March 2023

# Golden Age Newsletter

1915 S. 18th St. Centerville, Iowa 52544 Phone 1-641-856-2757

## Celebrating March

**Women's History Month**

**International Mirth Month**

**Dr. Seuss Day**
*March 2*

**Purim Begins**
*March 6*

**International Women's Day**
*March 8*

**95th Academy Awards**
*March 12*

**St. Patrick's Day**
*March 17*

**Mothering Sunday**
*March 19*

**Wellderly Week**
*March 20–24*

**Nowruz Begins**
*March 21*

**Ramadan Begins**
*March 22*

**American Crossword Puzzles Week**
*March 31–April 2*

*Barbara Smaniotto 6th*
*Henry Sleeth 13th*
*Janet Seals 13th*
*Tammy Whithworth 15th*

Family and Friends of Delmar Stevens

## A Doll's Debut

Ruth Handler watched her daughter ignore baby dolls in favor of playing with paper dolls of adult women. Handler realized that some young girls did not want to play mother to babies, but rather they wanted to use their imaginations to envision their futures as adults through play. Handler's solution was to introduce a new doll to the market. On March 9, 1959, Barbie made her debut at the American Toy Fair in New York City, and her popularity has endured for nearly 65 years.

Handler based her design, a slim 11-inch-tall woman with wavy blonde hair and a full feminine figure, on a German doll named Lilli. Lilli was first introduced not as a doll for German girls, but as a bold and quick-witted woman in a newspaper comic strip geared toward men. Lilli's popularity grew so much that she became a toy for children.

Handler discovered Lilli on a visit to Germany. She brought the doll home, made a few changes, and named her Barbie after her own daughter Barbara. Handler, founder of the Mattel toy company, utilized a sponsorship deal she had signed with *The Mickey Mouse Club* to advertise the doll on television to children. By 1961, Barbie had grown so popular that Mattel gave her a boyfriend—Ken, named after Handler's son—and a best friend named Midge. In 1964, they gave Barbie a sister named Skipper. Kids across the world wanted the dolls and to dress them in fashionable clothes, hats, shoes, etc. Other popular accessories include Barbie's Dream House and Dream Kitchen.

As popular as Barbie has been, though, she has always generated plenty of controversy. During the 1950s, she was viewed as challenging women's traditional roles. Throughout the 1960s, Barbie was a nurse, astronaut, and executive. Then again, her unrealistic figure (a holdover from the Lilli age) has been criticized as perpetuating negative body images for young girls. Regardless, Barbie has weathered these storms, bringing in one billion dollars for Mattel each year.

## The Time Has Come

On March 12, people will turn their clocks one hour forward for the start of daylight-saving time (DST). In 1784, Ben Franklin published a satirical essay in Paris suggesting that clocks move forward an hour in spring and fall back again in the fall, but the notion was not taken seriously in America until World War I when the first clock adjustment was made to conserve energy.

Each year, opponents of DST argue that the time change has serious negative impacts on health. Sleep deprivation and "circadian misalignment," the mismatch between our biological rhythms and the natural light cycle, may increase levels of the stress hormone cortisol in our bodies, leading to a slew of health problems like strokes, heart attacks, obesity, diabetes, and seasonal depression. One year ago, the U.S. Senate passed the Sunshine Protection Act, making DST permanent. The House of Representatives has yet to vote on the matter.

## Root Cause

Rah, rah, sis, boom, bah! Hooray for Cheerleading Week from March 6–12! The first cheers did not come from organized squads of uniformed college women waving pom-poms. It was at Princeton University in 1884 that the crowd first cheered in unison: "Rah, rah, rah! Tiger, tiger, tiger! Sis, sis, sis! Boom, boom, boom! Aaaaaah! Princeton, Princeton, Princeton!" A Princeton graduate named Thomas Peebles then brought the idea to the University of Minnesota. Peebles became the school's football coach and, during scrimmages, would spontaneously burst into the Princeton cheer. Minnesota student Johnny Campbell then decided to develop a cheer for the Gophers: "Rah, rah, rah! Ski, OO, mah!" During a game on November 2, 1898, Campbell leaped from the stands to lead the crowd in his chant, consequently becoming the first cheerleader.

## India's Local Color

The Hindu festival of Holi has been celebrated on the Indian subcontinent since the fourth century. It is celebrated at the end of winter, on the date of the last full moon of the first month of spring and falls this year on March 8.

The holiday has many names: the Festival of Spring, the Festival of Colors, and the Festival of Love. Like many spring festivals, Holi is a holiday of rebirth and renewal. Historically, Holi was an agricultural festival, a time to give thanks to the fertile land and the crops it brings. For Hindus, it is also a holiday of forgiveness and new starts. People forgive past wrongs, resolve conflicts, and renew relationships. This forgiveness is a way of cleansing oneself of emotional impurities.

One of the defining legends of Holi is that of the deities Radha and Krishna and their divine love. Krishna despaired that the fair-skinned Radha would find his dark skin unattractive. Krishna's mother Yashoda told him to ask Radha to color his face any color she liked. Radha accepted the idea and the two became united in love. One of the most famous rituals of Holi is the throwing of colored water and powder. Many people end the day covered in the colors of the rainbow as a commemorative remembrance of the gods Radha and Krishna and their love for each other.

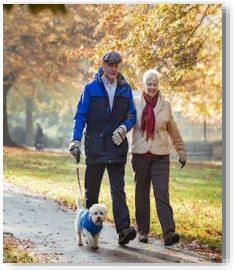
Still another legend celebrates the triumph of good over evil. King Hiranyakashipu was lord of several powerful demons who made him as powerful as a god. The king's sister Holika demanded that the king's son Prahlada worship him, but Prahlada refused, staying true to the god Vishnu. When Holika attempted to burn Prahlada on a pyre, Vishnu intervened and destroyed Holika and the evil king. This is why, on the eve of Holi, great bonfires are burned to commemorate the defeat of the demoness Holika and the triumph of good over evil. It is from the vanquishing of Holika that the festival of Holi gets its name.

## American Hero

March 10 is Harriet Tubman Day, a day to honor the legacy of the famed abolitionist and social activist. Tubman embodies the ideals that shape America: freedom, courage, leadership, and justice.

Born into slavery, Tubman escaped to the North in 1849 and became a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad. With a $40,000 bounty on her head, Tubman made 13 missions to free 70 enslaved people. Her extensive knowledge of the South made her an invaluable asset to the Union army during the Civil War. She became a spy and scout, often donning disguises to infiltrate cities under Confederate control. She provided vital information about Confederate supply routes and troop movements to Union commanders. Tubman even became a Union militia leader, leading a regiment to attack Confederate mines, storehouses, and crops in South Carolina. It took decades for her to receive recognition for her military service after the war, but she was finally awarded a pension in 1899.

## The Power of Parks



After being stuck in the house all winter, stretch your legs on March 30, Take a Walk in the Park Day, by strolling through your favorite local park. Parks are vital public resources. They have been proven time and again to increase property values, improve local economies, and decrease crime. Most importantly, they offer opportunities for people to get outside! They are public spaces for people to gather. Fields, trails, and courts offer opportunities for people to exercise and get healthy. Natural landscapes filled with trees and flowers not only provide valuable habitat for animal life and clear air but they offer tranquil retreats for visitors. Spending time surrounded by nature reduces stress, improves mood, and increases happiness.

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Postage Information

## Facility COVID-19 Update

We are happy to report that residents and employees of the facility were free of COVID-19 for the month of February.

## March Birthdays

In astrology, those born from March 1–20 are Pisces' Fish. Pisces are incredibly sensitive and empathetic. They often tap into their boundless imaginations and dreamy attitudes to become accomplished artists. Those born from March 21–31 are Aries' Rams. Rams are headstrong, charging forward into adventures with confidence and ambition. Aries' charisma and confidence make them effective leaders.

Lupita Nyong'o (actress) – March 1, 1983
Dr. Seuss (author) – March 2, 1904
Rob Reiner (actor) – March 6, 1947
Lester Holt (journalist) – March 8, 1959
Simone Biles (gymnast) – March 14, 1997
Nat King Cole (musician) – March 17, 1919
Vanessa Williams (singer) – March 18, 1963
Spike Lee (director) – March 20, 1957
Chaka Khan (singer) – March 23, 1953
Aretha Franklin (singer) – March 25, 1942
Mariah Carey (singer) – March 27, 1970
Eric Clapton (musician) – March 30, 1945