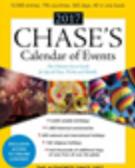


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In this issue, Nicolette Warisse Sosulski delights us with another peek into her chat reference life, but let's remember that despite the "sky-is-falling" cries we hear, print reference is not dead yet. And so, *Booklist* is offering a chance for you to listen to Nicolette live, in our upcoming webinar, "[Breathing New Life into Print Reference](#)." With so many online resources now available, how is print reference used today? How can we help people see the easy access to vast amounts of information right at their fingertips? In this free, one-hour webinar, Nicolette Warisse Sosulski will discuss ways to get the most out of your print reference collection, while editors Amber Zankey (*ProQuest Statistical Abstract of the United States*) and Holly McGuire (*Chase's Calendar of Events*) will provide useful tips and interesting testimonials from those two popular print references. This webinar takes place on October 18, 2016, but if you're reading this after that date, never fear —[all of our webinars are archived!](#)

You can read more about *Chase's Calendar of Events* in this issue's sponsored-content feature, "Where Do These Holidays Come From? (Or, How I Learned To Stop Worrying and Love Talk like a Pirate Day)." Editor Holly McGuire reveals just how holidays are created (fun fact: technically, there are no national holidays in the U.S.!). As always, I love to hear about what you'd like to see featured in *Top Shelf Reference*, particularly if you are interested in submitting a feature item. Get in touch with me at rvnuk@ala.org.

—[Rebecca Vnuk](#), Editor, Collection Management and Library Outreach, *Booklist*

Real Life Reference: Kung Fu Librarian

by Nicolette Warisse Sosulski



Dave Tyckoson, one of my mentors, talks about the "4 Rs of Reference": Reassure, Respond, Restate, Repeat. Sometimes they do not come in that order. And sometimes, in the bustle of things, it is easy to forget the reassure part—until the patron's insecurity comes up and more or less hits you in the face. And then, when this happens to me, my inner mom comes out, and I maybe say something that is not in any reference handbook or set of recommendations. Here is an example of this phenomenon.

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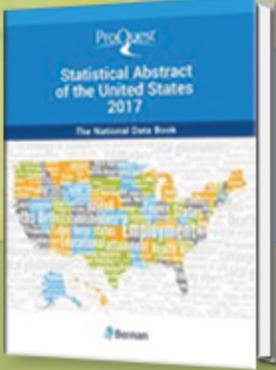
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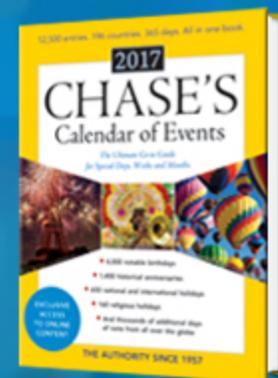
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ProQuest Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2017 EDITION



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- When is the presidential inauguration?
- Who was born on November 7?
- When does daylight saving time start?
- What music festival is said to have begun the Summer of Love?
- Is there a total eclipse of the sun in 2017?

WE'VE GOT THE ANSWERS

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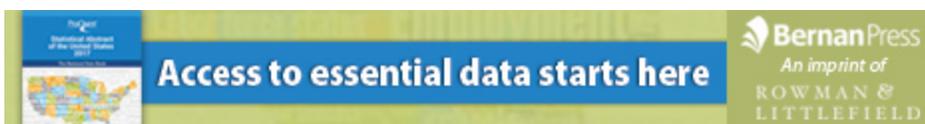
Where Do These Holidays Come From? (Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Talk like a Pirate Day)

by Holly McGuire

I don't know if your patrons ask about how new holidays are created, but that's the most-asked question the *Chase's Calendar of Events* office gets from the media and general public. Since we've been given the opportunity to speak to you in *Top Shelf Reference*, I thought I'd address that complicated issue.

It would seem simple to just say what a holiday was (originally, of course, from "holy day" and referring to a religious observance) and where each one comes from. There are civic and national holidays that reflect key historical milestones or significant national leaders (Independence Day and George Washington's Birthday). There are religious observances, such as Christmas or Ramadan. There are folkloric and cultural days—some of which have ties to prehistoric ages, such as Samhain, the ancient Gaelic harvest festival of October 31, which is today observed by neopagans and which has echoes in Halloween. Many of these days imply sober reflection and celebration of life's rites and rhythms.

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Featured Reference Review

Virus: An Illustrated Guide to 101 Incredible Microbes

by Barbara Bibel

With the Zika virus on the front page of newspapers worldwide, a book that explains what viruses are is very timely. This brief guide by a professor of virus ecology at Pennsylvania State University provides an accessible overview.

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#twitterreference

by Rebecca Vnuk

Librarians rarely just sit there while out at the reference desk. Even when there's not a patron in front of them, they're often furiously typing away at something on their computers.

It's likely that they're searching for the answer to a previous question, working on the latest collection report, tweaking a new public desk schedule . . . or perhaps they're tweeting. Let's take a peek.

 **Robert Hayes**
@hayesin01887 [Follow](#)

Whenever I'm cataloging a Dolly Parton CD, I write 'Dolly Patron.' [#librarianproblems](#)

9:23 AM - 19 Sep 2016

↩️ ↻ 1 ❤️ 8

 **Clare Davitt**
@Claritybear [Follow](#)

Title that caused an inappropriately loud librarian laugh:
"Dairy Goats for Pleasure and Profit". [#librarylife](#)

12:47 PM - 26 Sep 2016 · Bangor, ME, United States

↩️ ↻ 2 ❤️ 10

 **Jen Talley**
@jenunexpected [Follow](#)

I just discovered accidentally that "prehistoric toilet paraphernalia" is a legit LC subject heading. [#librarylife](#)

11:00 AM - 22 Sep 2016

↩️ ↻ 5 ❤️ 14

 **The Surly Librarian**
@SurlyLibrarian [Follow](#)

Someone left an article on the ref desk called 'Your Library Degree DOES Matter!'thank you? [#librarylife](#)

11:22 AM - 25 Jul 2016

↩️ ↻ 3 ❤️ 25

 **Fake Library Stats**
@FakeLibStats [Follow](#)

14% of librarians don't like cats but they remain silence so as to remain employable

4:20 PM - 18 Sep 2016

↩️ ↻ 31 ❤️ 66



Rachael D.
@RachaelDab

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Weeding the sports collection & I'm having 2 research players because I have no idea who is popular.

[#notasportsperson](#) [#sundaylibrarian](#)

2:12 PM - 11 Sep 2016



Emily Bayci
@EmilyBayci

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Update: my frantic hold placing has been temporarily halted due to reaching the hold limit of 100 titles.

[#librarianproblems](#)

9:04 AM - 24 Sep 2016



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