

The Villager



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It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas at the Village!

As the spirit of Christmas brings out the child in most of us, it also brings a kinder spirit which is a great way to celebrate Advent. Do you remember the advent calendars when you were a child? Each day you got to pick a piece of candy or small present to count down Santa Clause coming. Now that we are older and understand that Christmas is so much more than Santa Clause, we can still do the advent calendar. Each day from Dec 1st until the 25th do an act of kindness. Listed below are many examples of kind things you can do each day. Spread the joy and have yourself a very Merry Christmas

Celebrating December

- 5th Looking glass playhouse
- 7th Duane Grapperhaus
- 8th Cocktails & Carols
- 11th Podiatry
- 11th Church Tom Rankin
- 14th Senior Luncheon
- 17th Mens hair cut
- 18th Senior center Bingo
- 19th Maggie & Bonnie Singing
- 23rd Carolers (Church)
- 24th Church
- 31st New year's Eve Party & 6pm Duane Grapperhaus

December Birthdays

- 4th Betty Dilley
- 18th Melba Rendleman

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| 1. GIVE SOMEONE A HUG OR COMPLIMENT | 2. LET SOMEONE IN FRONT OF YOU IN LINE | 3. BUY A FRIEND OR COLLEAGUE COFFEE | 4. HOLD THE DOOR OPEN FOR SOMEONE | 5. GIVE A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE YOUR FULL ATTENTION |
| 6. DONATE A CHRISTMAS PRESENT TO A CHARITY | 7. TELL A JOKE TO MAKE SOMEONE SMILE | 8. DO SOMETHING KIND FOR YOURSELF | 9. HIDE A HAPPY NOTE FOR SOMEONE TO FIND | 10. DONATE UNWANTED BOOKS TO CHARITY |
| 11. TAPE SOME MONEY ON A VENDING MACHINE | 12. SMILE AT A STRANGER OR 2, OR 15 | 13. GET IN TOUCH WITH AN OLD FRIEND OR RELATIVE | 14. LET A CAR IN FRONT OF YOU IN TRAFFIC | 15. WRITE OR SEND A THANK YOU NOTE TO SOMEONE |
| 16. SMILE AND THANK SOMEONE WHO SERVES YOU | 17. TELL SOMEONE YOU LOVE THEM | 18. PAY FOR A STRANGER'S COFFEE | 19. OFFER TO HELP SOMEONE | 20. FEED ANIMALS (BIRDS, DEER, ETC.) |
| 21. DONATE UNWANTED CLOTHES TO CHARITY | 22. DO SOMETHING UNEXPECTED FOR SOMEONE | 23. GIVE A TREAT TO YOUR POSTAL CARRIER | 24. DO SOMETHING KIND FOR YOURSELF | 25. REFLECT AND RECORD HOW MUCH JOY THIS SEASON BROUGHT YOU |

Home for the Holidays

The sweet and spicy smell of gingerbread is a clear indicator that the holiday season is in full swing. By the time Gingerbread House Day arrives on December 12, you may have already indulged in eating this seasonal treat.



Gingerbread, made with ginger root, is believed to have originated in East Asia, where ginger was originally cultivated. It is believed that ginger and gingerbread were

introduced to Europe after the Crusades of the 11th century. Gingerbread was adopted most heartily in Germany, where monks perfected their heart-shaped *lebkuchen* cookies. These cookies were first made as unleavened honey cakes, made in the same fashion as communion wafers. With the introduction of ginger, German bakers transformed *lebkuchen* into their beloved gingerbread. In 1487, Emperor Friedrich III presented the 4,000 children of the city of Nuremberg with gingerbread cookies shaped to his likeness.

The shape of gingerbread was not limited to hearts, faces, and people; miniature houses made of the cookie were also common. This is why a gingerbread house figured so prominently in the tale *Hansel and Gretel*, first published by German folklorists and brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm in the 19th century. What better way for a witch to lure two children into her home than to build a home out of Germany's favorite cookie? Through this tale, the Brothers Grimm spread the popularity of making gingerbread houses beyond Germany.

It may be surprising that one of the most enduring holiday traditions was popularized by the tale of a witch attempting to eat two children by luring them into her gingerbread house. But the religious significance of gingerbread has deeper roots than *Hansel and Gretel*. Perhaps it stems from the development of gingerbread by German monks. Or the use of gingerbread in religious ceremonies. Whatever the reason, warm, spicy gingerbread has become synonymous with the Christmas season.

A Grimm Tale Turned White

The history of Disney's success with feature-length animated films began on December 21, 1937, when it released *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Many versions of this Grimm brother's fairy tale existed before Walt Disney put his hand to it. The first film version of *Snow White* hit theaters in 1902, but it was the Disney film that was considered groundbreaking. Indeed, the film won a specially designed Academy Award: one regular-sized Oscar statue with seven miniature Oscar statuettes. No less impactful was Disney's transformation of the story from a wicked tale of murder into a magical cartoon. The original unknown dwarfs were given funny personalities (not including the rejected names of Blabby, Jaunty, and Hoppy-Jumpy). Also forgotten was the evil Queen's fate of dancing to death in hot iron shoes. But this has always been the magic of Disney, providing the most exceptional and enduring family entertainment. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* has not lost any of its original luster.



Annual Wellness Checkup

Most of us know the importance of getting our cars regularly tuned up, visiting our physician for an annual physical, even having our furnace serviced each year, but what about a wellness checkup? A visit to a Physical Therapist once a year can help determine risk areas for injury or progression of diseases. Not only will they check your vital signs (such as heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen saturation), but they can also assess your flexibility, strength, posture, and balance to help set some health and wellness goals based on your individual needs. In addition, a Physical Therapist will also be able to provide education about different disease processes and help determine what types of exercise and equipment would be beneficial for you. For more information about an annual wellness checkup, contact one of the EmpowerMe therapists onsite or visit the website at www.empowermewellness.com

Go A-Wassailing



Whether you have a good singing voice or not, get into the swing of the holiday season with Go Caroling Day on December 20. You may be surprised to hear that carols did not originate as holiday songs at all. Carols were folk dances, and *carol* meant “to dance in a ring.” Most often

these dances and their accompanying songs were sung in the pubs (along with the presumptive overindulgence of ale). So when did carols make the jump from the alehouse to the church house? The answer might lie in Victorian England.

Wassailing, or the act of wishing good fortune on your neighbors, was a fairly common practice during the medieval era. It was believed that if you passed well wishes to your neighbors, they would reward you in turn. Caroling, or performing folk songs of well-wishes to neighbors, became traditional during local festivals and on holidays like May Day. But it was during the Victorian Era that caroling became forever merged with Christmastime. Legend has it that the first Christmas carol service was held in Truro, England, in 1880, when Edward White Benson attempted to lure carolers out of the pub on Christmas Eve by publicizing a carol service at church. Benson would go on to become the Archbishop of Canterbury.

It was also during Victorian England that Christmas became more popular and commercialized. Publishers began compiling and printing vast anthologies of carols. Some went so far as to take ancient songs and rewrite them as hymns to the birth of Christ. Many of the most famous Christmas carols date from this period, including “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen,” “The First Noel,” “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing!,” and “Joy to the World.” Nowadays, Christmas caroling is almost uniquely found during church services. Rarely do carolers venture door-to-door *a-wassailing* as they once did in olden times. But on December 20, Go Caroling Day, the practice may be revived. So don’t be surprised if you hear a knock on your door and a choir of voices.

The Invention of Clean

Many of us have good reason to thank Josephine Cochrane, for she invented the first automatic dishwasher on December 28, 1886. Cochrane was the daughter of an engineer and wife of a successful merchant and politician. In 1870, Cochrane and her husband moved into an Illinois mansion, where she hosted elaborate dinner parties served on heirloom china. Wishing to prevent damage to her precious china, Cochrane set about designing an automatic dishwasher in a shed behind her home. Wire compartments measured specifically to hold her unique collection of plates, cups, and saucers were fit into a wheel that revolved inside a copper boiler. A motor turned the wheel while hot soapy water rained down on the dishes. Cochrane took her invention to the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, where she won the highest prize. Just four years later, she bought a factory for her new company and provided dishwashers to many of Illinois’ most prestigious hotels and restaurants—and sweet relief to the world’s homemakers.

Making the Cut



Whether the snow is falling outside or not, you can provide some flurries of your own on December 27, Make Cut-Out Snowflakes Day. Paper snowflakes are

simple, easy-to-make decorations that instantly create a festive atmosphere. And like real snowflakes, no two are exactly alike! Simply fold a square piece of paper in half diagonally to make a triangle, fold it in half again to make another triangle, and then fold it into thirds. Next, use scissors to cut straight or wavy lines into the finished triangle. As you unfold your paper, you’ll find a perfectly unique and symmetrical flake. The cutting of paper snowflakes was born with Japanese origami in the Far East. It is likely that the French mastered the art of cutting paper doll chains from Japanese origami, and snowflakes evolved from those dolls.

