

Hello, and welcome to February! We have plenty of fun activities planned this month. Please let me know if you have any questions or ideas to share! Our biggest event will be our Family Luncheon on February 16th. There is a 2 guest maximum per resident. Please RSVP to our Activity Director, Jess Kimbler, @ 251-374-7119 to confirm your spot.



FEBRUARY 2024

Celebrating Black History Month

Each February, America observes Black History Month. This tribute to African Americans who have made an impact on the U.S. and the world was born from one man's call to action.

Historian and author Carter G. Woodson wanted the contributions of heroic Black men and women who helped shape the nation and its culture to be recognized and celebrated. In 1926, he created a weeklong event to promote Black history, and chose the second week in February because it included the birthdays of abolitionist Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln.

Fifty years later, after decades of support, the event expanded to Black History Month, a national observance, as part of the country's bicentennial. When President Gerald Ford signed the proclamation, he urged everyone to join in the "tribute to Black History Month and the message of courage and perseverance it brings to all of us." For his efforts, Woodson has been called the father of Black history.







ASSISTED LIVING

FEBRUARY 2024

Blood Pressure Prescription Tips

February is American Heart Month, and blood pressure is an important aspect of heart health. Prescription medication is a common treatment for high blood pressure, a condition that affects nearly half of the adults in the U.S. These tips can help the medicine be most effective:

- Have a routine; taking the medication around the same time each day will decrease the chances of forgetting a dose.
- Follow prescription directions, including duration of medication.
 Feeling better? Blood pressure reading normal?
 The medicine is doing its job; make sure to continue taking it as directed.
- Check and record blood pressure often. Taking your pulse rate is never a bad idea, either.
- Refill prescriptions before they run out; this way, you'll be prepared for unexpected situations.

"Connecting our hearts through love yields a nectar so sweet we are forever full." —Amy Leigh Mercree

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Mardi Gras Origins

A celebration preceding Lent, Mardi Gras culminates on Shrove (or "Fat") Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. For nearly 300 years, Mobilians have observed this pre-Lenten celebration.

The first carnival observance occurred at 27 Mile Bluff in the year 1703, continuing the cultural traditions settlers in Mobile (the "Port City") began back in their homeland of France. Celebrating Mardi Gras gave Mobilians the chance to enjoy a fine meal, some wine, and reminisce with families and friends.

In 1866, after the Civil War, during the period when Mobile was still occupied by Union Forces, another group of gentlemen, led by Joseph Stillwell Cain, decided to revive the Krafft parade (which had been on hiatus during the war). "Borrowing" a coal wagon from a local business, and dressed in improvised costumes depicting a legendary Chickasaw Indian chief, *Slacabamorinico*, they paraded through the streets of town on Shrove Tuesday, thus giving rebirth to Mardi Gras, which has been observed in Mobile ever since.

Highlights of Mobile Mardi Gras history include the crowning of "royalty." In 1872, Daniel E. Huger first reigned as Carnival King Felix I, and a carnival association was established. Ethel Hodgson ruled as Mobile's first Mardi Gras queen in 1893. Later, in 1939, The Colored Carnival Association (later to be renamed the Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association) selected a king and queen and elected the "Mayor of Colored Mobile," later retitled Grand Marshal. In 1968, Joe Cain Day was established as an all-inclusive street celebration that anyone was welcome to join.



While originating in Mobile, the Mardi Gras celebration quickly spread to other locations throughout the Gulf Coast. Mobile's Mardi Gras reputation as a major tourist attraction is reaching international proportions. More recent events in Mobile Mardi Gras tradition include, in 1993, the organization of the International Carnival Ball as a joint effort including both the Mobile Carnival Association and the Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association. In that year, also, the only public Mardi Gras style ball was begun to salute the Port City's carnival and international heritage.

CHEF'S CORNER

Keeping in theme with Mardi Gras, let's talk about that delicious treat of graham cracker, marshmallow, and chocolate known as the moon pie.

Originally made in the early 1900s by the Chattanooga Bakery in Chattanooga, TN, it is believed to have received its name when a traveling salesman was asking some Kentucky coal miners if they would like a snack while taking a break. One of the miners asked for a snack with graham cracker and marshmallow, requesting one "as big as the moon," which is what inspired the name Moon Pie.

By 1929, factory workers were boxing up hundreds every day, but the Moon Pie's rapid rise in the 1920s and '30s was just the beginning. It solidified itself as a staple of American culture during WWII after the sweet sandwiches were sent to soldiers overseas; something still done today. On the home front, Moon Pies followed workers from the south as they traveled to work in northern steel mills and in Chicago and Detroit's automobile plants. Many parents of that era considered Moon Pies to be the perfect snack for their children, with many who are now grown still relishing the memories of the Moon Pie during their childhood. Sometime during the mid to late 1950s, Moon Pies made their way into Mobile's Mardi Gras parades, but it wasn't until the early 1970s—when Mobile banned tossing cereal boxes for their sharp edges—that softer, sweeter Moon Pies took over as the holiday's top treat.





