

VALENTINE'S DAY

by Dr. Patrick H. Lau



Dr. Patrick H. Lau was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to the United States after High School. He retired from the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System where he served as Chief Radiologist. In 2011, Dr. & Mrs. Lau migrated south to sunny Florida to be near their son. Dr. Lau has dedicated countless hours supporting local community organization such as Indiana Association of Chinese Americans and Indiana Chinese Medical Association prior to his moving to Florida. Dr. Lau is also a scholar of art and literature and a prolific writer, he has been a dedicated columnist of Indy Asian American Times.



"Love is like a friendship caught on fire: In the beginning a flame, very pretty, often hot and fierce, but still only light and flickering. As love grows older, our hearts mature and our love becomes as coals, deep-burning and unquenchable." ~Bruce Lee

Romantically presenting a dozen of gorgeous long stem red roses contained in a lengthy white box purchased from a florist to my beloved wife prior to our marriage on Valentine's Day 情人节 is a distant cherished memory. After we tied the knot (For hearing my thoughts, understanding my dreams and being my best friend... For filling my life with joy and loving me without end...I said, "I do."), the long stem roses were replaced by a bouquet of sweet heart roses. In recent years, roses have not been bestowed to my adoring better half on Valentine's Day; instead, gifts have been given. This evolution of my way of gift giving, in truth, does not reflect the vicissitudes of my love and romance to my wife; indeed, my love to her is more today than yesterday and less than tomorrow, and, in truth, my love to her is more than words can wield the matter. Instead, it depicts the development of our philosophy of pragmatism and the priority setting of our way of living together. The Valentine's Day gifts, or other gifts for that matter, are, in fact, a symbol of love as well as thoughtfulness. Love is always bestowed as a gift. My wife and I feel that every day is our Valentine's Day forever and ever. Two hearts that beat as one 在天願作比翼鳥，在地願為連理枝; two souls with but a single thought 心有靈犀一點通. Luciano Decrescenzo wrote, "We are, each of us, angels with only one wing, and we can only fly embracing each other." I genuinely acknowledge that my wife is the wind under my wings.

Valentine's Day falls on February 14th; it is a day celebrating love, especially between couples and lovers. Someone has said, "Pour your heart out to the one you've fallen for, make your sweetheart feel special and celebrate the most powerful emotion on earth, love." Valentine's Day is, in fact, observed in many nations by people of various religions who want to celebrate the spirit of love, although it was originally a Christian holiday. According to scholars, the pagan origins of Valentine's Day commenced with the Roman Feast of Lupercalia, a spring and fertility festival in medieval times. It was celebrated from February 13th to 15th, honoring the gods, Lupercus and Faunus, as well as the Roman founders, Romulus and Remus. Besides a bountiful feast, during the ritual, the preachers cut the hide of a sacrificial goat into strips. They dipped the strips in the goat's blood and gently struck the crops and women with them; this was believed to promote fertility. On February 14th, the names of young maidens were placed into a large urn. Bachelors then drew the name of a woman, a prospective lover, valentine, from the urn. These matches lasted for a whole year until the next Lupercalia Festival. In fact, many lovers ended up in

marriages from this love ritual. In 497 A.D., Pope Gelasius abolished the pagan Lupercalia festival and proclaimed February 14th as St. Valentine's Day; an act of Christianizing a Roman holiday of Lupercalia. He regarded that the romantic matching of young men and women was unchristian, and he consequently prohibited the practice. Instead, the young people drew names of saints, who became their moral and spiritual guides for the year.

There is a popular legend regarding the origin of Valentine's Day. Valentine was a young priest rendering his service in Rome during the third century. Emperor Claudius II engaged in many bloodshed military operations; consequently, young men were reluctant to join the military. Claudius II believed that was primarily due to the fact that married men were emotionally attached to their wives and families and were unwilling to leave them to go to war. In addition, he assumed that single men made better warriors than married men. He, therefore, issued a decree that all marriages and engagements were prohibited. Abhorring at the injustice, Valentine defied the Emperor's law; and he continued to perform wedding ceremonies secretly, knowingly risking his life for the sake of people's love. After discovering what Valentine had been doing, Claudius II was extremely furious and imprisoned the priest. During his incarceration, Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter who visited him often. Eventually Valentine was beheaded on February 14, 270 A.D., thus becoming a martyr. However, before his execution, he wrote his lover a letter and signed, "From your Valentine." This phrase is still being utilized today. In 496 A.D., Pope Gelasius declared February 14th to honor the priest who by then had been bestowed to sainthood, the patron saint of lovers. It is thought that Pope Gelasius celebrated St. Valentine during the feast of Lupercalia due to the association of the martyred saint with lovers and marriage; hence preserving the festival's origins of celebrating fertility. Incidentally, St. Valentine was a very popular saint in England and France by the Middle Ages.

Evidently, Valentine's Day can be traced to Christian and ancient Roman tradition. And it is customarily a day on which lovers exchange their truest love and deepest feeling, and celebrate the spirit of love by presenting flowers, gifts, and sending valentine cards as well as a romantic dinner at a restaurant. Generally the top ten romantic gifts are flowers, chocolates, cosmetics, fragrances, watches, spa and yoga sessions, candles, costume jewelry, a romantic candle lit dinner and diamond rings and pendants. The foremost colors associated with Valentine's Day are red, pink and white. Red, the color of the heart, symbolizes passionate love; pink denotes the color of universal love; while white signifies purity and faith between two who love each other.

Going on a date with daring is one of the most popular customs of Valentine's Day in many countries around the world. This custom has the origin in England where people once believed that birds selected their mates on February 14th. Furthermore, many men make a proposal to their lovers in a romantic setting. Many couples exchange vows on Valentine's Day to make their wedding more memorable. Judy Garland once said, "For it was not into my ear you whispered, but into my heart. It was not my lips you kissed, but my soul." February 14th is the most profitable holiday for the U.S. It is reported that approximately 110 million roses,

floral merchants, accounting for 32% of annual sales, predominantly red roses are sold. The top ten romantic flowers are red rose, tulips, daisy, carnation, sunflower, iris, orchids, lilacs, lily and wildflowers. Since red indicates love and passion; red roses are therefore the ultimate choice that most people present to their dearests to express their loving feeling and emotion on Valentine's Day. Incidentally, the language of love is: red rose -- passionate love; camellia -- you are perfect; red carnation -- my heart aches for you; pink carnation -- I will never forget you; daffodils -- you are the only one for me; blue hyacinths -- our love is constant; sunflower -- I adore you; and red tulip -- you are a perfect lover.

Though the very first Valentine card, commonly known as Valentine, had been sent by Saint Valentine to his lover, signed "From your Valentine" before his execution, according to the aforementioned legend; the first recorded Valentine (formerly known as "poetical or amorous addresses") was sent in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans. He was captured during the Battle of Agincourt. During his confinement in the Tower of London, the young Duke sent a love letter with beautiful poems to his wife in France. His letter accompanied by those amorous verses is credited as the first modern day valentine; it is exhibited in the British Museum. It is believed that the commercial Valentine cards were first mass produced in the United States by Esther Howland in Massachusetts around 1840s. As reported by the U.S. Greeting Card Association, approximately 190 million valentines are sent each year in the U.S., and about one billion Valentine's cards are sent annually around the world; it is, in fact, the second largest card-sending holiday after Christmas. In addition to the old fashion way of mailing the valentine cards, millions of e-valentines have been sent, literally creating a new tradition of expressing love.

Besides hearts and red roses, another crucial symbol of Valentine's Day is Cupid, the roman god of love, who was the son of Venus. Cupid is derived from the Latin word cupido, meaning 'desire'. From mythical perspective, Cupid flew from place to place shooting arrows into people's hearts, making them fall in love. Individuals who have fallen in love are sometimes referred to as 'struck by Cupid's arrow'. During the Renaissance, artists portrayed Cupid as a baby angel with wings and carrying a bow and arrow.

Since Valentine's Day was 'imported' into China in the 1990s, Chinese, especially young folks, have been enthusiastically embracing the holiday; and the Chinese Qixi Festival 七夕節 has become increasingly known as "Chinese Valentine's Day", both are generally regarded as a holiday for lovers. Today in China, more and more young people celebrate Qixi Festival as if they are celebrating Valentine's Day; not infrequently, young ladies receive romantic gifts such as red roses, chocolate and cards as well as a romantic dinner. Nevertheless, the majority of the Chinese youths prefer to celebrate Valentine's Day to Qixi Festival; in their opinion and sentiment, it is not precisely a substitution of Qixi, but rather an extension of the love theme and a more accurate reflection of their more forthright ways of emotional display.

Here are some beautiful verses from famous poems pertaining to love, composed by legendary poets of various dynasties. 白居易: 在天願作比翼鳥，在地願為連理枝。天長地久有時盡，此恨綿綿無絕期。回眸一笑百媚生，梨花一枝春帶雨。夜半無人私語時。李商隱: 直道相思了無益，未妨惆悵是清狂。深知身在情長在，恨望江頭江水聲。身無

彩鳳雙飛翼，心有靈犀一點通。此情可待成追憶，只是當時已惘然！何當共剪西窗燭，卻說巴山夜雨時。李白: 相思相見知何日？此時此夜難為情。佚名: 有美人兮，見之不忘，一日不見兮，思之如狂。元稹: 曾經滄海難為水，除卻巫山不是雲。佚名: 執子之手，與子偕老。秦觀: 兩情若是久長時，又豈在朝朝暮暮。張籍: 還君明珠雙淚垂，恨不相逢未嫁時。梁啟超: 相思樹底說相思，思郎恨郎郎不知。徐干: 自君之出矣，明鏡暗不治。思君如流水，何有窮已時。司馬光: 相見爭如不見，有情何似無情。張先: 天不老，情難絕。心似雙絲綫，中有千千結。張仲素: 相思一夜情多少，地角天涯未是長。王維: 願君多採擷，此物最相思。崔護: 人面不知何處去，桃花依舊笑春風。劉禹錫: 東邊日出西邊雨，道是無晴還有晴。杜秋娘: 花開堪折直須折，莫待無花空折枝。蘇軾: 十年生死兩茫茫！不思量，自難忘。天涯何處無芳草，多情卻被無情惱。春宵一刻值千金，花有清香月有陰。歌管樓台聲細細，秋風院落夜沉沉。蘇武: 結髮為夫妻，恩愛兩不疑。歐陽修: 月上柳梢頭，人約黃昏後。黃增: 情人眼裏出西施。色不迷人人自迷。李清照: 此情無計可消除，才下眉頭，卻上心頭。晏殊: 天涯地角有窮時，只有相思無盡處。李之儀: 我住長江頭，君住長江尾；日日思君不見君，共飲長江水。吳歌: 月子彎彎照九州，幾家歡樂幾家愁。幾家夫妻同羅帳，幾家飄散在他州。佚名西洲: 愿天下有情人都成了眷屬。是前生注定事错过姻缘。王昌齡: 白露堂中細草跡，紅羅帳裡不勝情。卓文君: 愿得一人心，白頭不相離。張九齡: 海上生明月，天涯共此時。情人怨遙夜，竟夕起相思。

Irrespective of the origins, rituals, legends, traditions and customs of Valentine's Day, it is indubitably a day to commemorate the essence of love and happiness in our lives. Most people around the world, on February 14th, affectionately and romantically express their deepest amorous feelings towards their loved ones. The truth of the matter is that to love and be loved is the greatest happiness of existence. William Shakespeare wrote, "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, my love as deep; the more I give to thee, the more I have, for both are infinite."

"Time is too slow for those who wait, too swift for those who fear, too long for those who grieve, too short for those who rejoice, but for those who love, time is eternity." ~Henry Van Dyke



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Schedule of Events		
Reception:	Friday, February 24	6:30 — 8:00 p.m.
Light Breakfast	Saturday, Feb. 25	8:00 — 8:30 a.m.
Keynote Speaker	Dr. Merryfield	8:30 — 9:30 a.m.
Breakout A	Concurrent Sessions	9:45 — 10:45 a.m.
Breakout B	Concurrent Sessions	11:00—12:00
noon		
Awards Luncheon	Int'l Educators of the Year	12:00 — 1:00 p.m.

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Merry Merryfield
Ohio State University

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Dr. John Layton, Lafayette Schools
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Guess Who's coming to Lafayette IN...

Governor Mitch Daniels' Asia Mission Delivers Nanshan America Co. to Lafayette

Nanshan America Co. Ltd., a division of a Chinese parent company Nanshan Group, which manufactures aluminum industrial components for customers in the commercial transportation, automotive and industrial machinery industries, plans to invest up to \$98.5 million to construct a 420,000 square-foot manufacturing facility and a 15,000 square-foot office building in Park 350, a state certified shovel ready site in Lafayette. The project is a result of Governor Daniels' 2010 Asian jobs trip last November. "We've been studying the U.S. market, the largest in the world, for years. To establish this facility in the Midwest, with the best equipment from Europe and America and an elite American management team and workforce, will make us among the leaders in the global aluminum industry," said Lijun Du, president of Nanshan America Co., who met with Governor Daniels in Shanghai last November. "The state of Indiana and local governments have worked with us at an amazing speed and with a warm welcome. Of course, the excellent infrastructure close to our main market and the low cost of the business are all the key factors we've been considering to make this strategic decision." The company will create 150 new jobs by 2013, according to Nanshan America President Lijun Du. The Company will begin construction immediately and expects to begin production in the second quarter of 2012.

The Indiana Economic Development Corporation has extended Nanshan America up to \$1.3 million in performance-based tax credits. The company will also receive \$7.6 million in local incentives. The facility will produce aluminum extrusions for mass transportation and the automotive, distribution, industrial, and electrical industries. Some of its products will be used for high-speed train bodies.

Will She Be the Longest Reigning Monarch?

Queen Elizabeth II marked her Diamond Jubilee on Monday Feb 6 with a message thanking all those who had supported her over her 60-year reign and reaffirming her dedication to serving the British people. The 85-year-old monarch ascended the throne when her father, George VI, died on Feb. 6, 1952. She is the longest-serving monarch after Queen Victoria, who reigned for more than 63 years.

The queen's Diamond Jubilee will be celebrated with a series of regional, national and international events throughout 2012. The 2012 Diamond Jubilee weekend will be held from June 2-5, with the main highlight likely to be a huge pageant on River Thames. Over the course of 2012, members of the royal family including Prince William and his wife Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, will travel across the globe to Commonwealth countries including Canada, Jamaica and Belize. The queen and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, will stay closer to home, touring the U.K. from March to July.

A new Diamond Jubilee portrait of the Queen has been released by Buckingham Palace. The photograph, taken to mark the 60th anniversary of the accession to the throne, was taken in the Centre Room of Buckingham Palace by John Swannell. The Queen wears a state dress by the designer Angela Kelly, the State Diadem crown, as well as the Collet necklace, which was worn by Queen Victoria on her own diamond jubilee in 1897.

