700 B.C.E., when the Roman king Numa Pompilius switched from a 304-day calendar to a 355-day lunar calendar.

In addition to looking forward to fall's changing colours, here are some other dates to mark:

**Labour Day, September 4** -- 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** -- The United Nations observes this day annually to focus on the problem of illiteracy and recognize its costs in the loss of human potential. Businesses, governments, churches and charities, community organizations and private citizens are asked to invest in literacy to build a strong global community.

**9/11** -- This year marks the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks that killed more than 3,000. Memorials to commemorate the victims are planned at the site of the World Trade Center in New York City, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where passengers crashed a hijacked plane to prevent an attack on the nation's capital.

**Bottled Water Week, September 17- 23** -- According to the International Bottled Water Association, North Americans buy over 7 billion gallons of bottled water a year, making it the second largest commercial beverage after soda. It is a \$10 billion-a-year industry.

**Elephant Appreciation Day, September 22** -- This year marks the 10th anniversary of honouring the largest land mammal. An elephant weighs between 10,000 to 14,000 pounds -- as much as a school bus. They live mostly in the grasslands of Africa and the forests of Asia.

**Start of Fall, September 23** -- The autumnal equinox marks the time of year when day and night are 12 hours long. In China, this day marks the halfway point of the fall season. In Japan, the first day of fall is a national holiday; people visit grave sites and hold family reunions.

**World Tourism Day, September 27** -- The World Tourism Organization sponsors this day at the end of September because it marks the end of the tourist season in the Northern Hemisphere and the start of the season in the Southern Hemisphere. According to the WTO, France receives the most tourists at 75 million visitors per year; the United States is fourth with 46.1 million (following Spain and China); and Canada is eleventh with 19.2 million.

## Rosh Hashanah



The Jewish New Year begins at sundown on September 22 and over the next two days, Jews around the world will celebrate Rosh Hashanah, which literally means "first of the year" in Hebrew. The new year, 5767, is the anniversary of the creation of the world. Rosh Hashanah is a time for reflection, when people think about their past mistakes and plan changes for the coming year. One important part of the holiday is going to synagogue and hearing the sound of the shofar, a ram's horn. This ancient musical instrument, which was used to announce important events in Biblical times, is blown 100 times each day of Rosh Hashanah. Many people eat apples dipped in honey to symbolize a sweet new year. Another custom is to walk to a creek or river and empty one's pockets into the flowing water, symbolizing the casting off of sins.

## How Long!?

This issue of the Helix Messenger newsletter marks the 22nd anniversary of the first issue which was sent out in September of 1984. My wife, Chrystyna, has dutifully sought out interesting (we hope) snippets of information every month for the Messenger and we are happy to share a few moments with our customers when they read what she has presented for us all. Thank you, Chrystyna, for all your hard work, and thank you, dear friends, for sharing some time with us. The Messenger is also available in PDF format by email. Let us know if you wish to be on our email list.

Sieg Pedde, President, Helix Courier Limited

# Did you know?

## About The First Nail Polish

Men and women in ancient Egypt and Rome wore nail polish, but historians credit the Chinese with this 5,000-year-old adornment. During the Ming Dynasty, polish was made from beeswax, egg whites, gelatin, vegetable dyes, and gum Arabic. The most popular colours were red and black. Modern-day polish is a refined version of car paint.

## The History of the Hula Hoop



Most of us are familiar with the Hula Hoop fad in the 1950s, but Egyptian children were playing with similar toys more than 3,000 years ago. They swung large hoops of dried grapevines around their waist or pushed them along the ground with a stick. In 14th century England, children and adults were wild about “hooping,” and in the 1700s, missionaries to Hawaii came back with the name hula hoop in honour

of the dance that hoopers seemed to imitate.

In 1957, Richard Knerr and Arthur Melin, founders of the Wham-O Toy Co., heard from a foreign guest that Australian children twirled a bamboo ring around their waists in gym class. Recognizing a good idea, Melin and Knerr trademarked the name Hula Hoop and began manufacturing the brightly coloured plastic rings. To market them, Melin and Knerr did hundreds of demonstrations and gave away Hula Hoops at California playgrounds. Their perseverance paid off: Wham-O sold 25 million Hula Hoops in less than four months, and two years later, more than 100 million were sold. The fad began to fade by the end of 1959, but Hula Hoops have recently regained some of their popularity as a way to keep fit.

## About Flying Pie Pans



Back in the 1870s, a Connecticut baker named William Russel Frisbie began embossing his family name on the bottom of the tin pans in which he sold his pies. Seventy years later, in the 1940s, Yale students in New Haven began sailing Mr. Frisbie’s pie pans through the air, catching them, and shouting “Frisbie!” whenever the tin plate was about to make contact. In 1948, Californian

Walter Morrison designed the Pluto Platter, a plastic flying saucer for playing catch, which was produced by the Wham-O company. When Morrison visited the East Coast, he saw students tossing their pie plates, and decided to rename his toy “Frisbee.”

## Six Reasons for Automobile Accidents

A study at the Virginia Commonwealth University found that 98 percent of all vehicle crashes involved a single distracted driver. The most dangerous behaviours in order of prevalence were found to be:

1. Looking at accidents or roadside distractions;
2. Driver fatigue;
3. Looking at scenery or landmarks;
4. In-vehicle distractions like passengers, children, or pets;
5. Adjusting the radio or tape or CD player;
6. Talking on the cell phone.

## Commonly Confused Contractions

Don’t let the misuse of contractions detract from your writing. Here are some commonly confused possessive pronouns and contractions:

**whose:** a possessive pronoun. *Do you know whose book is missing?*

**who’s:** the contraction of “who is.” *Who’s coming to visit?*

**your:** a possessive pronoun. *This is your life.*

**you’re:** the contraction of “you are.” *You’re just in time for dinner.*

**its:** a possessive pronoun. *Put the book on its side.*

**it’s:** the contraction of “it is.” *It’s a very interesting book.*

**there:** an adverb, in this example. *The house is over there.*

**their:** possessive adjective. *It is their house*

**they’re:** the contraction of “they are.” *They’re going to their house, over there.*

**a lot:** There is no such word as “alot,” *I like him a lot.*

## In tune with Labour Day, here are some thoughts on labour and work:

*Life grants nothing to us without hard work.*

-- Horace 65-8 B.C.

*Work keeps at bay three great evils: boredom, vice, and need.*

-- Voltaire: *Candide*, 1759

*Hard work spotlights the character of people; some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don’t turn up at all.*

-- Sam Ewing

*Man matures through work*

*Which inspires him to difficult good.*

-- Pope John Paul II