

# J.E. Journal

DECEMBER 2023

## At A Glance



Enjoy some peppermint bark!



Happy Holidays!

Managed by



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## From the Desks of the Co-Presidents

Julie Simpkins & Greg Echols

Touching Lives stories hold a place in our hearts from all our communities and residents. This short story comes from Green Oaks at

Park Forest:

JoJo, has lived at Green Oaks of Park Forest for 9 yrs. 4 mos. She has been the president of resident council an ambassador for new residents, and our bartender for happy hour. She is very independent by cleaning her own apartment, she does her own laundry, and washes her dishes. Everyone knows JoJo. She has a regular routine. One particular day she wasn't downstairs 30 minutes early to wait for Bingo to begin. A resident said, "Melissa go check on her." Melissa went up to her apartment and found her sitting on the floor with her shoes in one direction and her glasses another. When asked how you got there, she replied, "where?" "You are on the floor." Melissa called down to the nurse to come up and bring an aide with you. They checked her vitals and sent her out to the hospital for observation. Upon returning, she didn't remember anything. She lost her memory for two weeks after this. Once she was feeling better, she was able to go back to her old routine. When asked about this experience, she says her angel (Melissa) found her. She said she doesn't know how long she would have been on the floor if she wasn't found at 1:30. JoJo just celebrated her 96th birthday this year. She has had a fascinating life. She continues to impress anyone that meets her.

We enjoy getting to know our residents, and short stories like this touch our lives as well as everyone's! We hope each and every one of our staff, residents, families, and friends have a great holiday season!





# IN THE NEWS

## ABOUT THE MONTH OF DECEMBER AND SNOW

Rick Banas



Walt Disney was born in Chicago on Dec. 5, 1901. As a little boy, he liked to draw farm animals. At the age of 27, his first cartoon, titled “Steamboat Willie”, made its debut.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on Dec. 6, 1865. The amendment abolished slavery.

American humorist, cartoonist, and writer James Thurber was born on Dec. 8, 1894, in Columbus, Ohio. His cartoons and short stories were published in the New Yorker. He is best known for writing “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty,” a story about a henpecked, daydreaming hero.

Anesthesia was used for the first time on a patient at a hospital in London, England, on Dec. 21, 1846.

Dec. 26 is National Candy Cane Day. Originally, candy canes were solid white sticks of sugar. As legend has it, a choirmaster in Germany in the late 1600s asked a local candy maker for some sugar sticks that he could hand out to the fidgety choirboys to keep them quiet during the traditional Living Creche ceremony at the cathedral on Christmas Eve. In light of the occasion, the sticks were bent to resemble a shepherd’s staff. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, red stripes were added. Candy canes reportedly are the number one non-chocolate selling candy in December.



Snow is actually translucent. It is the light reflecting off the snow that makes it appear white.

The snowiest city in the world is in Japan. On average, the city of Aomori in northern Japan gets 312 inches of snow a year. That is 26 feet of snow.

The Mt. Baker ski area in Washington state holds the record for the most snowfall in a single season – 1140 inches – 95 feet – in 1998-99.

It has snowed in places where you would least expect it, including the Sahara Desert and Hawaii. In 2011, the Atacama Desert in Chile, which is considered the driest place on earth, received 32 inches of snow.

December is National Pear, National Egg Nog and National Fruit Cake Month. The oldest versions of fruit cake date back to the Roman Empire. They were essentially an energy bar made by the Romans to sustain their soldiers in battle. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, fruit cakes were outlawed in Europe because they were so rich they were considered sinful.



# WELLNESS

## Holidays and Family

Deborah Denham RN, MSN, CPPS, CPHRM

Family- you can't live with them, and you can't live without them. Family dynamics can be complicated for some and smooth sailing for others, some people do not have any close family members. Some people want to spend time with their families and then others are pulling the curtains and ducking behind the couch when the holidays come.

Memories, I believe, are what family is about. Hopefully good memories, though some people's experiences may not be featured on the Hallmark channel. When my family gets together, we inevitably share stories about past experiences, holidays and the memories of our past relatives and friends' antics, mishaps or successes. Looking back on holidays, what are your favorite memories, ones that make you laugh and ones that make you say, "Let me tell you about...."?

Children develop their family story script from these get togethers and memories. I have very fond memories of my aunts from both sides of my family. Not because they were loving and sweet, but because they were some of the most unique and crazy people I ever saw. I think aunts hold a special place because they can do wild and crazy things, wear wild and crazy clothes and behave in a manner unlike your mother or father. Do you have any memorable aunts?

This year I was very hopeful to have my family get together all at the same time. I explained it was for the "Grands". The grandparents to see the grandkids while they are still with us and the grandkids to experience the more mature generation and learn the social graces that accompany that hierarchy. I am now in the "middle", handing off and training the next layer that will be taking over hosting and accommodating family. We learned from our parents and friends or by spending time with those we respected and found endearing. This holiday season, I am hoping we can help create memories for the younger layers and the Grands that they will tell their children.

If you have the opportunity to help create memories for someone else this season, please do. Share your stories with others. Don't hold back when in your family gathering, whatever that looks like now for you, all of you are part of a story to someone. Happy Holidays.

## Recipe Corner Peppermint Bark

- 12 oz white chocolate, chopped
- 12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- 1-1/2 tsp. peppermint extract
- 2 tsp. canola oil
- 5 candy canes, crushed

### Directions

1. Prepare the pan you choose to use by lining it with parchment paper or foil.
2. Melt your semi-sweet chocolate in a microwave safe bowl with 1tsp canola oil in 30 second bursts until melted. Stir in 3/4 tsp. peppermint extract and spread evenly in your pan. Chill until firm, about 15 min
3. Melt your white chocolate and 1 tsp. canola oil in the microwave in 30 sec bursts until melted. Stir in 3/4 tsp. peppermint extract. Spread evenly over the semi-sweet chocolate layer and top with crushed candy canes.
4. Chill until firm, then break into pieces!





# LIFESTYLE

## Birthdays/Anniversaries

### Resident Birthdays:

Lucy T. 12-4  
Sandy L. 12-5  
Don M. 12-5  
Sheila H. 12-17  
Delores V. 12-17  
Robert Ha. 12-21  
Buddy C. 12-24  
Carol P. 12-26  
Sharon C. 12-27  
Bobby C. 12-28

### Staff Work Anniversaries:

Peggy B. 10 Years

### Welcome New Staff

Riley-Dietary  
Ella- Dietary  
Beverly-CNA

## A Note from the Executive Director

Melanie Daniels

Winter is here! This is just a reminder to let staff know if you are going outside to walk. Wear extra layers of clothing. Make sure to let us know if sidewalks need any removal of snow or ice before walking on unsafe areas.



## Christmas Party

Beth Squires

Our annual resident Christmas Party will be December 22nd at 2:00 p.m.! 4 on the Floor will entertain and cookies and hot chocolate will be served!

## New Year's Eve Party

- December 29th
- Rich Gilmore entertaining
- 2:00 p.m.



# LIFESTYLE

## Upcoming events

Date: December 4th Time: 4:30 /6:15 p.m.

Location: Lobby

Details:

We will travel to East Peoria for the Festival of Lights display.

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Date: December 5th Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Dining Room

Details:

Friends in Harmony will give a short rendition of their public Christmas Performance.

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Date: December 11th Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Dining Room

Details:

Prairie Fiddlers will be here to present their Christmas Program.

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Date: December 12th Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Dining Room

Details:

We are so grateful to be able to bring a brass ensemble from The Peoria Pops Orchestra to John Evans. The 5 piece brass ensemble will be here December 12th @ 6:30 p.m.

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Date: December 18th Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Dining Room

Details:

Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long with Winston Dunbar. Join us along with our song books to sing festive songs of the season!

## Horoscope

### Aquarius (1/20-2/18)

Social contacts will help you get the right projects.

### Pisces (2/19-3/20)

Expect good results from financial activities.

### Aries (3/21-4/19)

Health will be great and enjoyable with plenty of activities.

### Taurus (4/20-5/20)

Expect to study more in your classes.

### Gemini (5/21-6/20)

Expect to have a long term perspective on your ambitions

### Cancer (6/21-7/22)

Try to focus on your execution in all your projects

### Leo (7/23-8/22)

Your family life will be full of happiness this month

### Virgo (8/23-9/22)

Love life will be fabulous this month

### Libra (9/23-10/21)

The Sun and Mars will help you in your growth

### Scorpio (10/22-11/21)

Family affairs paint a bright picture

### Sagittarius (11/22-12/21)

It's time to start fresh. Think of goals for the new year!

### Capricorn (12/22-1/19)

Finances will grow this month. Be smart!





# ANSWERS

## Christmas Word Search

Answer sheet

The word search grid is shaped like a Christmas tree. The words found are:

- C
- J
- A
- J
- X
- C
- N
- W
- N
- E
- Z
- X
- D
- R
- Q
- E
- O
- L
- E
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- R
- H
- U
- N
- C
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- V
- R
- N
- L
- E
- R
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