

December 2023



640 W. Randall St., Coopersville 49404 (616)997-9253



## Celebrating December

**Universal Human  
Rights Month**

**Safe Toys and Gifts  
Month**

**Dice Day**  
*December 4*

**Bathtub Party Day**  
*December 5*

**Salesperson Day**  
*December 8*

**Gingerbread House Day**  
*December 12*

**Humbug Day**  
*December 21*

**Christmas**  
*December 25*

**Thank-You Note Day**  
*December 26*

**New Year's Eve**  
*December 31*



## Christmas Tree Lighting

In recognition of our current residents and in memory of past residents, we invite you to a short ceremony to honor them. Join us in building 2 dining room at 7pm. Pastor Bob Porterfield will lead us in prayer and song, and our outdoor tree will be lit. A simple reception will follow.



## Christmas Party

Please join us for our annual Resident & Family Christmas celebration here at Fountain View! There will be live music, great food and gifts for the residents!

**Thursday, December 21**

**6:00pm**

**Buildings 1 & 2**

**(Building 3's party to be held at a later date)**



**Dorothy M., Bradley V.,  
Jacqueline C., Bonnie H., Irma R.,  
Don L., Lillian S., and Ernie V.**

## Happy Birthday

**Marguerite A.....1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Helen S.....2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Tom Z.....7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Tom M.....11<sup>th</sup>**

### **We will sadly miss...**

**Nancy Y., Bonnie B., Charlie S. and  
Kim H. who recently passed away.**  
**Our thoughts and prayers are with  
their families and friends.**



### Soup du Jour

It's a dish that earned the name "the soup that won the war." General Washington's Continental Army was starving and frozen one winter at Valley Forge. On December 29, 1777, Washington urged his army chef, Christopher Ludwick, to cook a meal he had once encountered visiting his brother in Barbados. It was a soup that warmed both his troops' bellies and hearts. Ludwick gathered what ingredients he could—tripe, meat, and peppercorns—and mixed up a version of pepper pot soup. Not only did the revolutionaries win the war, but December 29 came to be known as Pepper Pot Soup Day.

You could celebrate the day by recreating Ludwick's hot and spicy dish. Or you could honor Ludwick by rummaging around in your kitchen to concoct a soup made from leftovers and scraps.

### Fiddlin' Around



December 13 is Violin Day. On this day in 2010, rock violinist Ben Lee broke the Guinness world record for fastest violin player by playing Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble Bee" in just 58.515 seconds. After breaking the previously unbreakable magic-minute mark, Lee reportedly insured his fingers for over four million dollars.

Violins were once used only in classical music, but they have since become popular in jazz, rock, and pop music. Folk musicians have long played the fiddle, and violin-like stringed instruments have been used in India and the Arab world for hundreds of years. Violin makers, called luthiers, enjoy great renown. Italian luthier Antonio Stradivari's violins are so precious that one 1716 instrument, "The Messiah," is part of a museum collection in England.

## Home Sweet Home



Gingerbread House Day, December 12, brings a touch of magic to the holiday season. It's the perfect occasion to indulge in a time-honored tradition: building and decorating gingerbread houses.

This charming holiday observance offers a sweet escape from the busyness of the season.

The history of gingerbread houses has roots in medieval Europe, where gingerbread was initially reserved for special occasions and celebrations. It was often used to create intricate works of edible art, including gingerbread houses. These delectable structures gained popularity in Germany during the 16th century when the Brothers Grimm published their fairy tales, including the famous story of Hansel and Gretel, who discover a house made of gingerbread and candy deep in the forest.

Notable gingerbread houses have become a source of fascination and wonder. The White House has a longstanding tradition of creating a gingerbread replica of the executive mansion during the holiday season. These intricate confections often include detailed icing decorations and miniature furnishings.

Another impressive example is the annual National Gingerbread House Competition in Asheville, North Carolina. This event attracts pastry chefs and artists from around the world who craft astonishing gingerbread creations, from charming cottages to elaborate castles.

In modern times, gingerbread houses have evolved from simple, rustic structures to intricate architectural marvels. They continue to be a beloved holiday tradition, a sign of the enduring appeal of this spicy-sweet treat. This year on Gingerbread House Day, unleash your creativity, and see what kind of edible masterpiece you can create with family and friends.

## Goodbye Gluten

Lately you may have heard the term *gluten-free*. Gluten is a protein commonly found in wheat, barley, rye, and triticale (a combination of barley and rye). For those with celiac disease, gluten causes inflammation of the small intestine. For this reason, they must avoid bread, cookies, and anything else made with wheat flour. Many others believe that a gluten-free diet can be healthful and help prevent milder food allergies.

Gluten-Free Baking Week, the week before Christmas, provides people with the opportunity to try many different gluten-free ingredients in place of traditional wheat flours for their holiday baking. Almond, coconut, hazelnut, potato, teff, and corn flour offer interesting and flavorful flour substitutes. Even if you don't have any gluten allergies, this is your chance to impress your friends and family by using ingredients you've never baked with before.

## Cold Hard Facts

On December 1, 1959, twelve countries signed the Antarctic Treaty, which proclaimed that all countries would use the land of Antarctica for peaceful purposes



only. All scientific discoveries must be shared and used in a spirit of cooperation. Since 1959, the number of countries to sign the treaty has grown to 56. Many significant discoveries have been made on Earth's coldest continent. Research has detected the rise of global carbon dioxide levels, which contributes to global warming. Scientists have discovered fossils of plants, animals, and dinosaurs, as well as four new species of fish. This treaty has helped warm the spirit of international cooperation. Over time, the treaty advanced science, embodying global commitment to preserve and steward this pristine environment.



## From Meek to Mighty



December 15 is a day to root for the little guy with the big heart, for it is Underdog Day. What makes underdogs so appealing? They must win against all odds. Whether it's strength, courage, heart, or a little bit of luck, these heroes prevail against the most overwhelming odds. Here's a list of some of the best underdogs, real and fictitious:

Sports is the most likely place to start searching for memorable underdogs, and no team may have pulled off a more surprising win than the 1980 men's Olympic hockey team. A team made up of amateurs and college stars defeated a tough Soviet team during the middle of the Cold War. Sportscaster Al Michaels famously asked, "Do you believe in miracles?" You bet we do.

No story about underdogs would be complete without a mention of racehorse Seabiscuit. Seabiscuit was short with crooked legs and, after first failing as a racehorse, was used as a workhorse. His jockey was a visually impaired former boxer. At Maryland's legendary Pimlico Race Course, Seabiscuit defeated the accomplished War Admiral in what many believe to be the greatest horse race in history.

Literature is filled with underdog stories, and J.R.R. Tolkien's hero Frodo Baggins from his *Lord of the Rings* trilogy is practically the size of a dog. This tiny hobbit, best known for eating, drinking, and living in peace, crosses an entire continent full of beasts and demons to save the world from evil and destruction.

Harry Potter may well be another great literary underdog, but so is his creator, J.K. Rowling. This unknown writer and unemployed single mother created an international sensation and hooked thousands of children on reading.

## Leadership Team

**Connie Clauson**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Kelly Smith**  
Regional Operations Director

**Tara Frazier**  
Administrator

**Nancy Brewer**  
Business Manager

**Andrea Steffes**  
Life Enrichment & Volunteer Director

**Gary Lutz**  
Food Service Director

**Markus Temple**  
Maintenance Director

## Spectacular Soda



With its hundreds of uses, bicarbonate of soda certainly deserves its own day on December 30. Baking soda, as it is commonly called, is used for far more than baking. Make homemade toothpaste by mixing

baking soda with hydrogen peroxide. Mix a 3-to-1 ratio of baking soda and water to create a gentle exfoliant for your skin or to relieve the itch of insect bites. Add a sprinkle of baking soda to your shampoo to add extra cleaning power. Out of deodorant? Just apply a thin dusting of baking soda under your arms.

Even the ancient Egyptians were wise to the uses of baking soda. They found natural deposits of bicarbonate of soda and used them to create soaps. It's time to put that box of baking soda front and center in the cupboard.