

January 2019

# Gold Country Gazette

ASSISTED LIVING ACTIVITY DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



## Celebrating January

**All Things New Month**

**Soup Month**

**Paws For a Cause Dogs**

*January 2*

**Storytellers Guild**

*January 9*

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

*January 21*

**Monthly Birthday Party  
with the Sierra Songsters**

*January 22*

**Monthly Bus Trip Day**

*January 25*

## New Year, Lasting Traditions

Another new year begins, and all around the world people will be popping champagne, singing “Auld Lang Syne,” and kissing loved ones at the stroke of midnight. But just why, exactly, do we repeat these New Year’s traditions year after year?

Bubbly champagne is the drink of choice on New Year’s. Its invention is often credited to Dom Perignon, the Benedictine monk who oversaw the wine cellars of his abbey in the year 1697. While others saw bubbles as a problematic sign that wine had spoiled, Perignon perfected the production of this new fermented drink known as champagne. From its beginnings in the abbey cellar, champagne was regularly used in religious celebrations such as consecrations and coronations. It then made the natural transition to secular celebrations, most notably at the soirees of the French aristocracy. As champagne became cheaper and more accessible, it became the classiest beverage to offer during the holidays.

Scotland’s national poet Robert Burns penned the words to “Auld Lang Syne” in 1788 and sent them to the Scots Musical Museum, requesting that his lyrics be set to an old Scottish folk tune. The phrase *auld lang syne* roughly translates to “for old times’ sake,” and, fittingly, the nostalgic song is about preserving friendships. The tune was often sung at funerals, farewells, and other group celebrations. It finally made it to America in 1929, when the Guy Lombardo Orchestra played it at a New Year’s celebration in New York’s Roosevelt Hotel.

No New Year’s party is complete without a kiss at the stroke of midnight. In ancient times, the winter darkness was the domain of evil spirits. At New Year’s masquerade balls, scary masks were torn off at midnight, and a kiss was shared as an act of purification to chase away malign spirits. For centuries, New Year’s has been a time of celebration, nostalgia, and hope.

## Nothing Trivial



It is a little-known fact that January 4 is Trivia Day. Ahh, trivia, which for many is considered useless or trivial knowledge. But the word *trivia* has nothing to do with the useless or unimportant.

Rather, it comes from the Latin word *trivium*, which means “crossroads” or “place where three roads meet.” From *trivium* came the word *trivialis*, meaning “found everywhere” or “commonplace.” In medieval times, the *Trivium* of academia referred to a threefold curriculum of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, as opposed to the *Quadrivium* of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. In fact, the *Trivium* was considered the essential foundation of a full liberal arts education as far back as in ancient Greece, as explained by Plato in his dialogues. As you can see, there is nothing at all trivial about the *Trivium* or about the meaning of the word *trivia*.

Researchers even argue that trivia games are good for the brain. People enjoy guessing answers to questions about little-known facts. Psychology professor John Kouinos explains that your brain experiences a dopamine rush when getting the answer right. It just makes the brain feel good. Kouinos compares collecting facts to a person who collects stamps. “The more, and the rarer, the better,” he says. Psychologist Deborah Stokes also points out that retaining information, no matter how useless that information may be, is like exercise for the frontal cortex of the brain as it ages. Moreover, trivia games often don’t happen in isolation. People enjoy playing trivia games in social settings, which is an added bonus to brain health.

To get you ready for your next trivia challenge, check out these weird bits of knowledge: Oscar the Grouch was originally orange and didn’t turn green until the second season of *Sesame Street*; Hydrox creme-filled chocolate sandwich cookies were invented four years before Oreos; and Wayne Allwine, the voice of Mickey Mouse, married Russi Taylor, the voice of Minnie Mouse.

## Bye-Bye to Dry

The cold, dry winter air can wreak havoc on sensitive skin and cause chronic dryness. Luckily, January 8 is Winter Skin Relief Day, a day to take some small steps to ease the discomfort of dry skin. Skin lotions and moisturizers are helpful, but dermatologists also recommend taking shorter showers. This may be the number one cause of dry skin. A long, hot shower strips the skin of its natural oils, degrading our best barrier against cold, dry air. Dermatologist Joshua Zeichner recommends showers less than 10 minutes and no hotter than 84 degrees. Many common cleansers and soaps are alkaline, and washing often disrupts the natural acidic pH of our skin. Look for soaps that are pH balanced. These will have a less deleterious effect on the skin. Moisturizer is key. Applying a thick and oily cream while the skin is still damp will improve absorption, but don’t apply too much. Dr. Zeichner explains that constant moisturizing may tell the skin that it doesn’t need to maintain its own hydration. These small changes to your routine may ease some uncomfortable symptoms of dry skin.

## Burst Your Bubble



We wrap up the last Monday in January with Bubble Wrap Day, a day to pop to your heart’s content. Why do we get such satisfaction from popping bubble wrap? The answer may lie in the healing power of touch. Psychology professor Kathleen Dillon turned to the ancient Greeks for an answer, and she came up with a “fingering piece” or “worry stone,” often a smooth stone carried in a pocket. Rubbing the stone with one’s fingers brought about a soothing sense of calm. The same sense of relaxation has been attributed to Catholic rosary beads and the practice of doing needlework. Keeping our fingers busy, it seems, has an intensely calming effect. So, too, does popping bubble wrap. When we are stressed, our muscles tense. Tiny actions such as rubbing stones, tapping fingers, wiggling feet, or popping bubble wrap release nervous energy, and with each burst bubble, more tension is released and the happier we get.

## From the Desk of Sandy...

As we start a new year – 2019 I want to again thank you for your support throughout 2018 and ask for it to continue as we begin another year. Remember we are here to help; and we have wonderful team members anxious to help you with solutions. Ask, call, email – just let us help!

December also brought us a holiday surprise - our Annual surprise State Inspection. CMS requires the State of California to inspect us every 9-15 months. This survey has usually been in January for the last five years. Well SURPRISE, they arrived on our doorstep a full 5 weeks early this year – December 10. We do not have the results yet, but anticipate we will again do very well. Our health center team is proud of the fact that our resident's love us – we have not had a state "complaint" visit for almost 4 years. This is not the norm and we attribute it to the personal attention each person gets in Skilled Nursing! Other similar facilities surrounding us have dozens of complaint visits – so KUDOS to our skilled nursing team for their hard work.

For our residents and families in the Assisted Living, thank you for your patience as we add new handrails and new call bells. Both have been a bit of a pain with challenges that we didn't foresee. We will get them finished here in the next few weeks.

IF YOU ARE FEELING UNDER THE WEATHER; we ask you to discourage visitors and avoid going out and about until you feel you are no longer contagious.

Finally as we usher in a new year, we know you are the reason for our success! Thank you for your ever present support; we love hearing your compliments, kudo's and praises. Thank you for being with us through thick and thin!

Have a problem, question, or Idea? email me [sandy.haskins@rhf.org](mailto:sandy.haskins@rhf.org) or call 621-1100 x 4043

Sandy Haskins

## January Birthdays

In astrology, those born between January 1–19 are Capricorn's Goats. Goats are focused on lofty goals; these hardworking and determined souls will prevail with grit and resilience.

Those born between January 20–31 are Water Bearers of Aquarius. Water Bearers are deep-thinking intellectuals, unafraid of exploring outlandish ideas. Their strong sense of community makes them good friends and valuable team members.

Betsy Ross (folk hero) – January 1, 1752  
 Zora Neale Hurston (writer) – January 7, 1891  
 David Bowie (musician) – January 8, 1947  
 Alexander Hamilton (politician) – January 11, 1755  
**Earnestine H. (resident) – January 13th**  
 Faye Dunaway (actress) – January 14, 1941  
 A.A. Milne (writer) – January 18, 1882  
 Edgar Allan Poe (writer) – January 19, 1809  
 Benny Hill (comedian) – January 21, 1924  
 Virginia Woolf (writer) – January 25, 1882  
 Bessie Coleman (aviator) – January 26, 1892  
**Sandra S. (resident) – January 28th**  
 Tom Selleck (actor) – January 29, 1945



### Gold Country Retirement and Health Centers

Is Proud to Salute

### OUR FABULOUS ACTIVITY TEAM MEMBERS

during

**NATIONAL ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL WEEK**  
January 20-26, 2019

Angela Chuculate  
 Maureen Thompson  
 Darlene Chilton  
 Sarah Schoener  
 Mary Fatooh  
 Caillan Bower

Nancy Feather  
 Kathleen Camilleri  
 Jo Ann Cain-Stiles  
 Amanda Parks  
 Dixie Adams

(including our Bus Drivers)

**"Creating Memories, Enriching Lives"**  
 The Staff & Residents of Gold Country  
 Salute You!

**THIS PAGE RESERVED FOR CALENDAR**