

November Reflections

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In Flanders Fields
by Lieutenant Colonel
John McCrae

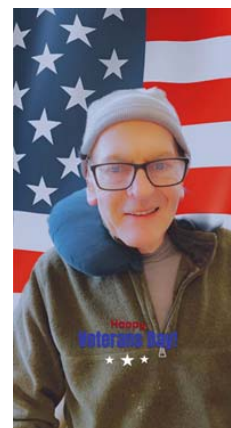
In Flanders Fields the
poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on
row,
That mark our place; and in
the sky
The larks, still bravely
singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns
below.

We are the Dead. Short days
ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw
sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and
now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the
foe:
To you from failing hands we
throw
The torch, be yours to hold it
high.
If ye break faith with us who
die
We shall not sleep, though
poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Our Veterans Day celebration!

Veterans Day is one of our favorite holidays at Cherrywood Memory Care. This year we hosted to 7 Veterans, and many wives & families of Veterans also. We had a flag folding ceremony that was led by a 94-year-old Veteran. Following lunch, we had a pinning ceremony where we gifted our Veterans with certificates & pins for their bravery & sacrifice. In addition, we had cards signed by staff, and we ended out the evening with live music on the keyboard performed by Vern. A special Thank you to Ramona Community Campus, and the students in grades k-4 for making, & sending in such heartfelt cards.



From Saint to Santa

Illustrator Thomas Nast has been called the “Father of the American Cartoon” for the illustrations he featured in *Harper’s Weekly* magazine in the 19th century. It was Nast who first used a donkey and elephant to symbolize America’s political parties. He fought corruption with scathing political cartoons. But Nast’s most enduring contribution to popular culture might be his depictions of Santa Claus as a jolly, fat man from the North Pole dressed in red and white.

Long before he was Santa Claus, he was Saint Nicholas, the Bishop of Myra, a fourth-century holy man renowned for the miracle of resurrecting three young boys killed by a butcher. For this remarkable feat, Saint Nicholas became the patron saint of children. Over the centuries, veneration of Saint Nicholas would spread. The Dutch called him Sinterklaas, and when the Dutch set sail for the New World in the 17th century, they brought Sinterklaas with them.

Sinterklaas, or Santa Claus, and Christmas, were well-established in America by the 1800s. But in December of 1823, Clement Clark Moore published his poem *’Twas the Night Before Christmas*, and first described Santa Claus not as an austere bishop, but “chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf.” Charles Dickens then published *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, transforming Christmas from a religious holiday into a popular and commercial extravaganza. By January of 1863, with the United States plunged into Civil War, Thomas Nast had plenty of inspiration for his first cartoon depicting Santa Claus.



Nast’s first depictions of Santa portray him not just as a jolly old elf but as an ally of the Union Army, and he used his own long beard as inspiration for Santa’s flowing white one. Over the next 23 years, Nast would make 33 illustrations of

Santa, none more influential than his 1881 image of “Merry Old Santa Claus,” complete with a white beard, rosy cheeks, red suit, and pack full of toys. This image, more than any other, has made Santa Claus who he is today.

Cherrywood December highlights

December 1st Live music by David Dohren

December 7th Live music on the keyboard by Vern

December 13th Live music by David Dohren

December 15th Live music by Ronni K

December 17th Gingerbread house decorating party (by reservation)

December 20th Tri-City Cloggers

December 21st Winter solstice celebration

December 24th Country Christmas breakfast & gift exchange

December 25th Christmas Day

December 26th Kwanza

Woodshop

One of this month’s projects in woodshop was to pick, and assemble one of our model kits. The men could choose between helicopters, sailboats, or soapbox race cars. Wood shop is a fun time for the men in our community. They get together in the dining room, and with the help of care staff they are able to relax, and assemble their projects.



Comforting Thoughts

The Danes have the perfect antidote for the long, dark nights of December—hygge. Pronounced *HOO-guh*, hygge has been described as everything from a lifestyle choice to the very essence of the Danish soul. Simply put, hygge is coziness, but it is far more than that.



The word *hygge* comes from the old Norwegian word *hugga*, roughly translated to mean “to comfort” or “well-being.” It was used to describe refuge

or shelter from the harsh Arctic elements. These days, hygge is about creating a warm atmosphere where you, your friends, and your family can enjoy coziness and happiness. Put on your most comfortable clothes. Enjoy the flickering glow of candlelight. Prepare some good homecooked food and eat it with your fingers if you want to. Pour a cup of tea and snuggle up under your favorite blanket to read a good book. All these things are hygge.

Hygge is also about creating a space free of tension or conflict. For this reason, people do not discuss politics, the news, work, or anything that may cause disagreement or debate. Cell phones and laptops often distract people from listening to each other. For this reason, screens are a no-no (unless you are all watching your favorite movie). Ultimately, hygge means that you can enjoy being yourself in the company of others.

Hygge has enjoyed much commercial success lately. Articles, books, and documentaries all tout steps to creating the perfect hygge home or throwing the ultimate hygge party. If you are skeptical about trying hygge, there is some evidence that the hygge lifestyle works. The World Happiness Index consistently ranks Denmark among the happiest nations in the world. Other Scandinavian countries where hygge is common practice also often rank in the top 10. So, does hygge create happiness? Or do the values and policies of these Scandinavian countries make people more likely to enjoy hygge? Why don't you put on your coziest sweatpants and find out?

The Great Debate

Canada's Great Flag Debate officially began on June 15, 1964, when Prime Minister Lester Pearson proposed a new design for the flag of Canada. The de facto flag of Canada was known as the Red Ensign, a red flag bearing the United Kingdom's Union Jack in the upper left corner. Sometimes the flag bore a coat of arms in its center; other times it was a maple leaf. None of these variations appealed to Pearson, who felt the country needed a new flag for a “new Canada,” one that represented all Canadians, not just those of British descent. Weighing heavily upon Pearson's mind was Quebec and rumors that the French-speaking province sought independence from Canada.

The Great Flag Debate sharply divided the Canadian government and caused acrimony amongst Canadians across the country for six months. Over 3,500 designs were submitted, but on December 15, 1964, the design proposed by Col. George Stanley was accepted. Canadians have sung “O Canada” to the two red bars flanking a red maple leaf ever since.

It's a Long Shot

The first Tuesday in December brings World Trick Shot Day, a holiday started by the Harlem Globetrotters, those basketball wizards renowned for making impossible shots look easy. Ordinary people with a basketball hoop and a ball are encouraged to amaze their friends by making trick shots of their own.



If you need inspiration, look to the Globetrotters. Each year on Trick Shot Day, they perform an impossible shot. In 2019, Globetrotter star Hammer Harrison performed the world's highest slam dunk by skydiving from

13,000 feet and slamming the ball home. Share your trick shot on social media, and the Globetrotters might take notice. You could win tickets to a Globetrotters game.

Roman Holiday

As an old carol reminds us, Christmas is “the most wonderful time of the year.” In ancient Rome, the weeklong festival of Saturnalia starting on December 17 was just as popular. The famed Roman poet Catullus went so far as to say that Saturnalia offered “the best of days.”

Saturn was the Roman god of agriculture, seed, sowing, and time. Saturnalia began as a farmer’s holiday to mark the end of the autumn planting season. Over time, the holiday evolved into a widely celebrated festival and moved later into the season, eventually coinciding with the winter solstice. The Temple of Saturn in Rome was the best place to celebrate Saturnalia. Rituals were performed to honor Saturn and ensure a good harvest. Some records indicate that the hollow statue of Saturn was filled to the brim with olive oil. The statue’s feet were bound with woolen ties, which were loosened on Saturnalia to symbolically free the god.



Romans also freed themselves. Slaves were permitted to wear the *pileus*, the red felt cap denoting freedom. Businesses and courts were closed. Banquets and feasts were held throughout the week, and

gifts of candles were exchanged so they could be offered at the Temple of Saturn. Evergreen boughs were used as decorations, and tin ornaments were hung from trees and shrubs. Revelers wandered from door to door singing songs. Saturnalia was such a raucous affair that the author Pliny the Younger built a soundproof room to shield him from the noisy crowds.

Many cherished Christmas traditions were originally part of Saturnalia: gift-giving, decorating with evergreen boughs, lighting candles, and door-to-door caroling. Emperor Constantine may have converted to Christianity in AD 312, but Saturnalia celebrations continued into the next century. Slowly, as Christianity became the dominant religion, the traditions associated with Saturnalia were celebrated on Christmas Day, December 25, a date chosen nine months after Gabriel’s Annunciation to Mary on March 25.

December Birthdays

In astrology, those born from December 1–21 are Archers of Sagittarius. The Archers are the travelers of the zodiac, curious and energetic, with open minds craving new experiences and challenges. Those born from December 22–31 are Capricorn’s Goats. Like goats that perch on mountain crags, Capricorns are masters of self-control and responsibility. Intense focus and fortitude help them reach their goals. Cherrywood didn’t have any resident birthdays to celebrate for November.

Bette Midler (entertainer) – Dec. 1, 1945

Lucy Liu (actress) – Dec. 2, 1968

Sammy Davis Jr. (entertainer) – Dec. 8, 1925

Raven Symone (actress) – Dec. 10, 1985

Frank Sinatra (entertainer) – Dec. 12, 1915

Jamie Foxx (actor) – Dec. 13, 1967

Beethoven (composer) – c. Dec. 16, 1770

Cicely Tyson (actress) – Dec. 18, 1924

Samuel L. Jackson (actor) – Dec. 21, 1948

Clara Barton (nurse) – Dec. 25, 1821

John Legend (musician) – Dec. 28, 1978

LeBron James (athlete) – Dec. 30, 1984



Christmas is right around the corner & our crafting for Christmas group is busy, busy, busy. We just finished these fun ornaments for our version of candy cane lane!