

# Superstitions abound on Friday the 13th

By Casey Hens  
staff writer

Breaking a mirror brings seven years bad luck . . . don't walk under any ladders . . . don't let a black cat cross your path . . .

When the bell tolls at midnight tonight, a traditional day of superstition begins as the calendar flips to Friday the 13th.

To add a touch of madness and mysticism, a full moon will rise Friday evening.

Some who study such phenomenon say we make these tales of folklore come true by making them a part of our culture and lives.

"Even though people say they don't believe it . . . they make nervous jokes," said Bob Thibodeau, Thibodeau, who owns the alternative Mayflower Book Shop in Berkeley, has researched the day and its meaning.

MANY BUILDINGS lack a 13th floor, some insurance statistics say one in 13 people will die this year and the U.S. dollar bill has numerous

letters and items that add up to 13, he said.

Just look at a dollar bill and count: 13 steps on the pyramid, 13 letters in the motto above it, 13 talons of the eagle and stripes on its chest, 13 leaves, 13 berries, and the 13 stars hover over the eagle.

"FRIDAY THE 13th is a death and rebirth," Thibodeau said, "a kind of metamorphosis. It's a day to make something different happen."

Although traditionally thought of as bringing bad luck, the number 13 can accent the positive and different, he said.

"Thirteen has always been a radical and rebellious number in the Bible. Every 13th tribe was radical and rebellious. And 13 was a big number to America — we had 13 colonies and 13 stars and stripes on our flag."

There are other folklore that lends credence to these positives, according to information from a computerized folklore archive at the University of Detroit.

Thirteen is a lucky number in

Egypt and parts of Latin America and Italy, where the June 13 anniversary of St. Anthony's death is celebrated.

The Chicago Anti-Superstition Society and Friday the 13th Clubs in Los Angeles and Philadelphia take the positive aspect even further.

"They meet either at 13 minutes before noon or 13 minutes after and they handle two-dollar bills, break mirrors and walk under ladders to show their defiance of the superstitions surrounding the day," information from the archives said.

Even the negative things associated with the day can be turned around, Thibodeau said. "Negative things make us grow."

ALL THE days of the week, including Friday, were named after a Greek or Roman god. Friday is named for the goddess Venus, who represents love, Thibodeau said. "Love is one of the big mysteries — a lot of superstition surrounds love." This adds yet another dimension to tomorrow — the day before Valentine's Day.

The folklore archives recall "Friday's child is loving and giving" according to nursery rhymes, that God gave Hebrew pilgrims struggling in the wilderness a double portion of manna on Friday, and that Christians regard Friday as a day of redemption.

Tomorrow's full moon is the icing

on the cake, with yet another grouping of superstitions including werewolves and Count Dracula.

Just as the moon controls the Earth's tides, so it controls human body fluid levels and activity levels, Thibodeau said.

SOME PEOPLE avoid having op-

erations during a full moon to avoid excessive bleeding. He said there is more crime, more accidents and in general, more activity.

"If you want to throw a good party, have it on the full moon. It brings out our bestial sides . . . our physical desires, things we repress come out."

## Payment alternatives offered

Your winter tax bill is due Tuesday, Feb. 17, and according to city treasurer Charles Rosch, you don't have to stand in long lines to pay your bills.

"We'd like the residents to know that they can pay their bills in a number of ways for their convenience. One, of course, is at the treasurer's office in City Hall, but the lines are usually very long. Residents can also pay their tax bill by mail, or at certain banks, or in our night depository after city offices are closed," Rosch said.

After 4:30 p.m., taxpayers can use the night depository on the east wall of the front courtyard. Tax payments may also be made at the following banks during normal banking hours: National Bank of Detroit (15 cent fee per tax bill), Michigan National Bank of Detroit (no fee charged), Michigan National Bank of Novi (no fee charged), Michigan National Bank of Farmington (no fee charged) and Manufacturers National Bank (no fee charged).

By law, payments by mail are recorded by the treasurer on the

date actually received. Payments received after Feb. 17 will be returned with added penalty. A 4 percent penalty will be added on Feb. 18-Feb. 28. Beginning March 1, all taxes, including personal property, must be paid to C. Hugh DeBany, Oakland County treasurer, with a percent collection fee plus Oakland County's current interest rate.

City Hall offices, 31555 11 Mile at Orchard Lake Road, are open for payment of taxes 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12 and Friday. The offices will be closed for Presidents' Day, Monday, Feb. 16.



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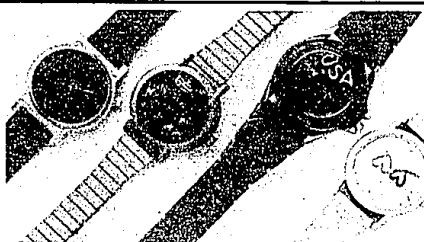
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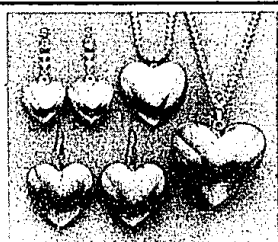


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