

# Birch Creek Gazette

Birch Creek Assisted Living 525 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St. De Pere WI 54115



## Celebrating May

**Clean Car Month**

**Inventors Month**

**Vinegar Month**

**Teacher Day**

*May 2*

**Astronaut Day**

*May 5*

**Cherish an Antique Day**

*May 9*

**International Nurses Day**

*May 12*

**Endangered Species Day**

*May 19*

**World Lindy Hop Day**

*May 26*

**Memorial Day (U.S.)**

*May 29*

## Resident of the Month

May's Resident of the Month is David B.! David was born in Waukesha, Wis. He married the love of his life, Sandie, and had four incredible children, who gave David 4 beautiful grandchildren.



David's favorite food is spaghetti. He enjoys drinking diet coke during happy hour. His favorite animals are dogs. Some hobbies he has enjoyed are hunting and fishing. David currently enjoys puzzles, bingo and playing the Wii video game system. If he is watching TV, he enjoys watching *Lost in Space*.

David's past profession was a service man for heating and cooling equipment. He enjoyed his trade the entire time in his profession. He has enjoyed traveling to Florida and Canada. Canada was David's favorite trip because of the fishing. David's favorite childhood memory is his dad taking him to visit his Grandma at her house.

The biggest event in David's life was marrying his wife, Sandie. Five things David cannot live without are his wife, kids, TV, church and the Green Bay Packers. Something David would like you to know about him is, he is an easygoing guy.

Birch Creek is honored to have David B. as this month's Resident of the Month.

## Polkomania



Put on your dancing shoes for Polka Weekend on May 26–28. Many places will not only be playing Czech polkas in their dance halls but they'll also be serving up traditional Czech fare like kielbasa sausage, sauerkraut, and kolache pastries with a dollop of fruit.

The popularity of the polka is said to have originated with one woman, Anna Slezakova from Labska Tynice, who invented the dance in 1834. Slezakova created a lively dance to the folk song "Uncle Nimra Bought a White Horse." Music teacher Josef Neruda, who witnessed Anna's new and unique dance, transcribed the tune to paper and taught the steps to his students. By 1835, the dance had spread to Prague. By 1839, it was popular in Vienna, and in 1840, it was introduced in Paris, where it became so popular that it created a so-called "polkomania."

The polka sound is immediately recognizable. Accordions, fiddles, clarinets, and tubas whip up a quick beat for happy dancing feet. The main characteristic of the polka is the half-step, or hop. In fact, the word *polka* likely comes from the Czech word *pulka*, meaning "half." Perhaps the easiest way to understand the rhythm of the polka is through a children's nursery rhyme: "Hippety hop, to the barber shop, to buy a stick of candy." The four counts of the phrase "hippety hop" correspond to the four parts of the dance: step, half-step, step, hold.

The polka may have originated in Bohemia (present-day Czech Republic), but it has spread far and wide to Germany, Austria, Poland, Scandinavia, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As this musical form has traveled, it has evolved into a wide variety of styles. Polkas have even grown throughout South America, where songs praise the gauchos of the pampas. Seeing as the polka is one of the few dances to have maintained its popularity since the 19th century, chances are good that it will remain popular for many years to come.

## Lucky Leprechauns

Two months after Saint Patrick's Day and we're still talking about Ireland's little green-clad men, the leprechauns. These little faeries are so popular they've been awarded a holiday all their own: May 13 is Leprechaun Day.

Long before leprechauns were considered tiny old men hoarding pots of gold at the ends of rainbows, they were water spirits called *luchorpan*, meaning "small body." These spirits eventually morphed into mischievous household sprites that were known to haunt cellars and drink too much. Others believe *leprechaun* comes from the old Irish term *leath bhogán*, meaning "shoemaker." Indeed, leprechauns are considered to be humble cobblers. It is said that you know you're near a leprechaun when you hear the tiny tap-tapping of their shoe hammer. Cobbling must be a booming business, for leprechauns are most famous for their hidden pots of shiny gold coins. These tiny tricksters offer us an important morality lesson: it is folly to try to get rich quick.

## By Any Other Name

May 5 is Hoagie Day, but this may mean nothing to anyone outside of Philadelphia, where this term is used for a big sandwich loaded with meat and cheese. Legend has it that the first version of this mega-sandwich appeared in Connecticut near a Navy submarine base. Italian shopkeeper Benedetto Capaldo served up loaded sandwiches he dubbed "grinders." Once the Navy yard began ordering 500 grinders each day, his creation was renamed the "submarine sandwich." In New York City, the sandwich is called a "hero," which many believe evolved out of a mispronunciation of the Greek "gyro" sandwich. Where did hoagie come from? Another mispronunciation. Shop owner Al De Palma created a massive sandwich fit for a "hog." The Philadelphia accent warped his "hoggie" into the "hoagie."



## As Luck Would Have It

See a penny, pick it up, and all the day you'll have good luck. The notion that a found penny brings good luck is such a popular superstition that it enjoys its own holiday on May 23, Lucky Penny Day.



Why are pennies considered lucky, especially when many of us consider one cent to be worthless? The idea of attributing luck to metal is an ancient custom. It was believed that metal was a gift from the gods. To carry a piece of metal was to carry the gods' blessing and receive protection from evil. For similar reasons, charm bracelets and horseshoes are also considered lucky. Another influence stems from the belief that money brings wealth and power. A penny saved, although only a mere cent, marks the beginning of a lifetime of savings.

Some cultures, like those in Europe and Ireland, believe that if you find a penny you have found one piece of a leprechaun's horde of gold. Tradition advises you to spit on the found coin and toss it into the bushes, returning it to the little magical elves. These enchanting creatures would then return the favor by doing you good deeds.

There are many variations on the lucky penny superstition. Some believe that only heads-up pennies are lucky. If you find a tails-up penny, you should flip it heads-up and leave it for another to find. Others believe that a penny or coin thrown into a fountain or tossed into a well allows you to make a wish. One rhyme advises, "Money on the floor, more at the door." An old Victorian rhyme advises brides what to wear on their wedding days: "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and a silver sixpence in your shoe." This last bit has evolved into "a lucky penny in your shoe."

The legend of the lucky penny has endured, but if you're still skeptical, perhaps you'll change your tune when you learn that one U.S. bank has hidden 100 "lucky" pennies across the country. Each one is worth \$1,000.

## Wild Goose Chase

May 1 is Mother Goose Day, a day honoring the mythical persona behind the ever-popular children's nursery rhymes. Most believe that Mother Goose was a catchall pseudonym for numerous authors, but there are theories as to who the "real" Mother Goose was. The French queen Bertrada of Laon, the mother of Charlemagne, who lived in the 700s, was known as "Goose-foot Bertha." A competing theory attributes the nickname to one Elizabeth Goose from Boston. In 1692, Elizabeth wed Isaac Goose, adding her six children to his 10. With 16 children, she became famously adept at storytelling and singing songs, the lot of which was compiled by her great-grandson into the Mother Goose volume. There is another supposed lost "ghost volume" of Mother Goose tales, which scholars have been searching for to no avail. This legend is so pervasive that many seek out Elizabeth Goose's grave in Boston to pay their respects. Adding to the unsolved mystery of Mother Goose, Elizabeth Goose's grave is unmarked. The visitors, on their goose chase to Elizabeth's grave, are actually visiting someone named Mary Goose.

## Flights of Fancy



Simple sheets of paper will be transformed into fanciful flying machines on May 26, Paper Airplane Day. There are dozens of paper airplane designs, but on May 26, only the best paper planes will win the day. Competitions abound with flyers striving to win in two categories: distance and time in air. The record distance for a paper airplane is 226 feet, 10 inches (about three-quarters of a football field)—a feat recorded at McClellan Air Force Base in California. The plane was folded by John Collins, a famed paper airplane folder, and thrown by Joe Ayoob, a former college football quarterback. The record for time in air is 29.2 seconds, thrown by Takuo Toda and recorded in Japan. Toda calls his design the Sky King Paper Airplane, and it was designed to climb high into the rafters and slowly glide downward.

## Screened Out

In our modern world, more and more things are being digitized, and more and more people are spending time in front of screens: televisions, cell phones, computers, tablets, even



cars and refrigerators are now being made with interactive screens. Some consider these computerized screens to be harmful enough to declare the first week in May Digital Detox Week, a week spent free of the influence of these screens in our lives.

Is “screen time” truly harmful? Some scientists have found screen time to have greater negative influences on kids. One study showed that kids separated from their screens for a week did a better job of reading emotions on other people’s faces than those who spent their days watching TV or playing computer games. This shows that too much screen time perhaps reduces childrens’ abilities to empathize with each other. Kids are not the only ones under the influence of screens. Adults who are on their computers or cell phones before they fall asleep have been shown to suffer through the night. The light from the screen disrupts the brain’s sleep-wake cycle, causing insomnia-like symptoms and sleep deprivation.

We must accept that computers and media such as television and games are a fact of modern living. But how do we strike a healthy balance with these digital devices? One researcher advises that if the sun is shining, then screen time should be limited. There is no digital substitute for a walk outdoors or a visit to the playground. Another suggestion is to strike a balance between the more passive, consumptive nature of sitting in front of screens with active creativity. For every minute spent in front of the TV or a computer game, balance that with cooking, knitting, building a fort, doing a puzzle, or creating an art project. In our digital world, where our every whim seems catered to, it is important to stay engaged and curious with the world beyond our electronic screens.

## May Birthdays

In astrology, those born between May 1–20 are Bulls of Taurus. Bulls are stable, reliable, and committed in both work and family. Bulls also appreciate love, beauty, and creativity, making them true romantics and lovers of the good life. Those born between May 21–31 are Gemini’s Twins. Twins have two distinct and alluring sides to their personality: sociable and ready for fun, or serious and thoughtful. Sometimes they feel as if one half is missing, so they forever seek new friends.

Jack Paar (comedian) – May 1, 1918  
Audrey Hepburn (actress) – May 4, 1929  
Tammy Wynette (singer) – May 5, 1942  
Don Rickles (comedian) – May 8, 1926  
Irving Berlin (songwriter) – May 11, 1888  
L. Frank Baum (author) – May 15, 1856  
Raymond Burr (actor) – May 21, 1917  
Queen Victoria (monarch) – May 24, 1819  
Vincent Price (actor) – May 27, 1911  
Bob Hope (comedian) – May 29, 1903  
Clint Eastwood (actor) – May 31, 1930

## Cola Cure-All



People have been drinking Coca-Cola since May 8, 1888, when the soft drink was first served by Dr. John S. Pemberton at Jacob’s Pharmacy in Atlanta, Georgia. Yes, Coca-Cola was first marketed as a medicinal cure-all beverage for ailments such as headaches, nerve disorders, addictions, and indigestion. By 1900, sales of Coca-Cola had reached 100 million annually. Perhaps this surge in popularity had to do with Coca-Cola’s brilliant marketing strategy of issuing tickets that could be redeemed at any location for a free glass—these tickets are considered the first coupons ever invented. Today Coca-Cola is as popular as ever. And it is still marketed as a medicinal cure for stomach blockages. Apparently, Coca-Cola’s chemical ingredients can cure a condition called gastric phytobezoar with a 90% success rate.



### Staff Birthdays

- Amber Dittman 5/2
- Angie A. 5/18



### Staff Anniversaries

- Karen J. 5/2/2005
- Joshua B. 5/2/2016
- Adrian G. 5/4/2015
- Emily M. 5/16/2016
- Patricia C. 5/23/2013



### Resident Birthdays

- Marlene S. 5/2
- Eunice S. 5/12
- Laoretta M. 5/30



### Dates to Remember

- 5/2 @ 1:30pm Mass with Father Benny
- 5/5 @ 2pm Cinco de Mayo Celebration with Mike Peterson
- 5/5 Happy 46<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alan & Diane!
- 5/6 @ 2pm Music with Jack Heinzl
- 5/8 @ 10:30am Music with Bobby Solberg
- 5/9 @ 1:30pm Empire Beauty School – Manicures
- 5/11 @ 3pm Thibby's Ice Cream Truck – FREE ICE CREAM FOR RESIDENTS, FAMILY, FRIENDS & STAFF
- 5/12 @ 2pm Mothers Day Social with Jeff Gofford
- 5/14 Mothers Day
- 5/16 @ 1:30pm Mass with Father Benny
- 5/17 @ 1:30pm Daydream Acres Petting Zoo
- 5/22 @ 2pm Tie Dye Towels/Shirts
- 5/23 @ 2pm Birch Creek Boutique
- 5/24 @ 1pm Lutheran Worship
- 5/30 @ 2pm Resident Council
- 5/31 @ 2pm Taste of Birch Creek

## Daydream Acres



May 17<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30pm Daydreams Acres will be bringing a traveling petting zoo to Birch Creek! The animals we will see are 2 alpacas, 2 jersey woolie bunnies, 1 miniature goat, 1 miniature donkey and 1 or 2 miniature horse. Life Enrichment staff will be taking photos for local news station WFRV. Birch Creek Life Enrichment staff will ensure residents who do not wish to have their pictures used, are not used for WFRV's promotion. Birch Creek will have a release form specifically for this date. We might have another local news station stopping by. If so, we will post signs and contact individuals as needed. If you have questions, please contact the Life Enrichment staff or Karen at the front desk. We hope to see you May 17<sup>th</sup>!