



March 2018

March Activities

We are going to have lots of fun this month with arts and crafts dealing with shamrocks, leprechauns, and the elusive pot of gold! We will also be dyeing carnations and doing some lawn bowling! We will also begin our Easter Baskets at the end of the month for our world-famous Easter Egg Hunt, which is scheduled for the 30th! We have a field trip scheduled on the 6th to the Dollar Store, and one on the 20th to the park for a picnic! We are also having cooking classes on the 13th and the 27th, a St. Patrick's Day party on the 16th, will be making living Easter baskets on the 21st, and a coloring/painting contest on the 23rd. We will also play other games outside, weather permitting. See you soon at Mother Earth!

The Rite of Spring

The vernal equinox occurs on March 20, 2018

March 20, 2018, is a date that most of us recognize as symbolic of changing seasons. As we welcome spring, people south of the equator are actually gearing up for the cooler temperatures of autumn.

What Happens at the Equinox?

Far from being an arbitrary indicator of the changing seasons, **March 20** (March 21 in some years) is significant for astronomical reasons. On March 20, 2018, at precisely 12:15 P.M. EDT, the Sun will cross directly over the Earth's equator. This moment is known as the **vernal equinox** in the Northern Hemisphere. For the Southern Hemisphere, this is the moment of the **autumnal equinox**.

Equinox Means "Equal Night"

Translated literally, *equinox* means "equal night." Because the Sun is positioned above the equator, day and night are about equal in length all over the world during the equinoxes. A second equinox occurs each year on Sept. 22 or 23; in 2018, it will be on Sept. 22 at 8:54 PM EDT. This date will mark the autumnal equinox in the Northern Hemisphere and the vernal equinox in the Southern (*vernal* denotes "spring").

Reasons for the Seasons

These brief but monumental moments owe their significance to the 23.4 degree tilt of the Earth's axis. Because of the tilt, we receive the Sun's rays most directly in the summer. In the winter, when we are tilted away from the Sun, the rays pass through the atmosphere at a greater slant, bringing lower temperatures. If the Earth rotated on an axis perpendicular to the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun, there would be no variation in day lengths or temperatures throughout the year, and we would not have seasons.

Rituals and Traditions

Modern astronomy aside, people have recognized the vernal equinox for thousands of years. There is no shortage of rituals and traditions surrounding the coming of spring. Many early peoples celebrated for the basic reason that their food supplies would soon be restored. The date is significant in Christianity because Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. It is also probably no coincidence that early Egyptians built the Great Sphinx so that it points directly toward the rising Sun on the day of the vernal equinox. Read more: Vernal (Spring) Equinox
<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/riteofspring1.html#ixzz3SDLe8Lze>

Birthday wishes go out to: Kevin A., James A., Linda B., Juan C., Rodrigo C., Janie C., Christina C., Daniel D., Sandra D., Ernest H., Pedro M., Joan M., Raul R., Claudine R., Lydia R., Annette S., Paula V., Perry W., and Bill W. Congratulations to all of you!

The Lore of the Leprechaun

It's the finest month of all, March, when we get to celebrate St. Patrick's Day! My Irish ancestry tells me that if you can follow a rainbow to its end, you will find a pot of gold.

That pot of gold belongs to a leprechaun. Being aloof and unfriendly little fairy souls, leprechauns aren't easy to spot. They spend all their time busily making shoes and stashing away all the money their craft brings them in that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. The only way to track a leprechaun is to follow the sound of a leprechaun hammering the shoes. They say if you catch one, he'll promise to take you to his pot of gold if you can just keep him in your sights. But be careful, leprechauns are VERY tricky, and before you get your pot of gold, he'll try to slip away!

Joke of the Month

A woman was driving around and around a parking garage in search of an available space. Nothing.

Then she noticed a couple walking ahead of her.

Hopefully, she asked, "Going out?"

"No," said the man. "We're just friends."