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February 2021

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The Start of Groundhog Day

To the unfamiliar, Groundhog Day is perhaps one of America’s weirdest traditions. Every Feb. 2, people wait for a large, furry rodent to see his shadow and then we predict the weather based on the animal’s actions.

But the winter holiday has a long history rooted in everything from early Christian traditions in Europe to 19th century American newspapers. Here is everything you need to know about how Groundhog Day got its start.

The origin story

The idea of Groundhog Day comes from an ancient Christian celebration known as Candlemas Day, which marked the midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information. On Candlemas Day, clergy would bless candles needed for winter and distribute them to the people, the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club’s website says. Superstition held that if the day was sunny and clear, people could expect a long, rough winter, but if the sky was cloudy, warm weather would arrive soon.

The Germans then expanded on this tradition, introducing the hedgehog to the mix. They believed, according to the Groundhog Day website, that if the sun appeared and the hedgehog saw his shadow, there would be six more weeks of bad weather, or a “Second Winter.”

Groundhog Day in the United States

Many of Pennsylvania’s early settlers were German, and they brought this tradition with them, switching the hedgehog for the groundhog, which could be more easily found in their new home, according to the Punxsutawney site.

In 1886, the Punxsutawney Spirit newspaper printed the first news of a Groundhog Day observance. The next year, everything fell into place. The Punxsutawney Groundhog Club celebrated for the first time at Gobbler’s Knob, according to History.com, and the newspaper’s editor declared that Phil, the Punxsutawney groundhog, was America’s official weather-forecasting groundhog.

Are you interested in receiving the COVID-19 Vaccination?

Give us a call, or stop in! We can help you get registered.



HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION STARTING IN FEBRUARY



Homestead Exemption (HE) is a property tax relief program for homeowners who occupy their residence or mobile home and up to one acre of land surrounding it.

Exemption applications need to be filed every year. Filing deadline is June 30th.

If you have signed up for Homestead Exemption in the past, you should receive this years forms in February. If you wish to apply for Homestead Exemption for the first time, please the County Assessors office for the forms.

If you have questions or need assistance filing for HE, call the **County Assessor's office (402-821-2588) or Saline County Aging Services (402-821-3330)**.

The 3rd Annual Shamrock Shuffle is upon us..

If you are interested in participating in the fun run/walk, let us know and we can get you signed up.



COMING SOON!

We will soon be offering workout equipment at SCAS!

Stay tuned..

This will be a great addition to our services!



Newsletter Slip

Cut this slip out, fill the information in below, and mail it to
Saline County Aging Services– PO Box 812– Wilber, NE 68465
or bring it into our office at 109 W. 3rd Street in Wilber
or call us at 402-821-3330.

Name:

Email or Mailing Address:

If you would rather have it sent via email, please provide your email address, printing carefully

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6 Tips for Touring Senior Communities Virtually & In-Person

Finding the right senior living community for your loved one is an important and personal decision. Whether you're touring assisted living communities, memory care facilities, or another type of care, consider the environment your loved one will thrive in on a daily basis.

While in-person tours have long been the norm, the rise of COVID-19 led to a surge in virtual tours. Experts expect these video conferencing visits to continue beyond the pandemic, citing factors such as convenience and advancing technology, like [A Place for Mom's new touring video app](#).

No matter which touring method you choose, these tips can empower your family to transition to senior living with confidence.

1. Observe community layout and tone

Is the layout small or large? Do its features accommodate mobility challenges? Does the staff maintain the building's cleanliness? Evaluating these core questions can help you assess if a community can be your senior's new home. In-person tourers should rely on multiple senses, taking in a community's sights and scents.

Look past the surface of a community and into the details, like windows and furnishings. Whether virtually or in-person, ask to see outdoor areas and to select the specific room your loved one will occupy, if possible. See for yourself what view your loved one will have from their window. Lastly, pay attention to the décor and colors to gauge if they will uplift your loved one's daily mood and routines.



2. Prioritize safety and security

For all seniors, especially those experiencing dementia symptoms like wandering and confusion, safety is paramount. To help ensure your loved one will have adequate supervision, ask the following questions:

- How is the community secured?
- Is there a 24-hour nurse on duty? If not, when is a nurse on duty?
- What medical services are available?
- How accessible is medical help?
- For residents with dementia, are there emergency alert systems, enclosed courtyards, or color-coded hallways to simplify navigation?



SAFETY

3. Assess staff friendliness, training, and qualification

Families often turn to senior living communities to provide a greater standard of care and expertise. Try to observe one-on-one interactions between staff members and residents, as a way to assess not only staff knowledge but also traits like friendliness and patience. From a more clinical perspective, these questions can help assure your staff meet high standards:

- Is your facility and staff accredited?
- Do staff attend ongoing training? How many training hours do they receive?
- Are staff members certified dementia care managers (CDCMs)?
- What's the staff-to-resident ratio?
- Do staff plan individualized care and treatments for each resident?
- How do staff care for bedridden or wheelchair-bound residents?
- How do staff care for disruptive or aggressive residents?
- Who coordinates outside visits?

4. Get to know the community’s social offerings and residents

The other residents at your loved one’s new senior living community will become their friends and daily companions. Do they seem social, engaged, and happy? If you’re touring in person, consider visiting during a group activity, like bingo or a social hour, to observe these interactions with residents.



Incorporating a meal into your tour can provide an opportunity to see available cafeteria options, in addition to the social benefit. During conversations with other residents, ask questions about their daily routines and honest opinions on the community.

If you’re touring virtually, ask about residents’ personalities, outings like field trips, and community clubs. Consider asking to see an event calendar or to speak with individual staff members.

5. Consider next steps if care needs progress

In case a loved one’s condition advances, make sure the senior living community has steps in place to support them. If they need to move out for any reason, like needing a greater level of care, how can families facilitate this transition? Questions include:

- Under what circumstances is a resident asked to move out of the community?
- What type of notice does the resident or caregiver need to give the staff?

6. Let your instincts lead you

Though questions and tips serve as a handy guide, they’re no substitute for your gut feelings. Ultimately, you know your loved one best. If you moved your family member into this new home, would you have peace of mind?

aPlaceforMom.com

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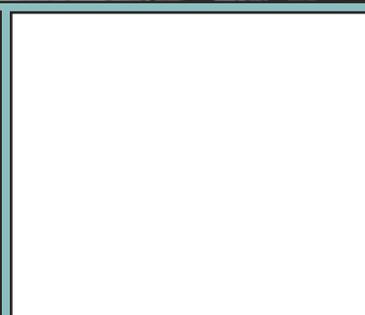
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Getting to the Heart of the Matter



February is National Heart Month and taking the best care of our hearts should be a top priority! More Americans are now living a life that is less physically active and more sedentary compared to decades ago. At the beginning of the 20th century, the leading causes of death were usually conditions that were respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia, flu, and tuberculosis. At the turn of the 21st, century the causes of death switched to heart disease and cancers being the leading causes.

Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women, with almost 1 in 4 deaths being linked to this condition. Caucasians and African Americans have a higher predisposition to get heart disease compared to other races. On average about 370,000 Americans will die annually from heart disease if left untreated. Heart disease used to be much more prevalent in older adults, but as obesity has increased, heart disease is now occurring in younger individuals. When you are assessing your risk for heart disease you need to know your numbers as they can be critical markers for your health:

- Aim for a blood pressure of 120/80mmhg or lower,
- Total Cholesterol <200 mg/dL,
- LDL "bad cholesterol" <100 mg/dL,
- HDL "good cholesterol" >60 mg/dL, and
- Fasting blood sugar should equal to or less than 100 mg/dL.

Reducing Your Risk

Focus on small gradual changes when it comes to your diet. The American Heart Association recommends limiting sodium to more than 2,300 mg per day and moving to a more ideal limit of 1,500 mg per day. Aim to include a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, lean protein, low-fat dairy and whole grains in your diet. Many fruits and vegetables are high in potassium which can hinder the effects of sodium on blood pressure. Canned foods are often hidden sources of sodium and "reduced sodium" or "no-salt added" versions can significantly reduce the sodium intake.

Limiting consumption of processed foods can also help to reduce sodium intake. Processed foods that tend to be high in sodium include canned soup, cheese, potato chips, crackers, ready-to-eat frozen dinners, and processed meats.

Get creative with your spices and seasonings! Fresh or dried herbs provide great flavor in your foods without all of the extra sodium. Some popular herbs include basil, dill, cilantro, rosemary, thyme and marjoram. Mrs. Dash makes "salt-free seasonings" in shaker bottles, but also in envelopes such as taco and roast seasonings.

Try and be mindful of your portion sizes at every meal and eat until you are satisfied and no longer hungry. It takes your brain 20 minutes to realize you are full so slow down and take your time.

You can also focus on your exercise by trying to get at least 150 minutes per week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Another non-diet change you can make is to not smoke. If you do smoke, try to reduce, or stop the habit all together. If you do not smoke, do not start the habit now.

Remember that these changes do not have to occur all at once and you may have more success by taking it one step at a time.

Make healthy living a priority by using a combination of both dietary changes and lifestyle changes. These can help ensure you not only live a long life, but that you are able to age gracefully with minimal complications

Exercise of the Month

Emotional Benefits of Exercise

Research has shown that exercise is not only good for your physical health, it also supports emotional and mental health. You can exercise with a friend and get the added benefit of emotional support. So, next time you're feeling down, anxious, or stressed, try to get up and start moving!



Physical activity can help:

- Reduce feelings of depression and stress, while improving your mood and overall emotional well-being
- Increase your energy level
- Improve sleep
- Empower you to feel more in control

In addition, exercise and physical activity may possibly improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function, such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity, and ignore irrelevant information.

Here are some exercise ideas to help you lift your mood:

- **Walking, bicycling, or dancing.** Endurance activities increase your breathing, get your heart pumping, and boost chemicals in your body that may improve mood.
- **Yoga.** This mind and body practice typically combines physical postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation.
- **Tai Chi.** This "moving meditation" involves shifting the body slowly, gently, and precisely, while breathing deeply.
- **Activities you enjoy.** Whether it's gardening, playing tennis, kicking around a soccer ball with your grandchildren, or something else, choose an activity you want to do, not one you have to do.

go4life.nia.nih.gov

Recipe of the Month

Banana Chocolate Muffins

Ingredients:

- 1 Box Chocolate Cake Mix
- 3-4 Bananas (mashed)
- 2 eggs

Directions:

1. Mash bananas.
2. Add cake mix.
3. Add eggs. Gently drop into mix and use a fork to beat them before incorporating into the rest of the mixed ingredients. Why dirty another dish!
4. Bake at 350 Fahrenheit for 16-18 mins. Check with a toothpick. Enjoy!



Pinterest.com

Funny Parent Lies to Children

1. "Sleeping with different blankets give you different dreams. If you have a nightmare you can make it go away if you change the blanket. Then you can have a fun dream!"
2. "No, we're not there yet." "Hey, did you know that if you sit real quiet in the car, it makes the car go faster so you'll get there quicker?"
3. My dad had some good ones: "Toys R Us is a museum, so no, we can't bring anything home." And, "All the animals at the zoo are different kinds of dogs."
4. This is not exactly a lie, but I taught my kid to jump up yell "Ta - Da" whenever she fell down as a toddler. So, when she come running down the sidewalk, trips and falls, she jumps right up and yells: "Ta - Da".
5. When I was a kid, I was horribly afraid of monsters coming into my room. My mom filled a spray bottle with water and blue food coloring and printed a sticker that said "Monster Spray". Boom, no monsters. One day she filled the bottle with clear normal water by accident. But that clever girl, she just told me it was new and improved monster spray that took care of invisible monsters, too. Mom was so smart!
6. As a teacher of small children, I tell the students that the smoke detectors are remote control cameras. Every time one of them obviously lies, I say to them: "I'll just go check the camera recordings and see who's right", and they fess up. Works every time.
7. When my preschoolers play together, often with other preschoolers, sometimes they pass gas in the excitement of their play time. Then they look at each other, trying to figure out who did it. I tell them, "When you fart, it makes your ears get warm." The one who touches their ears to check is usually the offender.
8. We told our kids that the ice cream truck was really the music truck. It worked for 4 years. They never begged to run out and get ice cream when the ice cream truck drove by.
9. "Yes Jason, If you put a slice of ham in the disc drive of your computer it will play a short informational video about pigs."
10. "I told my little sister that humans start their lives off as dogs. It was so funny, she waited patiently for our dog to turn into a human so she wouldn't be the youngest child in the family."



atimetoaugh.org



DeWitt Senior Center

Tuesday/Thursday:
Tai Chi Class 9am-10am

Wednesday:
Coffee 9:30am-10:30am

*For questions in regards to
DeWitt Senior Center,
please call 402.683.6475*



Alice Brakhage

Of
Tobias, NE

received a \$5 gift card to
Subway in December. Enjoy!

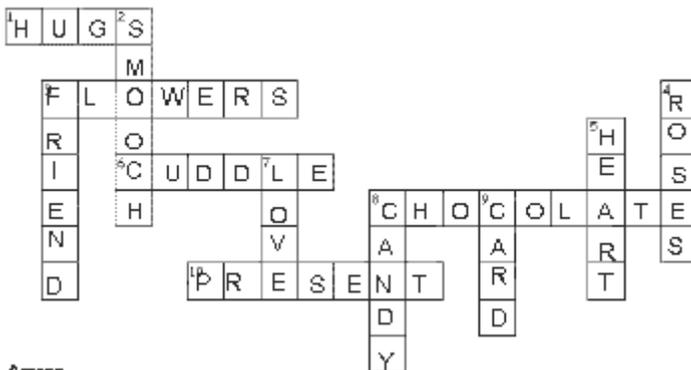
The answer to January's riddle, "There are 30 cows in a field, and 28 chickens. How many didn't?" — 10



Interested in Home Delivered Meals??

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For Wilber & the rest of Saline County
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ANSWERS TO THIS MONTHS PUZZLES



*A special wish to all of the
February birthdays out there from
Saline County Aging Services!*

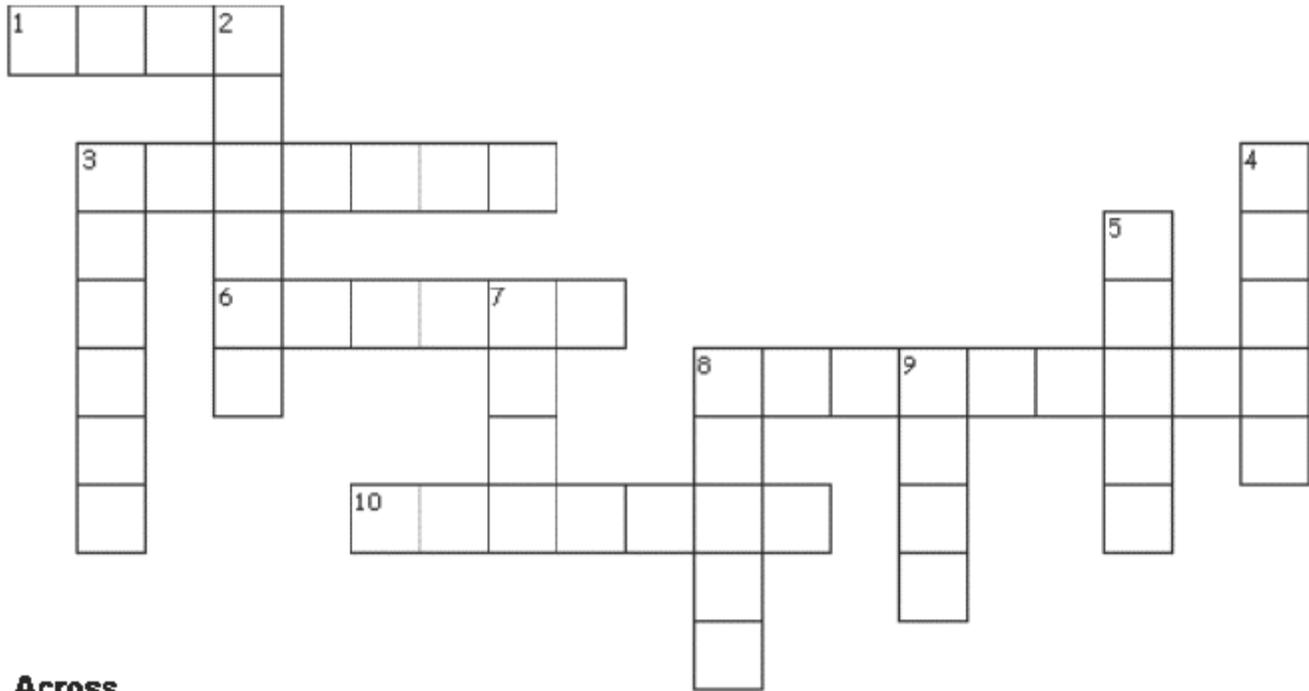
Riddle of the Month

Answer the riddle correctly by the **15th of the month** at Saline County Aging Services and get entered into a drawing to win a prize at the end of the month!

What two things can you never eat for breakfast?

Please include your name & phone number with your answer!

Valentine's Day Crossword

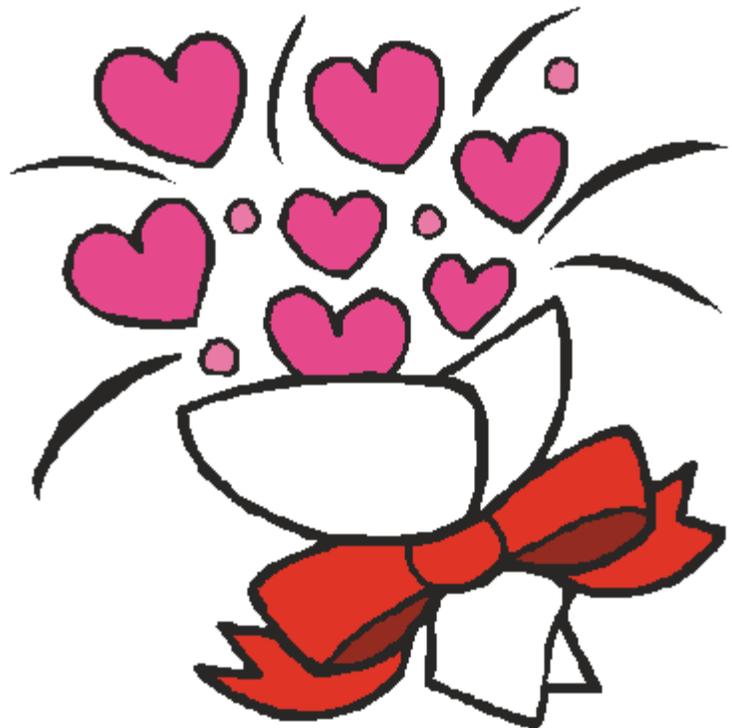


Across

1. _____ and kisses.
3. They smell pretty.
6. On Valentine's Day you should hug and _____ with your loved ones.
8. Special treat loved by all.
10. Wrap it up and tie it with a bow.

Down

2. Another word for kiss.
3. My best _____.
4. Delicate, red flowers (with thorns).
5. Valentine's Day shape.
7. I _____ you.
8. Sugary treat.
9. Sign it and give it to a friend.



Did you know?

- The average heart is the size of a fist in an adult.
- Your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons a day.
- The first open surgery occurred in 1893.
- The heart can continue to beat even when its disconnected from the body.
- The youngest person to receive heart surgery was only a minute old.
- Whales have the largest heart of any mammal.
- Most heart attacks happen on a Monday.
- A woman's heart beats slightly faster than a man's heart.
- If you were to stretch out your blood vessel system, it would extend over 60,000 miles.
- Laughing is good for your heart. It reduces stress and gives a boost to your immune system.



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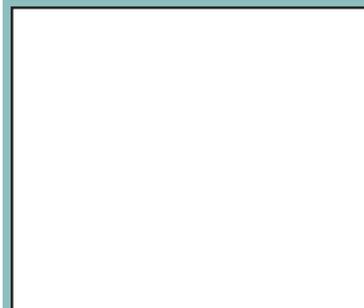
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