This month we will enjoy an extra day, transforming 2020 into an extraordinary year. Every four years, an extra day, called *leap day*, is added at the end of February. This extra day is built into the year to ensure that our calendars remain aligned with Earth’s movement around the sun. Our modern calendars have 365 days, but Earth takes 365.2421 days to make it all the way around the sun.

The ancient Egyptians were the first civilization to calculate that our cycle of days and nights did not align perfectly with the calendar year, but it wasn’t until Julius Caesar’s reign during the Roman Empire that anything was done about it.

For millennia, calendars were loosely based on human observations of the lunar cycle. Extra days, weeks, and even months were added at random to make up for seasonal discrepancies. Julius Caesar was fed up with the inadequacies of such calendars based upon a 10-month solar year. In 46 BC, he enlisted astronomer Sosigenes to modify the calendar to include 12 months and 365 days. January and February were added as the final two months of the calendar, with the leap day added as the final day of the last month of February once every four years. Julius Caesar named this the *Julian calendar* after himself.

The Julian calendar was hailed as a tremendous improvement, but it was still not perfect. The solar year is only .2421 days longer than the calendar year, not .25. Adding an entire day every four years added 11 extra minutes to each year! After hundreds of years, the Julian calendar veered weeks from the solar year. Like Caesar before him, Pope Gregory XIII decided to fix this problem. In 1582, the Pope created his *Gregorian calendar*. It was still a 12-month, 365-day calendar with an added leap day every four years, but the Pope went further. He decreed that leap years would not occur on years evenly divisible by 100, excepting those divisible by 400. For example, the years 1700, 1800, and 1900 were not leap years, but the year 2000 was. Pope Gregory XIII’s calendar is still in use today, but it is still not perfect. Mathematicians note that after another 10,000 years, someone will have to create a new calendar once again.
Starting off 2020 with Two New Wonderful Managers for the Team:

Kristen DiBona ~ Staff Development Coordinator

Where were you born: Lynn, MA, Newton, MA
Favorite Music: Beatles, Aerosmith
Favorite Color: Black
Favorite Activities: Yoga and Art
Favorite Vacation Spot: Cape Cod
Why did you get into this field of work: “When I was pregnant I never felt well and the nurses at my MD office were so helpful, I wanted to help others in that way too”

Michele Collins ~ SDCU Clinical Nurse Manager

Where were you born: Salem, NJ
Favorite Music: I love all music!!
Favorite Food: Everything!
Favorite Movie: The Departed
Favorite Vacation Spot: Provincetown, MA
Why did you get into this field of work: “The reason I got into the field of nursing is because I was in a serious MVA at the age of 16 and was hospitalized for a month. The nurses were so kind, supportive and smart and I wanted to do a job where I could make people feel the way they made me feel. Nursing is a career that gives back to me so much!”

Join us! Valentine’s Tea and Poetry Reading

Local Poet, Jessica Lucci, will be sharing her own poetry with us while we enjoy hot tea and valentine’s sweets! Thursday, February 13th at 2:00 PM in the Trellis Room.

Shout-outs from Resident Council

A group of nineteen residents met last week to talk about the ins and outs of living at the Belmont Manor and had some positive feedback to share:

“Stewart (Administrator) is sensitive and warm and a good listener”

“My visitors are amazed at how clean this place is, the housekeepers are always working hard”

“I have had positive experiences with the activities staff~ cheerful, makes me feel welcome. The activities expand my experience”

“The medical staff help the residents really make improvements here, my needs are met...”
From Your Valentine

On February 14 each year, sweethearts celebrate Valentine’s Day by exchanging cards, chocolates, and other tokens of love. But do these sweethearts know who they are celebrating? The true identity of St. Valentine is murky and there are differing stories detailing his role in the church and the acts that inspired the popular holiday bearing his name.

Competing stories depict St. Valentinus (the Latin version of the name) as either a priest from Rome or the Bishop of Terni during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. Legend has it that Valentinus aided Christians who were persecuted under Claudius II’s reign. Eventually, Valentinus, too, was put under house arrest at the home of Judge Asterius. It so happened that Asterius had a blind daughter. The judge asked Valentinus to prove the power of Christ by restoring the girl’s sight. When Valentinus performed the miracle, the judge thanked him by freeing him and all the Christians he had imprisoned. But Valentinus did not remain free for long. He was again arrested and brought before Emperor Claudius II himself. When Valentinus attempted to convert Claudius to Christianity, he was executed on February 14, AD 270, but before his martyrdom, he is said to have written a note to the daughter of Asterius, which he signed “From your Valentine.”

Another story details how Claudius II outlawed marriage for young men in the belief that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families. Valentine defied Claudius and performed marriages in secret, purportedly cutting hearts of parchment and gifting them to the couples as a sign of God’s eternal love. When Valentine’s secret was discovered, Claudius executed him.

These stories are different yet they both illustrate Valentine’s devotion to his faith and his people. As these legends spread, so did Valentine’s reputation for heroic love and devotion, inspiring a holiday dedicated to the ideals he died for.

Join us for our Annual Couple’s Valentine’s Day Lunch for our Residents & their Spouses.

Friday, February 14th
12:00 Noon in the 1st Floor Living Room
Please RSVP to our receptionist at (617) 489-1200.

Birthdays are Changing at the Manor…

Due to a global shortage in helium, and the need for helium to be used for medical reasons and other resources, we are looking to other creative ways to celebrate birthdays at the Manor. Keep an eye out for birthday crowns instead of balloons!

Hopefully at some point soon the helium resources will improve and we can get our balloons back, but until then we will enjoy being creative!
Happy Birthday to Our Residents!

Feb. 5th ~ Albert S.
Feb. 14th ~ Ann A.
Feb. 18th ~ John B.
Feb. 19th ~ Elizabeth D.
Feb. 23rd ~ Helen O.
Feb. 25th ~ Sarah K.

Wishing Everyone a Happy & Healthy Upcoming Year~!

February Birthdays

In astrology, those born between February 1–18 are the Water Bearers of Aquarius. As the water of life heals the land, so Aquarians are the humanitarians of the zodiac. Free-spirited, nonconformist, compassionate, and visionary, they support giving “power to the people.” Those born between February 19 and 29 are the Fish of Pisces. Fish feel things deeply, as in under-the-sea deep. These intuitive, creative, and intelligent people have strong feelings of right and wrong and also love to help others.

Ayn Rand (author) – February 2, 1905
Gertrude Stein (writer) – February 3, 1874
Rosa Parks (activist) – February 4, 1913
Laura Ingalls Wilder (writer) – February 7, 1867
Thomas Edison (inventor) – February 11, 1847
Galileo (astronomer) – February 15, 1564
Michael Jordan (athlete) – February 17, 1963
Sidney Poitier (actor) – February 20, 1927
Nina Simone (singer) – February 21, 1933
George Washington (president) – February 22, 1732
Elizabeth Taylor (actress) – February 27, 1932
Dennis Farina (actor) – February 29, 1944

Happy Birthday to our Staff!

Those born in February are honest and creative with a unique and original sense of style. Others admire them for their positive outlook on all aspects of life.

We wish that your special day is the beginning of an amazing year!

When Cows Fly

On February 18, 1930, a cow known as Elm Farm Ollie won the unique distinction of becoming the first cow ever to be milked while flying in an airplane, ushering in the very first Cow Milked While Flying in an Airplane Day. The circumstances of the flight are well-recorded, as Elm Farm Ollie was part of the International Air Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri. Researchers were apparently eager to observe the effects of flight on livestock. Elm Farm Ollie was an unusually productive Guernsey. She needed milking three times a day. During her flight, she produced 24 quarts of milk. Wisconsin native Elsworth Bunce had the honor of milking her, consequently becoming the first man ever to milk a cow in an airplane. The milk was sealed in paper cartons and parachuted to the crowds below, where it is said that Charles Lindbergh took a drink.