

The Insider: 3 facts you may not know about leap years

February 26, 2016 8:15 AM Samah Ahmed
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What will you do with an extra day in the year? For most Tulane University students the answer probably is: go to class. The extra Feb. 29 leap day falls on a Monday this year, so while many Tulane students will be taking notes in their classrooms, it's interesting to know how leap years were celebrated traditionally and why they occur.

Here are three interesting leap year facts you probably didn't know:

1. Leap days would have occurred in August if not for Roman emperor Caesar Augustus. At the time of Augustus' rule, his birth month (August) only had 29 days, while the month named after his predecessor Julius Caesar (July) had 31 days. Out of jealousy, Augustus ordered that February be shortened in order to give August a comparable 31 days.
2. Leap days are traditionally days on which women are supposed to propose to men. Saint Brigit supposedly said to Saint Patrick that women waited too long for their suitors to propose. Saint Patrick then declared that one day in a leap year would be set aside for women to propose to men instead.

3. Leap day proposals must be, by way of tradition, accepted. Another popular leap year story is that Queen Margaret of Scotland passed a law during her reign that imposed fines on any men who refused a proposal on a leap day.

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