

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

You must remember this ...

BY MARISSA LINGEN

What's the most important thing that happened in 2048?

A1: '48? That's when they found the cure for the grouse flu. Don't know what the poultry population would have done without that. It might have spread to the wild birds like the turkey flu did, and without another replacement population ... I don't like to think about hypotheticals. Bad, though. Dodged that bullet.

A2: The *Star Wars Droid Pilots* series started! Man, I gave a decade of my life to that fandom. The first convention wasn't until '49, though, so in '48 I was still going to *Ghostbusters* cons.

A3: Lorelei was born. She was so waxy at first, not red like a baby is supposed to be. She didn't cry for so long — minutes. And then she breathed a little and then this thin little scream, and I knew it would be all right. I can't think of anything that could possibly be more important than Lorelei.

A4: Oh, I know, you could use one of those services that gives you Top Headlines of 2048! You could look it up on your device right now! Or, wait, I'll ask my social hub, I bet they could tell you! I've got 40 answers collated, just a sec, they group into three main topics.

A5: Those single-celled organisms on Europa, that was '48. We worked another ten years on those, through the rough times

without more data. That was enough data to keep us going. Of course, we barely ate, but who cared? Europa! Nobody could give another answer, that's what '48 means.

A6: That was the earthquake in Argentina, wasn't it? I didn't know anybody down there, but it meant the beginning of the Pan-Southern Unification. That's pretty important, I guess. I mean, not for me personally, I don't know much about that sort of thing, for me it was probably that I took up macramé and got my cousin to leave that bastard Pat Schmidt, you don't even want to know. But I try to keep perspective. The rest of the world is out there.

A7: The Lutheran Church-Jefferson Synod broke off from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It was the most crucial church polity question of our time, I can't believe you're even asking — oh, you're not really asking, you just want to know if I remember what year it was. Of course I remember, it was '48.

A8: Plantain chicken enchiladas at Perez's. Enough said, right? Everyone tried to replicate that recipe, everyone. Even me. With a lager, nothing like it on a summer night, not so bad in the winter either. I think I ate nothing else for weeks that June. That allspice blend was probably coming out my pores. That's what my wife would tell you, '48, the year he stank of allspice and wouldn't stop trying to figure out which pepper blend.

A9: When my father died in '48, we couldn't keep Mum in the house any more. So we

spent all year moving her into an apartment. And then, well, you can guess how that turned out within a few years, all that work for nothing. God, what a decade, you might as well ask, what's your favourite time you got an ear infection? Most important thing that happened in '48? Christ, take your pick.

A10: My sister Janice graduated. She was the last of us who did. We couldn't afford anyone else's tuition for a while, it was before the reforms went through — you know all that — but we had Janice, my folks and aunts and uncles had all put in so she could get a pharmacy degree, and as you'd expect, *that* was handy. Janice hated it, but nobody much cared what Janice thought by then. Oh, it was a big party. We cooked for days for her graduation. I was jealous as anything. I miss her now.

A11: That was the year of the dingo resettlement, wasn't it? I think it was. I think that was the year Australia got too hot and they had to start moving animals. And they started with the dingos because they thought people would take to them well because they were like wee doggies? Heh, God, humans are dumb sometimes, I wouldn't take us on a bet. It wasn't the kangaroos until '50, was it? Maybe the kangaroos was '48. I'll look it up, shall I? Oh, have you got it. All right. Thanks.

A12: You want me to say President Banks, don't you? Because of the nanobombs? That's the answer you're looking for. I bet all the city people say President Banks got elected, that's the most important thing that happened in '48. Look, I got a new spray for the wheat rust. It held it off another three years. And Rob got a new combine, that was '48, that meant that when the nanobombs came, we were fine, we could hold out until everything got put back together again. You're not going to get the answer you want, all right? It's not all the way you think it is. Everybody else can say President Banks, I don't care, I'll be the only one who doesn't. Sometimes it's the combine. ■

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