

Kopernik Lodge

Newsletter



When Is the Winter Solstice?

The first day of winter in the Northern Hemisphere is marked by the winter solstice, which occurs on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, at 4:48 P.M. EST.

For the northern half of Earth (the Northern Hemisphere), the winter solstice occurs annually on December 21 or 22. (The Southern Hemisphere's winter solstice occurs in June.) The winter solstice is the day with the fewest hours of sunlight in the whole year, making it the "shortest day" of the year. Thankfully, after we reach the winter solstice, the days begin to once again grow longer and longer until we reach the summer solstice—the first day of summer and the longest day of the year.

Looking Back to See the Future

A new year often prompts us to look forward and imagine what the coming months might hold. The month of January is named for the Roman god Janus, protector of gates, doorways, and transitions. He was depicted with two faces, one looking to the future and the other looking to the past. January seems an opportune month for reflection, to contemplate where we have been as we chart where we are going.

The Spanish philosopher George Santayana famously said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." The past offers myriad lessons for the present. Studying past societies, systems, ideologies, religions, governments, cultures, conflicts, and technologies teaches us how we got to where we are today. Are there any more profound questions than "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" History often provides answers to these age-old questions.

History occurs on different and dramatic scales. The geologic history of Earth stretches back billions of years. Human ancestors first appeared hundreds of thousands of years ago. Human civilization began a mere 6,000 years in the past, while the modern era is just a few hundred years old. While there are lessons to be learned from each of these periods, perhaps far more pressing are our own personal histories. Personal reminiscence can be a powerful practice if done correctly.

For a long time, reminiscence was seen as unhealthy. It wasn't until the 1960s that psychologists began to value reminiscence and personal reflection. Of course, reminiscence takes many forms. Both obsessing about how awful life was and escaping into the glories of the past offer little value. However, using reminiscence to pass on valuable life lessons can be constructive to a younger generation. Using past experiences as a blueprint to overcome present challenges is also helpful. The value of the past is that it gives us wisdom and strength for the present and reinforces for us that the choices we made were valuable and life was not wasted.

Memories of our 2023 NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS





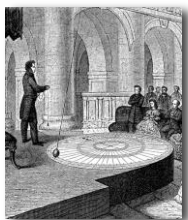
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Circular Logic



January 8 was Earth's Rotation Day, commemorating the day in 1851 when French physicist Léon Foucault first demonstrated that Earth indeed rotates on its axis, completing a rotation every 24 hours, measuring one day. To prove this, Foucault used a pendulum. Following Newton's law, which states that a body in motion will remain in motion until influenced by outside forces, Foucault swung his pendulum expecting it to swing continuously in the same arc in the same direction. Strangely, the pendulum's path appeared to change. Foucault rightly postulated that the pendulum's path had not changed, but the earth beneath the pendulum had rotated. The pendulum completed its rotation, returning to its original path after 24 hours.

Of course, before 1851, humans understood that a day had 24 hours. Foucault was simply the first to prove it using instruments on Earth's surface. It was the Egyptians who first broke the day and night into 12-hour segments. The number 12 held high significance to the Egyptians. Today, we often break numbers into groups of 10, which we call our *decimal* system, perhaps owing to counting on our 10 fingers. The Egyptians used a base 12, or *duodecimal* system, perhaps counting the finger knuckles of the hand, minus the thumb, which may have been used to do the counting. Twelve proved a powerful number—12 hours of daylight, 12 hours of darkness corresponding to 12 stars in the night sky, and 12 moon cycles leading to 12 months. Hours were kept by a sundial broken into 12 parts.

So, who then gave us 60 minutes and 60 seconds? This sexagesimal, or base 60, counting system was developed by the Sumerians and Babylonians. Perhaps the base 60 system was chosen because it had 12 factors, easily allowing users to break down one hour into 12 different fractions: 30 minutes, 20 minutes, 15 minutes, 12 minutes, 10 minutes, 6 minutes, 5 minutes, 4 minutes, 3 minutes, 2 minutes, and 1 minute. We still use the sexagesimal system to measure time, angles, and geographic coordinates.

Use It or Lose It

The third Saturday in January is Use Your Gift Card Day, a reminder to use those valuable presents before they are misplaced or lost forever. Gift cards were born in 1994 when the luxury department store Neiman Marcus first manufactured and sold them. But it was Blockbuster Video that mass-marketed the gift card in 1995. Prior to the gift card, gift certificates were popular, but they were too easily counterfeited. With a new era of computer tracking, gift cards would be virtually impossible to forge.

Of course, gift cards have their own share of problems. They were touted to be "as good as cash," but stores ran into trouble when they declared old gift cards expired after just a year of unuse. Today, federal laws govern the use of gift cards, including mandatory expiration dates of five years after the card is issued. The convenience of gift cards and their universal purchasing power, however, often overrule any inconveniences. They remain the ultimate last-minute gift idea.

Bobblehead Mania



In the 1960s, baseball teams began giving away bobblehead dolls that did not even resemble players. As ticket sales climbed on bobblehead giveaway days, the craze swept from park to park. And it wasn't children who wanted the dolls but grown men and women. Why would someone show up to a ballgame two hours early to wait in line for a wobbly-headed doll? Marketing psychologists chalk it up to escapism. People collect bobbleheads for the same reason they read tabloid magazines, go to the movies, and vacation in Las Vegas—adults use these outlets to escape the rigors and stresses of everyday life. And some are amassing bobblehead collections worth thousands! Some bobbleheads from the 1960s are worth \$10,000. Bobbleheads are so popular they have their own holiday on January 7.

Flying to New Heights

Travel to the Indian state of Gujarat on January 14 and you will find the skies filled with millions of kites for the International Kite Festival. Kite flying is more than just a recreational pastime; it is a significant cultural practice for many Indians.



The Kite Festival coincides with Makar Sankranti, the day of the year when the sun moves into the zodiac sign of Capricorn, marking the start of spring and signifying the commencement

of the harvest season. The key word here is *movement*, an acceptance of the movement of the seasons and realization that this constant flux is what facilitates the transition from winter to spring and restarts the agricultural growth cycle. Without this movement and change, life on Earth would cease to exist.

Kites fly on the winds of the earth, their movement dictated by forces beyond our control. In this way, the movements of the kites honor the same movements of Makar Sankranti. We are just along for the ride. Kites have more than just this cosmic significance; they have important cultural significance, too.

In India, the freedom of a kite gliding on the wind, rising higher and higher, has long been equated with independence. In the 1920s, Britain sent the Simon Commission to India to propose constitutional reforms for the country. The commission was composed entirely of British men, with no Indians included. One of the most important and visible forms of protest against the commission was the flying of kites bearing the slogan "Go Home Simon." Ever since, kites have been an expression of Indian patriotism.

But not all kite flying is so serious. Kite fighting has long been a popular sport in India. Kite strings are covered in glue and ground glass and the goal is to cut the string of an opponent's kite. During the festival, millions of kites are sold for pennies apiece, allowing everyone to participate in this age-old pastime.

Hopping into the New Year

The Chinese New Year on January 22 rang in the Year of the Rabbit. When the Jade Emperor invited the animals to his palace to determine the order of the zodiac, Rabbit proudly, perhaps arrogantly, believed that his speed would certainly make him first. Rabbit set off and did arrive first, but thinking that he had plenty of time, he took a nap. When Rabbit awoke, he found that three other animals had beaten him: Rat, Ox, and Tiger. The arrival of Ox irked him most of all because Rabbit had always considered himself faster and superior to the slow, plodding Ox.

At first glance, those born during the Year of the Rabbit may appear weak or soft, but this belies their natural strength and confidence. Rabbits are social with a natural charisma that attracts others. Smart, reasonable, and always paying attention to detail, Rabbits make excellent scholars. While Rabbits may appear careful and conservative in their actions, they need surprises in their life to prevent things from becoming too routine. Rabbits enjoy a peaceful life taking care of others.

Logophiles Rejoice!



January 9 is a holiday for all the logophiles out there. A logophile is a lover of words, and January 9 is Word Nerd Day. Writers, those accomplished weavers of words, advise time and again to seek out simplicity. Mark Twain: "Don't use a five-dollar word when a fifty-cent word will do." Ernest Hemingway: "There are older and simpler and better words, and those are the ones I use." Stephen King: "Any word you have to hunt for in the thesaurus is the wrong word." But what do these writers know? Today is the day to ignore their advice and embrace the weird and wonderful words that make language so vibrant! Anneal your vocabulary by engaging in elocutionary gymnastics!

Finding a Lost Art

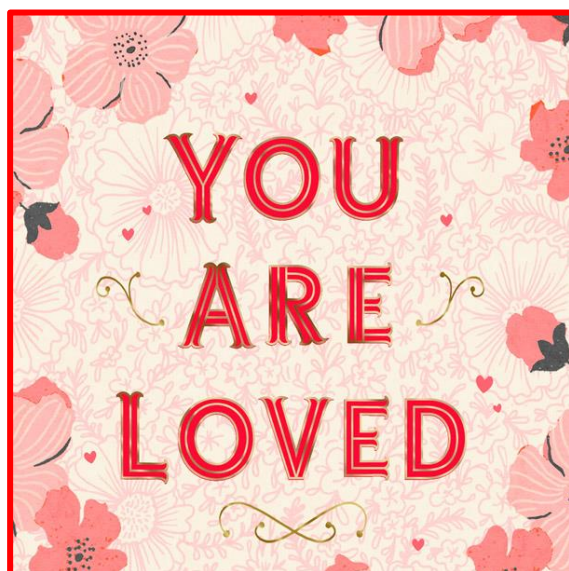
You may not realize it, but if you send a valentine through the mail on February 7, you are celebrating Send a Card to a Friend Day. Despite the ubiquity of electronic communications like text messages and social media posts, the art of sending mail by post has not been lost entirely. Sending a thoughtful letter to a friend or loved one is a surefire way to show that special someone exactly how dear they are to you.

While a greeting card purchased from a store is a nice gesture, the best card-sender does more than just sign their name. Demonstrate thoughtfulness by personalizing your message. Reflect on a memory or moment you shared with your loved one that really meant something to you. List the qualities you most admire about your friend or what you most miss about them, or thank them for a valuable lesson they taught you. Finally, sign off with a thoughtful question and encourage them to write back.

Handwriting a letter won't just make their day, but the act of writing is a powerful one for you, too. Writing has been proven to reduce stress, strengthen memory, and sharpen your wit, all at the same time. If you feel particularly inspired, you could compose an original poem. After all, it is believed that poetry is what gave us the Valentine's Day we know and celebrate today.

While Valentine's Day has been celebrated as the religious feast day of St. Valentine since the fifth century, it wasn't until 1382 that Valentine's Day became a secular holiday for romantics. That was when Geoffrey Chaucer, the writer from the High Middle Ages best known for *The Canterbury Tales*, penned his poem *Parlement of Foules*.

In this poem, he declares Valentine's Day as the date when mating season begins for both birds and humans. Over the following centuries, young lovers seized on February 14 as the day to express their adorations with the sending of flowers, chocolates, jewelry, and of course, valentines. If you plan on sending one of this year's 190 million Valentine's Day cards, make sure to personalize it for the one you love.



Our residents' introductions.

We would like to share with you what our, friends and neighbors would like to tell us about themselves; what they like, where they grew up and what is important to them. It is their story. in their own words.



Hello My Name is Patrick.

I am legally blind.

I was born in Burnaby. My mom was a shoe maker and my dad was a barber. I have two younger sisters: Susan and Eileen. We are pretty close.

I was married and I have a son – Shawn who is handsome - just like me.

I have one granddaughter.

I was a trucker. I loved working on my trucks. I also used to play football and I was very good at it.

My favorite color is blue.

My favorite food is pizza.

I am an animal lover. I love dogs. I had a German Shepard; her name was Tara. She was extremely intelligent. She always did what she was told to do.



Hello my Name is Dorothy.

I was born in Vancouver. I came from a family of two children. My sister's name is Dawn, because she was born in the morning.

My dad was born in Ontario and my mom was born in Norway.

When I finished my studies, I started working in the movie industry, where I met my husband Stewart. We had two children: Karen and Janet. They are both married. I have a granddaughter and one great-granddaughter.

I love animals. In the past I had two cats: Magic and Sandy. I also had a dog - a Maltese terrier. His name was Pepei. He was very smart. When my husband was coming home from work, Pepei was jumping on the couch, looking out the window, anticipating my husband. He knew what time Stewart was coming home.

My favorite color is pink. My favorite food is Shepard pie.

I always keep busy and participate in the recreation therapy programs. I love to do crafts.

I have been in Kopernik Lodge for thirteen years; where I am happy and enjoy all the festivities organized here.

Heart vs. Head

When it comes to making decisions, must we always choose between listening to our heads and following our hearts? In 2007, inspirational speaker Deb Kulkula decided that she no longer wanted to choose one over the other, so she declared February Renaissance of the Heart Month, an entire month dedicated to making decisions with the heart as well as the intellect.

Many people insist that the best decision-making is data-driven and entirely logical, emphasizing the importance of keeping a “cool head.” Emotions (sometimes called *intuition* or *instinct*) are often seen to cloud or muddy the decision-making process. Society also tends to influence our decision-making. When it comes to finding a job, people will often follow their heads rather than their hearts. Attractive incentives like higher pay, more prestige, and better benefits take precedence over a low-paying dream job that might satisfy a lifelong passion. And yet when it comes to finding a life partner or choosing a pet, we let our hearts guide us. Culture has told us that when it comes to jobs, we follow our heads, but when it comes to relationships, it's okay to follow our hearts. The scientific truth is that decision-making almost always requires both cognitive and emotional thinking.

Studies show that almost every decision is really a struggle between our emotions and intellect. Studies of individuals with damage to the emotional centers of their brains show that these people struggle mightily with decision-making. This is because we use both our intellect and emotions to calculate risk and reward, the primary drivers of decision-making.

Relying solely on emotion or intellect to make decisions often drives us to make poor choices. As brains develop from childhood and people amass both good and bad life experiences, we fine-tune our abilities to calculate risk and reward. The wisdom that comes with old age develops from the hard-won lessons taught to both our heads and our hearts.

Keeping busy

At any age, we all have the same basic needs to explore, have fun, learn, and live life to the fullest. Recreational activities are a great way to bring fun into our lives. Socializing with friends, meeting new people, playing games, singing, doing purposeful crafts often go a long way towards our well-being.

In Kopernik Lodge we assist our residents to lead healthier, happier lives. Our dedicated staff takes a great pride in delivering exceptional care that is compassionate, safe, and resident-centered. We strive to meet our residents' physical, emotional and spiritual needs focusing on each resident's personal requirements, and preferences. We offer holistic care, enriching activities and exciting social programs.

At our Kopernik Lodge there is always something to do. We work hard and we play hard. Whether we do it alone or with others, we always keep busy.

We celebrate holidays and have great parties. We also make seasonal decorations and crafts. Not only we have fun doing them, but we also take pride sharing them with others and displaying them in our home.

We enjoy various games, such as the Foosball Table - soccer game. The game is bringing a lot of joy to our residents. The table was generously donated to us by the family of one of our residents.

Another popular game is Balloon Tennis. During the game we have two teams on each side of the net; we are using pool noodles to hit the balloon. There is lots of fun in playing it. Sometimes, we are surprised to see our residents to do extraordinary things. For example, we would never expect some residents to be able to stretch their arms to hit the balloon. But...they often do! It must be the spirit of competition, the bonding that is felt by those participating in an activity, as well as having so much fun, that makes them do it.







*It's amazing how we seem to
know it all
and yet constantly find something
new to learn
and do*



St. Patrick's Day Celebrations









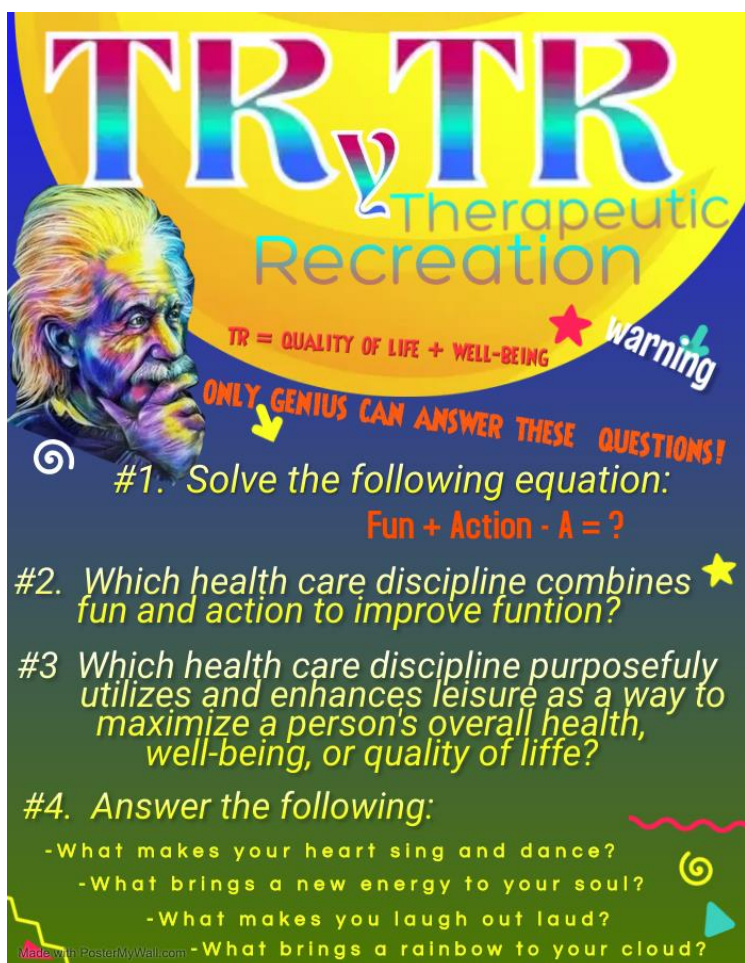
Hello, I am Fanny.

My name is Epifania Villanueva. However, you can call me Fanny. I am new at the Kopernik Lodge and I am working in the Recreation Therapy department as an Activity Aide.

I am married and have one daughter, a 22 years old young lady.

I came to Canada in 2014 and took my recreation courses in 2015. I was a geriatric nurse in Singapore and a surgical nurse in Brunei.

My favorite hobbies are cooking and baking; and my favorite colors are green, blue and pink.



February was Therapeutic Recreation Month

Therapeutic Recreation (TR) is not about diversional therapy, activity for the sake of being busy or a distraction. In residential care Therapeutic Recreation is about bringing joy and quality of life to residents. It is about maintaining each resident's sense of meaning and purpose, and their capacity for happiness, rationality, self-determination, and autonomy. Residential homes are meant to be, first and foremost, homes, places where residents can continue to live a good life. Therapeutic Recreation is vital to creating an environment of living a full life, of thriving, in Residential homes.



The Road to Adulthood

The transition from childhood to adulthood is never easy, and many cultures have coming-of-age rituals to mark this passage. In Japan, the second Monday of January is Coming of Age Day, a national holiday to celebrate and congratulate all who have turned 20 years old within the past year.

Turning 20 is a cultural milestone in Japan and means that young men and women can now legally drive, smoke, consume alcohol, and gamble. But adulthood means far more than these allowances. Adulthood brings with it the burden of new societal responsibilities and expectations. The weight of independence is heavy, and ceremonies and celebrations are designed to lighten the burden.



Every municipality in Japan holds a ceremony at a local city hall, gym, or community center. The new adults wear fabulous kimonos, sure to look their best for their special day.

A mayor or special guest delivers a speech declaring them legal adults. After all the photographs and congratulations, families may venture to a shrine to pray for success and good health. And then it is off to celebrate, where the new adults enjoy their first legal drink of alcohol with their families.

Coming-of-age ceremonies are part of several cultural traditions. Thirteen-year-old Jews celebrate bar and bat mitzvahs. Hispanic cultures celebrate *quinceañeras*, marking a 15-year-old girl's transition from girlhood to womanhood. American girls hold Sweet 16 parties. Sixteen-year-old Amish youth enjoy the rite of passage known as *Rumspringa*, where they formally join the Sunday night singings that are so important for courtship. Some choose to leave the Amish community to experience the world beyond.

In all of these instances, coming-of-age ceremonies serve to assist children in their journey to adulthood and to feel supported by their parents, peers, and community.

Walk on the Wild Side

The first Saturday in April, which this year coincides with April Fools' Day, is International Firewalk Day. Is walking on burning embers for real or an April Fools' trick? Firewalking, the test of walking over embers barefoot, is a religious ritual that dates back to 1200 BC. Its practice was first recorded in India, where two Brahmin priests challenged each other to walk over fire, with the one who walked the farthest winning the competition. Firewalking is also practiced in cultures of Japan, China, Polynesia, amongst Native American tribes, and the Kung people of the Kalahari. It caught on in America after an article detailing the ritual was published in *Scientific American* magazine in the 1970s. But the question remains: Is firewalking safe? Research suggests that it is possible to walk safely over hot embers because they are cool enough to not instantly burn the soles of the feet. In addition, firewalkers move rapidly enough to prevent serious burns.

Bearable Traditions



The first Monday after Twelfth Night, marking the end of the 12 days of Christmas, is Plough Monday, a day when ploughmen traditionally blackened their faces with soot to disguise themselves and carried a decorated plough door-to-door looking for alms, shouting "Penny for the ploughboys!" Work was generally scarce in the winter, and the handouts helped the farmers survive. The Tuesday after Plough Monday brought the Straw Bear Festival, when one of the ploughboys was dressed head to toe in straw to look like a bear. The bear was led through town on a chain and made to dance for gifts of money, beer, or food. The straw bear may come from old harvest festivals, where "Old Man Winter" was driven away to prepare for the planting season.