

December 2014

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A Senior Solutions Management Property



December by the Numbers

25. Number of squares on a typical bingo card. December is the game's birthday month.

100. Color varieties available for poinsettias. Red, white and pink are the most popular.

15 billion. Pieces of mail the U.S. Postal Service estimates it will deliver between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve.

Popcorn Pick: 'Eight Below'

When a winter storm forces the evacuation of a science research station in Antarctica, the explorers are forced to leave behind the base's team of eight faithful sled dogs. The brutal weather conditions postpone a rescue mission for the dogs until spring. This 2006 Disney adventure-drama follows the dogs' struggle to survive the season alone and their guide's determined battle to save his canine companions.



Peppermint Pick-Me-Up

Whether in candy canes, lotion or tea, peppermint is popular this time of year. Use it to give yourself an instant pick-me-up. The scent stimulates blood flow to the brain, which increases alertness.

A Snack for Sleep

Having trouble sleeping and tired of counting sheep? Try a banana for a nighttime snack. The fruit contains tryptophan, which can make you drowsy. Bananas are also rich in the minerals magnesium and potassium, which help relax your muscles.

Soothing Soak

Do you have joint pain when participating in hands-on activities, such as knitting or playing cards? Soak your hands in a basin of warm water for five to 10 minutes before you begin; this will loosen your joints and reduce pain.

Say 'Oui' to Wii

Keep on enjoying those athletic games on the Wii. As well as providing fun and exercise, research shows that engaging in active-play video gaming can make it easier for players to begin or maintain other physical fitness activities, such as walking or playing tennis.

Do Something New

As a new year approaches, vow to try something out of the ordinary every week. Whether it's a new activity, friend, food or simply learning a new word, bringing something different into your world can enhance brain health and enrich your life.



Talk About It

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

The holiday season means different things to different people, but no matter what special event you celebrate, you likely have plenty of fond memories of it. Use the questions below to start a discussion about your holiday favorites.

What is your favorite holiday this time of year? Why?

Do you remember a particular holiday gift that left a lasting impression on you? If so, what was it, and who gave it to you?

Have you ever given someone a memorable gift? What was the recipient's reaction?

Holiday music ranges from sacred to sentimental to silly. Do you have a favorite holiday song? What is it? Do you have a special memory associated with the tune?

Gadget Gifts With Grand Appeal

Nearly every holiday gift guide features high-tech gadgets, such as tablet computers and electronic readers—products seemingly geared toward younger generations. But many of these devices appeal to seniors, too. Here's why:

Tablets. Bigger and easier to read than a smartphone but more lightweight and portable than a laptop computer, tablets seem tailor-made for seniors. With a tablet, you can access the Internet, read and send emails to your loved ones, watch movies, play games and puzzles, take pictures, and talk with long-distance friends and family via video chat.

E-readers. Although you can use a tablet to download books, magazines and newspapers, electronic readers are less expensive, even more lightweight, and provide a better reading experience thanks to their glare-resistant screens and other

features. Best of all, e-readers save space by storing thousands of books and other materials that you can easily carry with you wherever you go.

Portable digital music players. Whether you're crooning along to classic hits from your younger years or new favorites, music brings joy to our lives and can even be a form of therapy. Portable digital music players will store your song collection—in addition to audio books and talk radio podcasts—that you can listen to when riding in a car or just relaxing at home.

Many high-tech gadgets appeal to seniors as well as younger generations



Cinematic Celebration

This year marks the 75th anniversary of "Gone With the Wind," considered by many to be the greatest film of all time. Based on Margaret Mitchell's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about love in the Old South during the Civil War era, the motion picture is among the most popular and widely known films. Here, however, are some facts that might surprise you.

Selecting Scarlett. More than 1,400 actresses interviewed for the role

of heroine Scarlett O'Hara. Joan Crawford, Katharine Hepburn and Bette Davis were among the most famous ones considered before Vivien Leigh was cast.

Breaking barriers. Hattie McDaniel's portrayal of lovable, yet no-nonsense servant Mammy not only captured the hearts of viewers, but earned McDaniel an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. She was the first African-American to win an Oscar.

Famous facade. Tara, the fictional family plantation of the O'Hara family, is still one of the most requested tourist attractions in Atlanta. Visitors are disappointed to learn that the stately home doesn't exist and was only a stage set built on a Hollywood studio lot.



Help for Arthritic Hands

For people with arthritis, everyday actions, such as opening a door or writing a list, can be a painful struggle. Several simple exercises, done a few times a week, can soothe arthritis symptoms. Check with your health care provider to see if the following exercises are right for you:

Thumb touch. Keeping your movements slow and smooth, touch each fingertip to your thumb, starting with the index finger and moving toward the pinkie. This movement helps to increase the range of motion in thumbs, making it easier to pick up small objects such as a toothbrush or spoon.

Palm press. To relieve pain, place your palm on a table and straighten your fingers until your hand is flat. Do not force your joints. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds, then release.

Wrist workout. Stretch your arm in front of you. Bend your wrist backward, then forward. Next, stretch your wrist the other direction by turning your palm to the ceiling, then back to face the floor.

Strength squeeze. Improve your grip by squeezing a soft ball in your palm as hard as you can. Hold for a few seconds, then release. For stronger pinching power, grip the ball between your thumb and your fingertips and hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Do both of these exercises two or three times a week, resting your hands for 48 hours between sessions.

Wreaths Across America

Remember. Honor. Teach. This is the simple but important mission of Wreaths Across America, an organization that has grown from humble beginnings to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, honor those who serve, and teach children about the price that has been paid for our freedoms.

In 1992, Morrill Worcester, owner of a wreath company in Maine, found himself with a bumper supply as the holidays neared. Remembering a childhood trip to Arlington National Cemetery, Worcester worked with officials to have the wreaths placed in one of the older sections of the famous resting site. As word of the gesture spread, support grew. The owner of a trucking company offered to transport the wreaths, while volunteers from veterans groups decorated them with red bows.

This continued each year, but it wasn't until 2005 that the tribute received national attention. In 2008, Congress voted to designate Dec. 13 as Wreaths Across America Day. Today, the annual escorted delivery from Maine to Virginia is known as the Veterans Honor Parade, and it stops at schools, veterans' homes and communities along the way. Nearly a quarter million wreaths are placed at more than 500 locations, including every state, Puerto Rico and abroad.

You can learn more about the program at WreathsAcrossAmerica.org.





Remember Me?

She flew from
Neverland, fell in love
in the South Pacific
and taught the von
Trapp children to sing.
Actress Mary Martin
starred in some of
Broadway's biggest
musicals. Learn more
about this legend of
the Great White Way.

She was born Dec. 1, 1913, in Weatherford, Texas.

For her 1949 starring role as Nellie in "South Pacific," a show highlight was her song "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair." It was Martin's suggestion that she really shampoo her hair onstage.

In 1954, Martin enchanted audiences as Peter Pan, both on Broadway and TV broadcasts. She often said it was her favorite role.

Beginning in 1959, she spent two years starring as Maria in "The Sound of Music."

Martin earned three Tony Awards for Best Actress.



"This Month In History" DECEMBER

1900: German physicist Max Planck makes science history with a study originating the quantum theory of physics. He won a Nobel Prize for his work.

1933: Prohibition ends upon ratification of the U.S. Constitution's 21st Amendment.

1936: King Edward VIII voluntarily abdicates the throne of England in order to marry American socialite Wallis Simpson.

1955: In Montgomery, Ala., Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a public bus and is arrested. Her act became the symbolic beginning of the civil rights movement.

1956: Dubbed the "Million Dollar Quartet," Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley strike up an impromptu jam session at the legendary Sun Record Studios in Memphis. **1972:** The three astronauts of Apollo 17, the last lunar-landing expedition, return to Earth after a 10-day mission.

1991: The Soviet Union is dissolved, marking an end to the Cold War.

2006: Football running back LaDainian Tomlinson scores his 29th touchdown for the San Diego Chargers, breaking the NFL record for most touchdowns scored in a single season.

2009: "Avatar," directed by James Cameron, debuts and beats his earlier film "Titanic" as the highest-grossing film of all time.

