

How Valentine's Day can re-ignite romance

by the American Counseling Association

Valentine's Day – candies, flowers and all the sweet sentiments that speak to young love. Is that what this holiday is for you, or have you been in a relationship so long that the romance is just a fading memory?

If the latter is the case, why not use Valentine's Day as a starting point for putting the romance back in the relationship, and not just for one day but as a permanent adjustment? The sad truth is that most failed relationships don't explode, but rather fade over time as the romance disappears and one or both partners end up feeling neglected and unimportant.

A starting point for reviving the romance is by showing the other person you're still paying attention. Start by remembering things (yes, use your calendar or day planner) beyond just that birthday and anniversary. Celebrate special days, like

that first date anniversary or that vacation that you both so enjoyed. Celebrate non-special days, just because you want to.

You also have to make time for each other. Romance in a relationship requires paying attention to the other person's feelings and thoughts, not just to the problems, issues and details of daily life.

If necessary, add your partner to your schedule in order to insure that there's time for each other. Maybe you need a weekly "date night," or a set 30 minutes each day to share thoughts, feelings and future plans.

In our busy lives, it's too easy to just pass each other by. We let the problems overwhelm us, and ignore the love and positive emotions that bring us happiness.

While love may "just happen" when you meet the right person, keeping love alive as a relationship matures takes time

and effort, though the work can be enjoyable. Giving your partner a small gift for no reason other than love will bring a loving smile to his or her face, and a warm feeling to you as well. And isn't that what a strong, romantic relationship should be giving you?

The greeting card companies and advertising world may have Valentine's Day aimed at third graders with secret admirers and young couples head over heels in first love, but the romance and positive emotions of the day should inspire all of us to look for more romance in our relationships. Put in some effort to keep the romance alive and you'll find the rewards are well worth the effort.



Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



its Hee-haws thrown in)?

I'm almost back in the swing of daily walks at the lake. I can't wait for each morning to see if the lake is water or ice. It puts a spring in your step either way.

I didn't know a person could get so soft, just lolling around the house because of ice and snow, with all the shoveling one had to do. The answer to rejuvenation is a trip to the Brass Comb (hair parlor) and lunch at "Pac Thai" (a new eatery), both in Forest Grove. My head felt much lighter and my stomach was well satisfied. If you're tired of eating the same old thing, give them a try.

I read about a fellow who got upset because he couldn't get his brand of crackers even

Is it true? Are we really back to normal (or what we call normal with all

though store employees escorted him through the store by flashlight. No complaint, just adding my 2¢. All of us get testy when it's the holidays (or not), no lights, no heat, and water rushing around. We forget everyone is affected, not just us. So – Bite the bullet – buy a substitute or go without. (Happens to me all the time – you have a favorite – and nothing can take its place for flavor.) Please, don't bite the provider of services, the table may turn and you'll be on the other end.

Did you know Easter is 78 days away?

I understand the Vernonia Church Chorus is practicing the Easter Cantata. We missed it last year due to the flood.

Has your phone been put on automated harassment yet? Mine has. Two days a week, 9:15 a.m., same man's voice, same company trash and no way to cut him off except hang up. I did one morning, then picked the phone up again and he was still talking – so I didn't cut him off. It's a free world???

20 Years Ago This Month

The February 23, 1989, issue of *The Independent* included the following news story on page 4, under the headline "Council ponders sewer repair costs":

A discussion of sewer system financing dominated the February 6 meeting of the Vernonia City Council, as Glenn Higgins of Community Action Team, Inc. said preliminary estimates indicate that repairs to the system will cost about 2.75 million dollars.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will fund 55% of the total, but the city will have to find funding for about 1.2 million, Higgins said.

Ed Crane of HGE Engineers, which is doing the sewer facilities study for the city, said the work to be done includes slip lining the old terra cotta sewer pipes, and building a fourth sewage lagoon. The costs are not firm, he said, they are estimates.

Higgins urged the council to apply to FmHA for \$1.2 million immediately

Councilor Mario Leonetti said he doesn't feel that HGE is living up to the agreement it has with the city, and wanted a full council workshop prior to

making the request for funds.

The council approved the application over Leonetti's objections when Higgins explained that it wasn't binding, but was only to "get in line" for available funds.

The council approved a recommendation by Police Chief Phil Jacobus that parking be prohibited for 20' on each side of Rose Ave., from Bridge Street north, in order to relieve traffic congestion at that corner.

The council also agreed to postpone removing a maple tree, at the request of Janet Conger. Previously, Henry Anderegg had asked to have it removed because it was a nuisance. Conger feels the tree is an asset. Public Works Director Mike Smith will review the situation.

Help arrives after V. Cares evacuated

The threatening weather in early January caused Vernonia Cares Food Bank (VCFB) to evacuate its facility from January 1-10, 2009. VCFB director, Sandy Welch said, "Our concern is that we lost all food, freezers, and office equipment in December 2007. We did not want that to happen again, so all those items were loaded into trucks and trailers and moved to higher ground to protect them from flooding. However, this left us with the dilemma of our inability to assist food bank clients at a time when they needed us the most".

Welch contacted executive director Tracie Smith of Columbia Pacific Food Bank (CPF)

to see if food could be made available for Vernonia's food bank clients. Tracie suggested assembling food boxes in St. Helens, loading them into Columbia Pacific's freight truck and driving the truck to Vernonia. (A similar procedure worked well for Vernonia's clients regarding Christmas boxes in December 2007.)

The pre-assembled food boxes were given to Vernonia's food bank clients from the back

of the CPF truck on January 8. "This was a well planned solution to the problem we faced, thanks to many hours of work by Columbia Pacific's staff," Welch said. "We appreciate the groceries which were made available from the Oregon Food Bank. This is an example of agencies working in cooperation with each other for the benefit of the hungry people within our communities," she concluded.

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