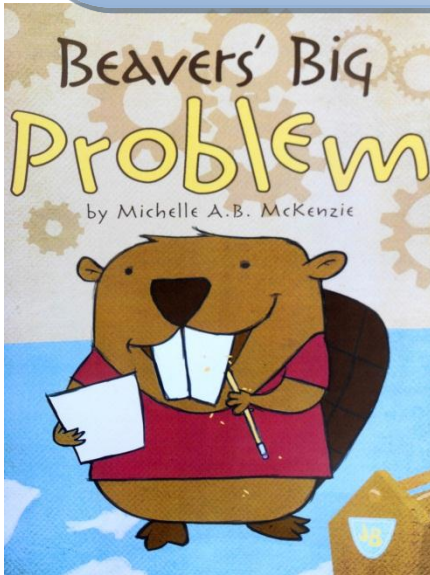


Groundhog Day



Groundhog Day is celebrated on February 2nd!

**Michelle
A.B.
McKenzie**

**Children's
Author**

Source: *Groundhog Day*, by
Gail Gibbons (2007)
Holiday House

February 2 is "Groundhog Day". Folklore says that when a groundhog peeks out of his burrow and sees his shadow on this day, there will be six more weeks of winter. That same folklore also says that if he doesn't see his shadow, an early spring will come.

The custom of Groundhog Day arose out of ancient observances celebrating the end of winter and beginning of spring. It was believed that if a hibernating animal, such as a hedgehog, bear or badger, awoke from its sleep in the beginning of February, there would be several more weeks of winter. Many early European immigrants settled in Pennsylvania where hibernating groundhogs were abundant. They decided to watch the groundhogs as a continuation of the European tradition. This custom became an annual celebration in a Pennsylvania town called Punxsutawney (punk-suh-TAW-nee).

In 1886, a man named Clymer Freas dubbed February 2nd "Groundhog Day" in the local newspaper. The special groundhog we all watch became known as "Punxsutawney Phil". Every year many people converge upon "Gobbler's Knob" to see "Punxsutawney Phil" removed from his burrow by City officials at 7:25 a.m. to observe whether he will see his shadow. If he does see his shadow, six more weeks of winter are predicted; if he does not, the forecast is for an early spring.

It is all in fun.