

January 2015

THE TATTLER

Treemont Retirement Community, 2501 Westerland Drive, Houston, Texas 77063 / 713-783-6820



Celebrating January

**Adopt a Rescued Bird
Month**

Mentoring Month

**International Creativity
Month**

**Universal Letter Writing
Week**
January 8–14

Vocation Awareness Week
January 13–19

Buffet Day
January 2

Twelfth Night
January 5

Midwife's Day
January 8

Cut Your Energy Costs Day
January 10

Belly Laugh Day
January 24

**Bubble Wrap
Appreciation Day**

A Whole Year of New Years

Many people around the globe will be counting down the seconds until January 1 to shout, "Happy New Year!" But there are also many people who won't be celebrating a new year on January 1. Some cultures do not even consider it to be the year 2015!

For many Chinese, the New Year festival is the most important of the year. February 19 marks the beginning of the year of the sheep, considered an unlucky year, for those born as sheep are said to be meek.

New Year's in Thailand, known as Songkran, is celebrated over three days from April 13–15. The Thai people take the notion of spring cleaning seriously, and they celebrate their New Year each spring with a festival of throwing water. Coincidentally, April is also the hottest month in Thailand, so thousands of people drenching each other with water in the streets provides the perfect means of escape from the scorching heat and suffocating humidity.

It is tradition amongst both Ethiopians and Jewish people to celebrate their New Year in September. Enkutatash in Ethiopia falls on September 11, marking the end of the rainy season and commemorating the return of the Queen of Sheba to Ethiopia after her visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem in 980 BC. The Ethiopian calendar is also eight years behind the Western calendar, so the year 2015 will be 2008.

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, begins at sundown on September 13. It will be year 5776 on the Hebrew calendar! It is customary for this first high holiday to be announced with the blowing of the shofar, which is a hollowed-out ram's horn.

Those of the Islamic faith do not celebrate their New Year until the evening of October 13, which marks the first day of the month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, and the year will be 1437.



Hi-Yo, Silver!

The call of “Hi-Yo, Silver! Away!” first echoed on Detroit’s WXYZ radio station on January 30, 1933. A mysterious masked cowboy known as the Lone Ranger went on to become one of the most famous and influential

western heroes of the 20th century and beyond.

WXYZ station owner George Trendle and writer Fran Striker co-developed the idea of *The Lone Ranger*, yet neither of them had any experience with cowboys or the Wild West. To them, this hardly mattered. After seeing the success of the movie *The Mask of Zorro*, they wanted to develop an American version of a masked swashbuckler. Furthermore, they wanted their hero to set an example of good morals and to stand for truth, justice, and freedom. The show was an instant success and eventually drew an audience of 20 million faithful listeners three times a week.

The writers did not worry about historical accuracy. This was perhaps most evident in the character of Tonto, the Lone Ranger’s faithful Native American sidekick, who uttered simple phrases and groans. During early episodes, the Lone Ranger was often stuck talking to his horse, Silver. The writers realized they needed a second character, so they introduced Tonto on February 25, 1933. Like the Lone Ranger, Tonto was also a model of justice and truth, and often provided the brains of the duo.

By the 1950s, *The Lone Ranger* had moved to film and television, and starred Clayton Moore as the masked hero. The western craze hit full stride, and a string of hit shows followed: *The Roy Rogers Show*, *The Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok*, *Bonanza*, *Gunsmoke*, *Maverick*, and *Rawhide*. Some argue that the western declined with the Red Scare, the Space Race, and the Cold War. Yet others contend that westerns never went out of style. *The Lone Ranger* struck gold in 1933, and westerns have been treasured ever since.

The Magic Touch

The ingenious system of raised dots that are “read” through the fingertips by the blind is known as braille and is named for the Frenchman Louis Braille. As a student at the National Institute for Blind Youth in Paris, Braille loved to read and craved a wider variety of books. His mission was to create a new alphabet for the blind, and, at age 15, he developed braille. January 4, World Braille Day, celebrates his achievement and his birthday.

Braille based his alphabet on a secret military code developed by Captain Charles Barbier de la Serre for Napoleon’s French Army. This code of dots, known as *écriture nocturne*, or “night writing,” was a way for soldiers to communicate silently and without a light at night. Barbier visited the Institute for Blind Youth in Paris to present his system. Braille quickly mastered Barbier’s system, discovered its flaws, and developed his new system. When he presented his improvements to Barbier in person, the old army Captain was incredulous and offended. History, however, has proven Braille’s contribution to be as important as Gutenberg’s printing press.

Capable Cables

On January 17, Cable Car Day, cable cars all over the world will garner attention. Cable cars use cables to pull them up or lower them down. San Francisco’s iconic cable cars are moved



by a system of cables underneath the street. The high-flying cable gondolas of Rio de Janeiro carry people to the Christ the Redeemer statue atop Sugarloaf Mountain. The valley of Gulmarg—the Himalayan “meadow of flowers” in India’s Jammu and Kashmir regions—boasts the highest cable car ride at 13,058 feet. One of the longest cable car rides is in Switzerland’s Alps. The 30-minute journey from the village of Grindelwald to Mannlichen allows visitors to enjoy the rugged Alps without a pair of hiking boots!

Brain Work

January bodes to be a challenging month. It is, after all, International Brainteaser Month. There are brainteasers for every taste. Wordsmiths enjoy crosswords, word jumbles, and acrostics. Mathematicians enjoy sudoku and kakuro. Riddles, logic puzzles, tangrams, ciphers, and even good old-fashioned Rubik's cubes keep our minds sharp.



Just as exercise is healthy for the body, brainteasers are healthy for the brain. Flex your gray matter by answering some of these brainteasers below:

1. A man stands on one side of a river, his dog on the other. The man calls his dog, who immediately crosses the river without getting wet and without using a bridge or a boat. How did the dog do it?
2. In 1990, a person is 15 years old. In 1995, that same person is 10 years old. How could this be?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?

Is your mind too cluttered with irrelevant minutia to solve January's brainteasers? Never fear. Another little known fact is that January 4 is Trivia Day, a day to demonstrate the remarkable benefits of random knowledge. Make some room in your head for these curious tidbits:

- On Good Friday in 1930, the BBC reported, "There is no news." Piano music followed.
- Hydrox cookies debuted in 1908, four years before Oreos.
- Duffel bags originated in the town of Duffel, Belgium, where the thick cloth used to make the bag was manufactured.

Answers: 1. He walked; the river is frozen. 2. The person was born in 2005 BC. 3. Mt. Everest; It was still the highest mountain before it was discovered.

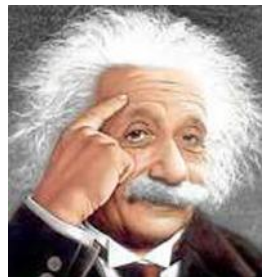
After the Beep

While some people believe that Inane Answering Message Day on January 30 is a day to revise any long, annoying, or otherwise inane answering messages, many believe it is the perfect day to put a smile on your caller's face by recording a silly message for their listening pleasure. Below you'll find some wonderfully inane treasures to record on your answering machine or mobile phone:

"Hello, there. The answering machine is broken. This is the refrigerator. Speak slowly, leave a message, and I'll stick it to myself with one of these magnets."

"This is you-know-who. We are you-know-where. Leave your you-know-what you know when."

"You are calling another dimension, a dimension of no sight, but of sound and mind. A journey into a wondrous land of imagination. That's the sound of the beep up ahead—your next stop, the Twilight Phone."



Isn't That Peculiar?

January 10 is the day to hug the nonconformist in your life—it's Peculiar People Day. The word *peculiar* is not an insult. Some of the most creative scientists and artists were known for their eccentricities. Albert Einstein picked up cigarette butts off the street to collect tobacco for his pipe. Howard Hughes spent days in a chair in the middle of his "germ-free" zone in a Beverly Hills hotel room. Ben Franklin began his days with an "air bath," standing in front of an open window to catch a breeze in his birthday suit. All of these people may have shared a trait that psychologists call "cognitive disinhibition," a failure to ignore irrelevant information. While many filter out unhelpful information, creative types make offbeat connections all day long, leading to peculiarity, yes, but also wonderful innovations.

Happy New Year to all of you. May your year be filled with happiness and the anticipation of new beginnings. May we all focus on the joy of new friends and neighbors, the peace of living in a safe and loving environment and the warmth of old friends and all things familiar.

Your Residents' Council has begun the year with a new Chairman, Chuck Stone. We also have some new members on the Council. The list of Council Members will be posted on the Bulletin Boards across from the mail boxes and down the hall from the Dining Room. Remember, the Council is your voice to Owners and Administration. If you have recommendations, concerns or comments, you may make them to your Building Representative who is a Council Member or any member of Council, including the Chairman. They will bring your suggestion forward for discussion at the next scheduled meeting of the Council.

Lets have a happy and healthy New Year!

Read This, By Cracky!



Dagnabbit, it's time for Talk Like a Grizzled Prospector Day on January 24. You've never heard of it, you say? Perhaps you have heard of James

Marshall, the prospector who, on January 24, 1848, discovered gold that started the California Gold Rush. Almost 100 years later, a farmer named Walter Knott built a western-themed ghost town on his berry farm. Knott's Berry Farm drew a wide audience, thanks to its guarantee that anyone who found gold on the property as part of the "panning for gold" attraction could take it home. Every January 24, Knott's Berry Farm celebrates Marshall's discovery with its annual Prospector's Day parade. So dadgummit, hitch up yer overalls, grab yer dumfungled pan, and get ready to pan the whole consarn territory for the sockdologer of payouts!

January 2015 Birthdays

1 st	Gilbert Petri	B105/106
	Margaret McCoslin	C212
2 nd	Joyce Anderson	E107
	Betty Meers	B204
5 th	Charles Nathan	C113
	Maud Barth	D302
7 th	Kathleen Clawson	E319
	Charles White	C104
9 th	Dan Kaspar	F110
17 th	Joe Sobotik	A309
	Lupe Reyes	D301
18 th	Gene Peebles	A301
19 th	Anne Kruse	A310-311
21 st	Margaret Smith	A202
27 th	Robert Sibley	F113
	Betty Meers	B204
	Peggy Floyd	F308
28 th	Paul Milling	E101
	Eleanor Topkis	F213
29 th	Nanny Phillips	A213
30 th	Eileen Love	A120/121

January's Birthday Dinner celebration will be held Thursday, 1/29/15

January Birthdays

Those born between January 1–19 are Capricorns, the Goat. Capricorn is the most stable and serious sign of the zodiac. Reliable, resourceful, and determined, Capricorns make excellent leaders and managers. Those born between January 20–31 are Aquarius, the Water Bearer. Witty, clever, and honest, Water Bearers desire independence above all and are not afraid to deviate from the crowd to pursue their own interests.

Betsy Ross (flag maker) – January 1, 1752
 Isaac Asimov (author) – January 2, 1920
 Elvis Presley (musician) – January 8, 1935
 Robert Stack (actor) – January 13, 1919
 Vidal Sassoon (designer) – January 17, 1928
 Edgar Allan Poe (author) – January 19, 1809
 Ernest Borgnine (actor) – January 24, 1917
 Wayne Gretzky (athlete) – January 26, 1961
 Oprah Winfrey (TV host) – January 29, 1954
 Gene Hackman (actor) – January 30, 1930