



February Newsletter

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Important February Dates

(All times are CST)

January 28, 2:31 pm until February 18, 8:57 pm - Mercury Retrograde

The Mercury retrograde is perhaps best known of all retrogrades. This celestial body requires 88 days to make a complete pass around the Sun and remains stationary for anywhere between a few hours and a few days, depending on the time of year. This planet goes into retrograde three times a year for around three weeks each time. Mercury has the highest frequency of retrograde and stays in this position for the shortest length of time of any other planet.

Communication is Mercury's main domain. Therefore, communication is greatly affected by this planet's pull. During the period Mercury is in retrograde motion, individuals may find their message is better conveyed through another less familiar medium. Messages may be misunderstood; whispers may be overheard and mail or email may be misdirected. Those who are usually constrained by public speaking may have moments of clarity, while those giving a public address may be dramatically misquoted. This is a good time to explore new outlets of communication. Choose your words carefully.

If Mercury retrograde is in your chart, your tongue is likely to get you into trouble or you may be afraid to speak your mind for fear of the consequences. There may be an issue with intellect or intelligence. You may find your self-expression is "heard" through other forms rather than verbal or written.

February 2 – Imbolc

Imbolc

Animals/Mythical Creatures – firebird, dragon, groundhog, deer, burrowing animals, ewes, robin, sheep, lamb, other creatures waking from hibernation

Gemstones – amethyst, garnet, onyx, turquoise

Incense/Oil – jasmine, rosemary, frankincense, cinnamon, neroli, musk, olive, sweet pea, basil, myrrh, and wisteria, apricot, carnation

Colors/Candles – brown, pink, red, orange, white, lavender, pale yellow, silver

Tools/Symbols/Decorations – white flowers, marigolds, plum blossoms, daffodils, Brigid wheel, Brigid's cross, candles, grain/seed for blessing, red candle in a cauldron full of earth, doll, Bride's Bed; the Bride, broom, milk, birchwood, snowflakes, snow in a crystal container, evergreens, homemade besom of dried broom, orange candle anointed in oil (see above) can be used to symbolize the renewing energy of the Sun's rebirth.

Goddesses – Virgin Goddess, Venus, Diana, Februa, Maiden, Child Goddess, Aradia, Athena, Inanna, Vesta, Gaia, Brigid, Selene (Greek), Branwen (Manx-Welsh)

Gods – young Sun Gods, Pan, Cupid/Eros (Greco-Roman), Dumuzi (Sumerian)

Essence – conception, initiation, insight, inspiration, creativity, mirth, renewal, dedication, breath of life, life-path, wise counsel, plan, prepare

Dynamics/Meaning – first stirring of Mother Earth, lambing, growth of the Sun God, the middle of winter

Purpose – honoring the Virgin Goddess, festival of the Maiden/Light

Rituals/Magick – cleansing; purification, renewal, creative inspiration, purification, initiation, candle work, house & temple blessings, welcoming Brigid, feast of milk & bread

Customs – lighting candles, seeking omens of Spring, storytelling, cleaning house, bonfires, indoor planting, stone collecting, candle kept burning dusk till dawn; hearth re-lighting

Foods – dairy, spicy foods, raisins, pumpkin, sesame & sunflower seeds, poppyseed bread/cake, honey cake, pancakes, waffles, herbal tea

Herbs – angelica, basil, bay, benzoin, celandine, clover, heather, myrrh, all yellow flowers, willow

Element/Gender – earth/female

Threshold – midnight

To learn more about this and other Sabbats, get our The Sabbats eBook at www.the-witches-apothecary.com/the-sabbats-ebook.html

February 6, 9:44 pm – New Moon, 9:56 pm – Solar Eclipse

New Moon & Solar Eclipse

The eclipse of the Sun has traditionally been viewed with dread over the ages, as the great giver of life seems inexplicably to disappear from the sky. Birds prepare for bed; the sky darkens in the middle of the day. It seems as though something dreadful is about to happen. Over the years, experience has shown us that old things come to an end (or are overthrown!) under a solar eclipse and a new beginning can be made. The effect on the world of eclipses has been seen to be generally felt for some six months, until the next eclipse then restructures the cosmic energies.

Astrologically, solar eclipses signify the fall of the mighty (or at least, they're in big trouble!). Depending where in the zodiac the eclipse occurs, stress is always placed on the matters governed by that sign, or sector of the zodiac. A powerful Solar Eclipse can create massive havoc, in accordance with other aspects in the heavens at the time, as can be clearly seen by the trail of earthquakes and other disasters associated with the Solar Eclipse and Grand Cross of August 1999.

This eclipse occurs at 17°44' of Aquarius, the sign of the Water-Bearer, but this is the first solar eclipse in 19 years with the nodes in Aquarius and the first eclipse of this cycle with Pluto having made the transit into Capricorn, along with Jupiter into Capricorn and Saturn into Virgo, changing the elemental flavor of the world from fiery to earthy. This eclipse is by no means as powerful as that of August 1999, but it does re-stimulate the energies of that massive cosmic event, for it falls exactly opposite its position in the zodiac, in 18 Aquarius, as opposed to 18 Leo!

It occurs in the constellation *Delphinus*, the Dolphin, in the fortunate Hindu asterism, *Dhanishtha*. There are many aspects in the heavens on the day, so this eclipse seems to mark a fortunate entry into the new Earth-focused decade ahead.

It does however lie in the shadow of the upcoming Mars/Pluto opposition, when opposing forces will have a paralyzing effect. A contest of wills, especially in the political environment is sure to result in trouble. Governments and the powerful are likely to fall, or if not, to have no clear mandate, thus inclining the people to rebel. Efforts to gain control may produce precisely the opposite effect. This is not the time to change or interfere with the status quo. Deliberately engaging the hostility of another is to arouse a formidable opponent you might not otherwise have had to confront. Eschew underhand manipulations, as they are likely to create more trouble than they are worth. Matters will come to a head at the Full Moon, which is of course the Lunar Eclipse on February 20th.

Solar eclipses don't often pass over populated areas, but when they do, they appear to have significant disruptive effects on the people and nations concerned (e.g., economic or political crises, civil unrest). Solar Eclipses also seem either to trigger or amplify natural events in the regions they affect (e.g., severe weather, earthquakes). Whether this effect is an astrological one or not, is a moot point, though recent scientific work on the effects of the Moon on earthquakes and other terrestrial phenomena is interesting. No doubt they would hasten to deny any *astrological* effect! The eclipse being in Aquarius means that people with Fixed signs (Aquarius; Leo; Scorpio; Taurus) featured in their birth charts are more likely to be affected. The next eclipse of the Sun will be on August 1, 2008.

February 20, 9:30 pm – Full Moon, 9:27 pm – Lunar Eclipse

The February Full Moon is known as the Virgo Moon.

Virgo Moon

This Moon is not good for most ritual work – the final aspect of Moon square Mars could bring conflict – but the energy of the eclipse during this Full Moon makes it good for a quiet meditative ritual to bring out your hidden depths. With Moon in Virgo helping put your mental

and emotional house in order, a ritual for self-examination and self-expression is appropriate, as is work to break bad habits.

To break a bad habit, you will need quiet space to yourself. Write down exactly what that habit is, why you want to stop and what you will be able to do once the habit is gone. Bring this into your ritual space. Cast a circle if you wish. Comfortably sit or lie down. To completely relax, tense each part of your body, then release the tension. Start with your feet and work your way up to your head. When finished, take three long, deep breaths, letting out all the air each time. Let your mind rest a while, then visualize yourself without the habit. See yourself slender, smoke-free or however you wish. Hold the image as long as possible; when the image starts to waver, immediately say, "For the good of all, so mote it be." If there is a circle, open it.

- Magenta Griffith

The Eclipse of the Moon

The eclipse of the Moon has traditionally been viewed as a bad omen, for it can awaken irrational responses. Since the Moon governs domestic matters, the public and the emotional personality, rather than leadership, it tends to have a more personal effect than the solar eclipse, which plays a more outward, even political, role.

As a rule, women and family are generally more affected by the lunar cycle, whereas men and politics are signified by the solar. This is not to say that women are not political animals, nor that men are distinct from the family, but that the private, nurturing side is more affected than the public, social and media driven arena, which even in the 21st Century is still primarily dominated by males, or at least by what might be described as masculine energies.

The first lunar eclipse of the year is a total eclipse in Virgo. From start to finish, it lasts about three hours and twenty-six minutes (not including the penumbral phases which are very difficult to see). The partial eclipse begins as the Moon's eastern edge slowly moves into the Earth's umbral shadow. During the partial phases, it takes just over an hour for the Moon's orbital motion to carry it entirely within the Earth's dark umbra.

Vivid Red... or Orange?

The color and brightness of the totally-eclipsed Moon can vary considerably from one eclipse to another. Dark eclipses are caused by volcanic gas and dust, which filters and blocks much of the Sun's light from reaching the Moon. But since no major volcanic eruptions have taken place recently, the Moon will probably take on a vivid red or orange color during the total phase. After the total phase ends, it is once again followed by a partial eclipse, as the Moon gradually leaves the umbral shadow.

The total phase of a lunar eclipse is called *totality*. At this time, the Moon is completely immersed within the Earth's dark, umbral shadow. Totality will last just under 50 minutes. This is quite a bit less than the last total lunar eclipse on August 28, 2007, which lasted 90 minutes. The eclipse occurs at 1°53' Virgo, in conjunction with the Fixed Star *Megrez* in the constellation of Ursa Major, the Great Bear. This star is a star of Mars, so is passionate and driven. It symbolises spiritual sight; creativity and violence. It is also known as *Atri*, who was one of the seven *Rishis* (Hindu sages), the ruling star of the Great Bear, Ursa Major. The Great Bear gives a

quiet, prudent, suspicious, mistrustful, self-controlled, patient nature, but an uneasy spirit and great anger when roused. By the Kabalists it is associated with the Hebrew letter *Zain* and the 7th Tarot Trump, "The Chariot". The energies of the Chariot give great impetus in one's direction and also tend to reduce any surrounding negative effects.

Since different parts of the Moon will be covered by different portions of Earth's shadow, quite a variation in brightness and in color can be expected. Consequently the southern half of the totally eclipsed Moon will appear considerably brighter than the northern half. The eclipse is well-placed for North and South America as well as Western Europe and North-West Africa.

A Critical Event

The Moon is eclipsed in Virgo, so people at this time will feel quite reserved, eschewing flattery or emotional display. Selfishness, narrow-mindedness, trouble in employment, or with employees are likely. Passion is overcome by intellect and people are likely to be extremely critical and picky, both of themselves and others, especially their partners. The military is likely to be very edgy and inclined to take the lead, particularly if there is political disagreement, which is indicated by current aspects. Transiting Mars, notably, is conjunct *Polaris* and more ominously *Betelgeuse* in the constellation of Orion, suggesting war, carnage and general damage due to misunderstanding and undue edginess. Remember, the Moon in the eclipse is conjunct Megrez, a star of Mars.

Health issues are likely to be in the news. Saturn, lord of Karma, and the bright Royal Star, *Regulus*, are only three degrees (three fingers' width) east and west, respectively, of the Moon. *Regulus*, a star of Mars combined with Jupiter, is the most Royal Star. Known as Raphael, the Healing Archangel, healing is thus restated as an issue. This star was anciently *the Watcher of the North*, noted for his nobility, ambition, alertness, great power, status and leadership, but associated with sudden downfall, accidents and violence. Since *Regulus* is in the last degree of tropical Leo, this diminishes his power somewhat, being out-of-sign in this figure.

Saturn on the other hand is retrograde in Virgo and conjunct the eclipsed Moon. This is a definite warning, showing that relationships and family life will be liable to restrictive feelings – feelings of aridity and sorrow. Saturn opposes the Sun in Pisces, increasing responsibilities and drudgery. The Sun in the eclipse is conjunct the Royal Star *Fomalhaut*, so the temptation will be to resort to alcohol, or drugs. *Fomalhaut* is the Archangel Gabriel, the *Watcher of the South*. You need to watch your associates. It may seem as though you are taking one step forward and eight steps back. Forget about receiving any show of thanks or gratitude. Nit-pickers and those in charge seem to take it for granted that you will have what they need and are fully prepared to execute their demands. Sloppy work or irresponsibility you exhibit under this influence will not only be unacceptable now, but may work against you in the future. Do not seek favors, or promotion – and don't count on luck. It is a transitional energy. Issues will come to a head at the Solar Eclipse on August 1st.

People with mutable signs prominent in their charts will have a hard time separating their egos from their emotions, failing to recognize that something (or someone) they want may simply represent ego involvement, instead of emotional commitment. The mutable signs are Virgo, Pisces, Gemini, and Sagittarius. What we are called upon (or driven) to do may often interfere

with what gives us emotional satisfaction, or we chase after our desires, while we waste or fail to develop our talents and skills. A tug-of-war exists between desires and emotional needs and practical ambitions. Appreciate whatever positive circumstances you encounter, and don't be misguided enough to believe you can easily overcome any negative ones.

(Eclipse information from www.astrology.com)

New Items at The Witch's Apothecary

Herbal Teas (Spearmint, Doublemint, Energy & Sore Throat) – www.the-witches-apothecary.com/herbal-teas.html

Pentacle Tote Bags – www.the-witches-apothecary.com/pentacle-tote-bag.html

Horseshoe Wind Chime – www.the-witches-apothecary.com/horseshoe-windchime.html

Nag Champa Cones – www.the-witches-apothecary.com/nag-champa-cone-incense.html

Pentacle Soapstone Box – www.the-witches-apothecary.com/pentacle-soapstone-box.html

To see all of our new items, visit www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com

The Witch's Apothecary February Sale Items

Wicca Starter Kit w/Money Spell – Regular Price \$26.99, Sale Price \$24.99

Peppermint Herbal Tea – Regular Price \$5.99, Sale Price \$4.99

Magickal Correspondences eBook – Regular Price \$4.99, Sale Price \$3.99

Magickal Herb Kit, 50 Herbs – Regular Price \$29.99, Sale Price \$27.99

Clear Quartz Pendulum – Regular Price - \$17.99, Sale Price \$15.99

To see all of our sale items, visit www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/saleitems.html

Astrology

by Arlene

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Hi everyone, as I promised, I am going to answer your horary questions (horary is an astrological question of the hour). The letter I am answering today is from Holly. Holly's question was formed in her mind at 7:40 am on 1/9/08 in Tecumseh, OK 74873. The question is: "Will conditions be favorable for me to move to Colorado in June or July, 2008 and will the time be okay for job searching and house hunting?" Actually it is usually better to ask one specific question so as not to confuse the issue.

After printing the astrological chart for the question, the answer is as follows:

Capricorn is rising, ruled by Saturn of responsibility, which is in Virgo leading to work. However, there could be either a delay in finding work or you may start with a temporary job until a later date.

However, many of the important planets and signs are in the first house of the physical self. You have the Sun representing success, the Moon is your emotions, Mercury is your communications, Neptune is your ideals and the Moon's north Node represents karmic gains and protection. It seems that you can successfully move in June or July. You also have Venus in Sagittarius in the 11th house of hopes, wishes and goals!! Venus is money and possessions while Sagittarius is at a distance (Colorado) which gives further confirmation to the "Yes" answer.

Holly, if you wish to purchase the ASTRO STAR KARDS and easily interpret your own questions and answers, you may order through The Witch's Apothecary. To order them, go to www.the-witches-apothecary.com/astro-star-kards.html If you wish to have other questions answered, you contact me by e-mail and the price per question is \$25.

Thanks for the question and I hope you are pleased with the response.

I have also decided to devote part of this column to the planet Mercury in the different signs and it affects your thinking.

MERCURY IN ARIES – impulsive, argumentative?

MERCURY IN TAURUS – slow to make a decision

MERCURY IN GEMINI – chatterbox of the zodiac!!!

MERCURY IN CANCER – emotional mentality

MERCURY IN LEO – creative thinking

MERCURY IN VIRGO – analytical

MERCURY IN LIBRA – excellent for meditation

MERCURY IN SCORPIO – secretive thoughts

MERCURY IN SAGITTARIUS – spiritual thinking

MERCURY IN CAPRICORN – thoughts of "Business Executive Careers"

MERCURY IN AQUARIUS – metaphysical, thinking of humanity

MERCURY IN PISCES – pay attention to your subconscious (dreams)

Of course, this is just the tip of the iceberg. We can do more in depth classes by computer and with the purchase of the ASTRO STAR KARDS from The Witch's Apothecary. We can do six lessons at \$8 each or 7 lessons for \$50. The Cards will be explained and astrology will be made easy.

To have me answer a question similar to the question above, you need only email Astrarlene@aol.com with the question, your name and the exact time of the question (MOST IMPORTANT THAT YOU LOOK AT THE TIME AND JOT IT DOWN AND HAVE IT AVAILABLE WHEN YOU EMAIL ME). I will also need the exact location of where you are when the question first starts to form in your mind. Ex; OKC, OK 73108. I WILL NOT NEED YOUR BIRTH TIME ONLY THE *BIRTH TIME* OF THE QUESTION!!! I WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW YOU CHOOSE TO USE THIS INFORMATION. WHEN YOU EMAIL ME, PLEASE INCLUDE THIS PARAGRAPH "I AM AWARE THE ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS ARE FOR MY READING PLEASURE AND I WILL NOT HOLD ARLENE ASIN RESPONSIBLE IN ANY WAY FOR HOW I CHOOSE TO USE THIS INFORMATION"

Well, until my friends, until the next issue, in Love and Light,

Arlene

Herb of the Month

Rose ~ Element – Fire, Planet – Venus, Gender – Feminine. Also attributed to the element of Water, and also the influence of Mars, Parts Used – Flowers, Magickal Properties – Ultimate Love, Protection, Uses – The ultimate in love wishes, this will aid in bringing a true lasting love and help also to mend any spats between you in an already committed relationship, the petals can be bathed with while thinking a new love to you, the dried flowers are burned in love wishes, sleeping with the flowers will protect your dreams, carry a sachet or amulet for protection against bodily injury or when working healing wishes

To learn more about this and other herbs, get our Magickal Herbs eBook at www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/magickal-herbs-spells--recipes-ebook.html

Stone of the Month

Malachite – This powerful healing stone works to heal the heart as well as the body. It is further used for money, love and for centering and balancing. It enhances our ability to nurture all Life. Use it to manifest prosperity into your life and to open your heart to others. Malachite is one of the few stones that can be used to clear and activate all Chakras. It has wonderful healing properties, and because of the high copper content of the stone it has a very steady pulsing electromagnetic energy field. It absorbs negative energy from the auric field cleansing it, thus balancing the wearer and protecting them from the effects negative energies. It is great for increasing concentration skills and is quite beneficial to physical, as well as psychic, vision. Malachite helps to find a balanced path between the desires of ego and of our higher Will, aiding us in removing blockages and inspiring us with ideas which will help to manifest those goals.

Rune of the Month

Ansuz (A: The As, ancestral god, i.e. Odin.) – A revealing message or insight, communication. Signals, inspiration, enthusiasm, speech, true vision, power of words and

naming. Blessings, the taking of advice. Good health, harmony, truth, wisdom. Ansuz Reversed or Merkstave: Misunderstanding, delusion, manipulation by others, boredom. Vanity and grandiloquence. (Odin is a mighty, but duplicitous god. He always has his own agenda.)

To learn more about this and other runes, get our Rune Dice Book at www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/rune-dice-divination.html

Tarot Card of the Month

Ten of Pentacles – Emotional and financial stability. Family fortunes, inheritance and prosperity that has been built up and handed down over the generations. The formation of family tradition. This card may indicate good fortune regarding a dowry.

To learn more about this and other Tarot Cards, get our Basic Tarot Card Reading eBook at www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/basic-tarot-card-reading.html

Correspondence of the Month

Goddesses

Some Goddesses appropriate for invoking at the New Moon:

Hecate – for guidance in creating new goals

Artemis – for energy and guidance to bring new goals to fruition in the days ahead

Inanna or Persephone – for rebirth, life-changes, and new growth in the days ahead

Freya – for creativity and imagination

Brigid – for creativity, motivation and strength to begin work on new ideas and projects

Aradia – for beginning philanthropic projects to help your community, or beginning education with the goal of improving the conditions of your life

Some Goddesses appropriate for invoking during the Waxing Moon and at First Quarter:

Artemis, Inanna or Persephone – for their continued assistance for projects you called on them for at the New Moon

Aphrodite – for self-esteem, and the confidence to follow through on developing projects

Venus – for balance and resolution of problems in growing relationships)

Kwan Yin – for promotion of compassion, wisdom and healing within humankind and the Earth

Some Goddesses appropriate for invoking during the Full Moon:

Demeter – for assistance bringing projects to completion, or to bring comfort or healing to the bereaved

Anu – for assistance bringing goals to fruition

Isis – to invoke nurturance and protection of yourself, your loved ones, projects or goals that are dear, or of humankind of Mother Earth as a whole

Aradia – to invoke the blessings of learning, compassion, and a sense of community into yourself and humankind as a whole

Selene – to invoke the blessings of love and happiness into your life and relationships

Inanna – to invoke fertility with the goal of motherhood

Lakshmi – to invoke abundance and growth on all levels of being, material, emotional and spiritual

Some Goddesses appropriate for invoking during the Waning Moon and Last Quarter:

Maat – for assistance in determining the cause of troubles, and what in your life is worth furthering, and what would be best left behind

Themis – for the same assistance as can be provided by Maat, particularly with regard to relationships

Cerridwen – for assistance in gleaning wisdom from perceived mistakes and failures

Hecate – for assistance in removing unwanted obstacles from your life so that you can be free to begin anew in the days ahead

Inanna – for guidance pertaining to soul-searching, removal of the proverbial seven veils to reach the heart of your soul, in search for your own higher Truth, and for strength to cope with the grief that comes from letting go of old habits and ideas

To learn more about this and other correspondences, get our Magickal Correspondences eBook at www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/magickal-correspondences-ebook.html

Spell of the Month

Strength Ceremony

We all have times in our lives when things are hard and we don't have much faith in ourselves. I recommend doing this ritual whenever the feelings of doubt or fear start clouding your thoughts. This is a group ritual, but it is possible to modify it for a solitary practitioner.

Cast the circle and then go around the circle so everyone can say how they became strong.

"I became strong through facing my fears.
I became strong through my friends.
I became strong through my family.
I became strong through making mistakes.
I became strong through taking a stand.
I became strong through dreaming."

Chant and raise power.

The above can be modified to be more personal.

To receive more spells, get our Wicca 101 and Beyond: A Witch's Grimoire eBook at www.The-Witches-Apothecary.com/book-of-shadows-ebook.html