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Quickies

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LEAPING INTO LIFE
BY BRITTA ROPPE

I still celebrate my birthday every year on February 28. However, many people born on leap day chose to celebrate on March 1. The confusion surrounding when to celebrate on non-leap years poses a problem on key birthdays, like 18 and 21. Each state chooses either February 28, or March 1 to legally become leap-babies birthdays on off years. For example, when I turn 21, I will have to wait until March 1 before I can legally drink in Iowa, even though February is my birth month. (That’s a whole day!)

On the bright side, there are also a lot of perks that come with being born on leap day. There is generally tons of free food for leap-day babies as well as discounts on everything from skydiving to shoes. Usually, there are deals for even those of you with annual birthdays. I always have a “go-to fact” whenever I’m forced to play “ice-breaker” games on the first day of class. And even when I’ve been on this earth for 100 years, it will still be age appropriate for me to go to clubs.

DON’T BE THE PERSON WHO ... • Shakes off snow on the Cyride • Loudly chomps gum • Says winter is their “hibernation period” • Doesn’t pick up their dog’s poop • Ignores the person holding the door open for them • Takes advantage of your group project members • Wears jeans to the gym • Takes over every classroom discussion • Walks in the bike lane • Goes through their significant other’s phone • Is a professor who ignores their mic making annoying noises

TIPS TO GET OUT OF A PARKING TICKET • Appeal it • Park in a 30-minute loading zone • Make friends with the Parking Division employees • Put a fake yellow envelope on your car • Put a note on your car with a convincing sob story • Research the Parking Division shifts and time your parking accordingly • Park on a side street and take the bus in • Add a “Parking Division” decal to your car • Park off campus at the city lots (less expensive tickets) • WALK

The odds of being born on February 29th are 1 in 1,461. I am one of the lucky ones.

When I tell people that I was born on leap day and will be turning 5 this February, I get one of two responses: “That’s so awesome!” or “Oh, that sucks.” But I’ve always enjoyed the uniqueness of only having a “real birthday” every four years. It guarantees that even when I’m acting childish, I’m always acting my age.

Leap day is necessary because it takes the earth a little over 365 days to orbit the sun — 365.24 days to be exact. The commonly used Gregorian calendar deals with the additional almost quarter of a day by adding a day to the calendar every four years on February 29. The Chinese calendar chooses to make up for the extra time by adding a leap month about every three years.

I like to celebrate my real birthdays by doing something representative of my leap age. For example, when I turned 4 (16), I invited all of my friends to play games at an arcade, where we ate pizza and played laser tag. I use it as an excuse to continue to participate in more youthful activities. This year, I am planning on celebrating by going to Sky Zone.