



Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation

February Newsletter, 2020



*The rose is red, the violet's blue,
The honey's sweet, and so are you.
Thou art my love and I am thine;
I drew thee to my Valentine:
The lot was cast and then I drew
And Fortune said it shou'd be you.*

This short English poem is dated from 1784, but despite being over 235 years old it is practically new in the lengthy history of Valentines Day.



Originally celebrated as a Feast Day to honor early Christian martyrs, the February 14 date goes back to 496 A.D. One of the martyrs, Valentinus, died 200 years earlier at the hands of Roman soldiers. Not until the 14th century did Saint Valentine's Day begin to become associated with love and romance rather than a religious feast day.

The custom of sending or delivering cards, candy, and presents originated in 19th century England as a day for men to express interest in their chosen sweethearts. In those days women didn't send Valentine wishes until received from a man first. A woman being the first to express interest would have been thought of as "forward" - very unseemly!

Locally, the Amador Dispatch of January 20, 1872, reported that a '*Grand Masquerade Ball*' would be given on Valentine's Day by the Sutter Creek Fire Company in Sutter Creek. In 1880, that paper reported such a volume of Valentine mail that a temporary post office had to be opened at the school house.

By the turn of the 20th century, pre-printed Valentine cards had been introduced and the Amador Dispatch of February 13, 1903 noted that the E.G. Freeman Co. store had Valentines from 1 cent to 10 dollars! She'd have to be the "**cats meow**" for a \$10 Valentine. Prior to approximately 1890's - 1900, Valentines were hand made by cutting pieces of lace or paper and gluing things like herbs, dried flowers, and even birds together to create the desired effect.



School children in the 1930's began exchanging Valentines with other classmates, and by the 1950's every student was required to give a Valentine to every other so no one would be left out.

Today, though not a public holiday anywhere in the world, Valentine's Day is acknowledged as the day to let someone know that you think they are "**the bees knees**" which is pretty special.

Valentine's Day is presently a multi-billion dollar event for cards, presents and candy, although candy sales rank fourth behind Halloween, Easter, and Christmas.



Happy Valentine's Day
from the Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation

Save the Date

SCCBF's 6th Annual Shrimp Feed, hosted by Parlor #17 of the Native Sons on the Golden West, will be Saturday, May 9, 2020



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