Notable Quotable

"As long as the world is turning and spinning, we're gonna be dizzy and we're gonna make mistakes."

~ *Mel Brooks, filmmaker*

December Horoscopes and Birthdays

In astrology, those born between December 1–21 are centaur archers of Sagittarius. Archers are curious, energetic, and enjoy change, the restless travelers of the zodiac. They cherish freedom as their greatest treasure. Those born between December 22–31 are the horned goats of Capricorn. As goats climb to great heights, Capricorns strive to get to the top, using discipline and common sense to find fame.

Our December Birthday Gems:

Frances Riggins 1st
Betty Melton 4th
Clark Holbrook 9th
Jean Moore 15th
Marlene Dugan 21st
Mary Glen Peacock 22nd
Ty Bauer 24th

Spinning into the Season *continued from pg. 1*

were no friction between their points and the surface. However, this hasn't stopped engineers from trying to build a top that could conquer the laws of physics.

Traditional tops are still hand-built using a lathe and a discerning eye. The best of these handmade tops can spin for several minutes and even hours. New technologies now allow perfectly balanced tops to be made on computerized machines using top-of-the-line-materials. These tops cost thousands of dollars and may spin for hours. One top called LIMBO recently broke the world record by spinning for 27 hours, 9 minutes, and 24 seconds. Hidden inside the top was a battery, flywheel motor, motion sensor, and a computer chip designed to monitor the top's stability and correct the motion of the spin. While LIMBO is not technically a top but a gyroscope, it is a demonstration of how far engineers are going to perfect this simple toy to defy the laws of gravity.

Dancing Under the Stars

We had a fantastic turnout for our 1st Annual "Dancing Under the Stars" USO-themed Fall Ball in Assisted Living on Thursday, November 14th, 2019. We thoroughly enjoyed the music and the dancing. Please see our Facebook page for photos from this event. We started the evening with a special themed dinner meal (SOS, Green bean casserole, cole slaw and apple brown Betty for dessert). Next, the ladies got further "dolled" up with help from our volunteers and staff as they "painted their faces".

Legacy Therapy Services assisted in helping the residents that wanted to "cut a rug" and we sang the night away with help from Jen and Bob.

We look forward to next year's event! Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time!

Join us in January 2020 for a Great Gatsby party!! It will be the *Bees Knees*!

December 2019

Whispering Willows

The Willows of Easley
An Assisted and Independent Living Community
105 Willow Place, Easley, SC 29640
(864) 855-9800. www.thewillowsofeasley.com
Laura Spearman, Executive Director
Nancy Medlin, Sales Director
Becky Forsythe, LED and Newsletter Editor

Celebrating December

Cookie Day
December 4

St. Nicholas Day
December 6

Poinsettia Day
December 12

Winter Solstice
December 21

Hanukkah
December 22–30

Christmas
December 25

New Year's Eve
December 31

Spinning into the Season

As the holiday season approaches, children gravitate to toy store windows to stare longingly at the wonders on display. Rarely do spinning tops make children's wish lists anymore, yet these toys are some of the oldest known to human civilization. A clay top discovered by archaeologists in Iraq's ancient city of Ur dates to the 35th century BC—that's nearly 6,000 years ago! A wooden top dated to 1300 BC was found in King Tut's tomb. During the medieval era in Europe, *parish tops* measuring eight inches high and weighing two pounds were kept in town squares for play, exercise, and competition. Cultures all over the world have fashioned tops from whatever materials they have on hand, including fruits, nuts, seeds, and seashells. What makes these toys so fascinating and enduring? Is it their simplicity or the way they seem to magically defy gravity?

Every spinning top is an experiment in physics. The toys remain upright thanks to angular momentum. In fact, precision balanced tops spun perfectly upright would spin forever if there

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Colder weather and outings

As a reminder, we reserve the right to limit, cancel, and /or postpone outings if the temperature drops or the weather shows signs of rain, snow or sleet. We do this not to be mean but rather to show concern and care for ALL our residents and staff. This is a safety and health measure we provide for our loved ones – YOU. Please respect our decision in this matter.

If a decision is made, it will be posted publicly in a timely manner and a substitute activity will fill its place.

Thank you for your understanding.

The Aged Visits the Doctor

Being a physician myself, I never realized the situation of the patient, especially the aging patient who is anxiously sitting in the waiting room for his (or her) appointment. What does he expect? What does he anticipate their doctor to tell him? Even before he sees the doctor, he is escorted into the office by a nurse, friendly though somewhat intimidating. The first thing done is the weight. "Did I gain more weight? Am I still overweight? I am on a diet (which started three whole days ago). Did I really need that piece of pie last night?"

The next thing on the agenda is the blood pressure. "Will it still be too high, or has it come down – finally." Am I nervous? Do I have white count hypertension? My blood pressure is always lower when I check it myself at home compared to when the doctor checks it (wearing his long white coat). I am then taken to a room, asked some questions (like those questions I've previously been asked) and then told to wait. "The doctor will be right in, I am told." Twenty minutes later, he (or she) walks into the office and asks me how I am. He knocks before he enters the room (probably to make sure I haven't disappeared). He then starts talking as he is starring into his computer, looking for more things to say. This being done, he then takes out his stethoscope and listens to my heart and lungs to ascertain that my hear is beating and my lungs are breathing – something I could have told him myself. He then talks some more; says he is going to order some tests and for me to schedule my next appointment (so we can start this whole process again). I then walk out of the office and for the first time, feel better. I have survived!

Is this how older people react to going to their doctor? I suspect it is since these were my own personal reactions the last time, I saw my own doctor. I was one of those aging patients. This time I was on the opposite side of the fence compared to when I was the doctor, full of facts, ability to communicate and make myself clear and empathize with what the patient was telling me. Now that doctor himself was one the aged fighting through issues of health, memory, eyesight, balance, confusion, and reality. Do we grow wiser as we grow older? I would like to say yes. Somehow, I doubt it.

Editor's note: Part three in our aging series by Dr. Richard Buyer, retired MD.

Visitors, Families and Residents!

Please remember to sign in and out at the Nursing Stations if leaving the building (with a resident or as a resident leaving alone with a friend). Please do not use the visitor log at the front of the building. This is for visitors and to help us have an accurate head count incase of an emergency. We must give the fire department a total head count, so there is a reason behind needing this information.

Thank you for your consideration!

Radio City Splendor

Radio City's Rockettes were originally the "Missouri Rockets."

On December 27, 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, Radio City Music Hall opened in New York City. The theater was the pet project of billionaire John D. Rockefeller Jr. He envisioned a performance venue for the masses, an Art Deco masterpiece where rich and poor alike could see the highest-quality entertainment. One year after opening, Radio City debuted its *Christmas Spectacular*, featuring the high-kicking Rockettes on its Great Stage. The stage measures over 100 feet long and 60 feet wide and was constructed to resemble a setting sun. Since its opening, over 300 million people have passed through its doors to enjoy movie premieres, stage shows, concerts, and more. Radio City Music Hall remains the largest indoor theater in the world today and has earned the name "Showplace of the Nation."

The Season of Sugar and Spice

Biblical scenes were some of the earliest images on springerle molds.

December is chock full of holidays celebrating cookies. The first week of December is Cookie Cutter Week. The week of December 16–20 is Cookie Exchange Week. The 4th is Cookie Day, the 12th is Gingerbread House Day, and the 14th is Gingerbread Decorating Day. No wonder December is "the most wonderful time of the year"! Baking and exchanging sweets have been winter solstice traditions for hundreds of years.

The winter solstice is celebrated around the world by many cultures, and food has always been associated with these traditions. It was during the Middle Ages that dessert became an important part of winter solstice feasts. This was due to an influx of new and exotic ingredients, including spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and black pepper, and sweet fruits like dates and apricots. Wealthy families added these fine new ingredients to their pantries, and their cooks created new and wonderful pastries and cookies. It became a sign of great wealth to send friends gifts of baked sweets.

One of the oldest and most popular cookies was springerle, the anise-flavored cookie that originated in Germany in the 15th century. Anise was prized as a spice and a medicine, often grown in the cloistered gardens of monasteries. Springerle is easily recognized by the elaborate bas-relief pictures pressed into the cookies thanks to detailed molds carved into wood or clay. Like anise, ginger was considered both an exotic spice and a medicine. Recipes for ginger cookies came to Europe from China during the Middle Ages, but it wasn't until the 16th century that the gingerbread house became popular. This was thanks to the Brothers Grimm and their story of Hansel and Gretel discovering a house made entirely of candy.