

MAKING LIFE MORE FUN

Getting Serious About April Fool's Day

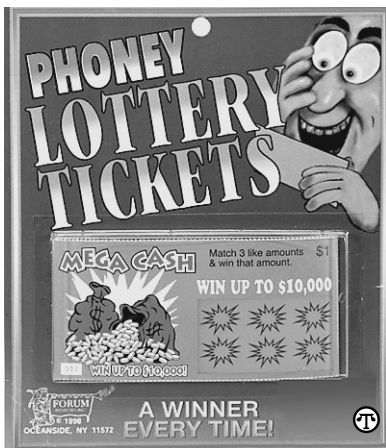
(NAPSA)—For some people, there's no fooling around when it comes to assembling practical jokes to play on April 1st. Even the most dedicated prankster, however, might be surprised to learn of the origins of this humorous holiday.

In 16th century France, the start of the new year was originally observed on April 1, in much the same way New Year's is today, with parties and dancing. Then in 1582, Pope Gregory introduced the Gregorian calendar, which had the year starting on January 1.

The word was slow to spread. Some did not believe (or didn't hear) the news and continued to celebrate the New Year on April 1st. These people were labeled fools and many began to play tricks on them, sending them on "fool's errands" and inviting them to non-existent parties. Hence, the "April Fool."

When England officially adopted the new calendar in 1752, the tradition of prank playing on April 1 continued—eventually spreading to Scotland and "the Colonies."

Today, while many come up with new ways to make mischief—and try to outdo the all-time great pranks, such as the Swiss "spaghetti harvest" of 1957—others stick to tried and true gags. A vast supply of items that can help stir things up, can be found at Spencer Gifts, including:



Classic April Fool's Day pranks still surprise and amuse.

- **Whoopee Cushions.** Did you know that early in Whoopi Goldberg's career, she used the name Whoopee Cushion as a stage name?
- **Fake Bullet Holes.** "The Sopranos" is back in season, so how about a staged "whacking?"
- **Remote Control Fart Machine.** Hide it under a seat at dinner, press the remote, listen for the sounds and watch the embarrassed flush creep up the one on the hot seat.
- **Other all-time favorites—**available just in time for the tomfoolery—include silly string, gum that turns the tongue blue, an ice cube with a bug in it and itching powder.

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