



# Birchwoods at Canco

## Assisted Living Community

86 Holiday Drive • Portland, Maine 04103 • Phone (207) 772-1080 • [www.seniorlivinginstyle.com](http://www.seniorlivinginstyle.com)  
Facility License Number ALLS1927

## DECEMBER 2020

### BIRCHWOODS AT CANCO STAFF

Administrator .....MICHELLE TUFTS  
Assistant Administrator..... TONYA D'ANDREA  
Director of Health Services..... LISA HUBERT  
Resident Services Coordinator.BONNIE HARMON  
Executive Chef .....TIM HUNT  
Marketing.....CATHY WHEATON  
Sous Chef .....JEREMY MCCULLOCK  
Activity Coordinator ..... LENORE HILTON  
Activity Assistant ..... JULIETTE MOHAN  
Administrative Assistant ..... PAM HINKLEY  
Administrative Assistant ..... CAROL PEDLEY  
Maintenance Coordinator.....CHRIS SCHAFER



**HAWTHORN**  
SENIOR LIVING

## All About December

The month of December is full of so much holiday fun. Here is some fun information about December.

The tree of the month is the Spruce tree. These trees can grow between 0 to 200 feet. The Spruce tree is from the Evergreen family and are sold as Christmas trees. Spruce trees are native to North America and thrive in temperate climates across the world.

December's birthstone is the Turquoise. The turquoise is considered a lucky gemstone. Legend has it that wearing the blue stone will bring material wealth and provide protection from an unnatural death.

The flower of December is the Narcissus. The Narcissus, also known as the daffodil, is a lovely yellow and white flower that usually blooms in springtime.

December 21st is the shortest day of the year in the northern hemisphere; this day is known as the winter solstice.







## Benefits Of Playing Bingo

Bingo is commonly thought of as a game for the elderly, but did you know it's beneficial to their health? Learn more about the benefits of playing bingo.

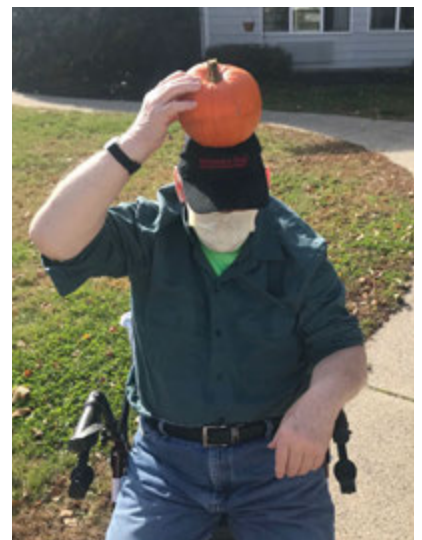
Bingo is stereotypically referred to as one of those "games old people play." But bingo can actually be a very healthy activity for aging adults. Studies have shown that there are many benefits of playing bingo for seniors in particular.

### Benefits of Playing Bingo

Did you know that bingo for seniors scientifically improves health? Learn some of the benefits for older adults who engage in a game of bingo.

## Pumpkin Patch Fun

We were unable to go to a pumpkin patch this fall, so we made our own, and residents were able to come and get a pumpkin. Some residents brought them to their rooms to enjoy, and other residents brought them to our pumpkin painting art class. We are enjoying a warm fall and all the outside Patio time.





## Increases Social Engagement

Games for senior citizens, like bingo, are great because it increases social engagement. Seniors often struggle with isolation. Every year, they are losing friends and family to distance, death or other factors. They're also less energetic than they once were, which makes it difficult to be motivated to leave the house and be a part of social activities.

A bingo competition is a structured way for senior citizens to get some fresh air and interact with other people. Since bingo games usually happen at the same time every week, it can easily become part of a routine.

## Allows for Reflection and Memory Recall

One of the best sit down games for senior citizens is Life Experience Bingo.

The elderly have so many life experiences that make this game very enjoyable for them to play. After writing down the common things they've done on a bingo card, the bingo caller can say them to the group.

Older adults get the opportunity to laugh and reminisce about their lives. This opens the door for them to connect with other seniors who have had similar life experiences. Additionally, using their memory to bring to mind past experiences is a great brain exercise for aging adults.

## Decreases the Risk of Mental Illness

It's sad, but the risk of mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety, get higher as people age. One of the major factors of depression is isolation, which bingo helps to tackle through social interaction.

Cognitive impairment is usually accompanied by depression in older adults. Playing memory games, like bingo, is great for combating mental illness and memory loss diseases like Alzheimer's.

## Improves Cognitive Function

Playing bingo improves cognitive function in the elderly. Brain games, even those online, help aging adults remain sharp and tackle day-to-day tasks. Most seniors are able to play bingo at various stages of mental health.

Bingo is repetitive, which is helpful for elderly players who may not have the wherewithal to learn new rules and skills. In this way, bingo strikes the perfect balance between improving the mind and being a simple, engaging game.

## Improves Memory

One of the benefits of playing bingo for the elderly is that it supports memory improvement. A wide variety of digital games and apps for seniors exist to help combat cognitive decline. However, older people may think

more traditionally when it comes to gaming.

It's important to consider, "what do seniors like to do?" New games and technology may be foreign and unfamiliar. For those who prefer to play in-person games rather than on a screen, bingo is a perfectly good alternative.

Games for senior citizens need to be interactive and engaging. This allows them to focus on the task at hand for a longer period of time, opening up neuropathways for learning. People who are engaged are more likely to remember what happened than if they were bored or disengaged.

## Better Hand-Eye Coordination

As we age, our bodies tend to get a bit shakier and we lose some coordination skills. Because seniors must place chips onto their card quickly in bingo, it's a good step towards improving hand-eye coordination.

Simple movements, like placing a chip on a card, can be beneficial to the daily life of older adults. This can help your elderly loved one with household tasks such as cleaning, cooking or buttoning clothes.





DEC 2020

Birthdays

Ken Hall, 11th  
Duncan MacDonald, 14th  
Pearl Poland, 17th  
Gladys Adelson, 20th  
Patricia Stearns, 22nd  
Doris Smith, 23rd  
Lillian "Trudy" Adams, 30th

Locations

Billiards Room, BR  
Activity Room, AR  
Chapel, Chapel  
Dining Room, DR  
Fireplace, FP  
Living Room, LR  
Lobby, LB  
Outing, Outing  
Patio, Patio  
TV Room, TV

Check the Activity Room daily to see upcoming events, movies and outings!

“Time together as a family is a gift.”  
—Joanna Gaines

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>5</b>
		<b>1</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Story Reading by the Fireplace, FP	<b>2</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Brain Teasers, AR 2:00 Holiday Crafts, AR 4:00 Evening Walk	<b>3</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> Cookie Exchange Week 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Movie and Popcorn, AR	<b>4</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Morning Prayers, FP 2:00 Holiday Cooking Decorating, AR 4:00 Social Hour, AR	9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Holiday Music and Cookie Exchange, AR 2:00 Bingo, AR <b>4:00 Root Beer Floats, AR</b>
<b>6</b> 9:30 Word Scramble Game, AR 10:30 Morning Prayer Service, Chapel 11:30 Morning Exercise, AR 2:00 Christmas Tree Decorating, AR 4:00 Social Hour, AR	<b>7</b> 9:30 Brain Teasers, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Let's Decorate the Halls 4:00 Conversation and Cocoa, AR	<b>8</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Evening Walk	<b>9</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Christmas Symbol Trivia, AR 2:00 Decorating the Gingerbread House, AR 4:00 Social Hour, AR	<b>HANUKKAH BEGINS AT SUNSET 10</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Evening Walk	<b>11</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Cornhole Game, AR 2:00 Christmas Tree Craft, AR 4:00 Evening Prayers, FP 	<b>12</b> <b>Gingerbread House Week</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Morning Prayers, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR <b>4:00 Root Beer Floats, AR</b>
<b>13</b> 9:30 Gingerbread Word Scramble, AR 10:30 Morning Prayer Service, Chapel 11:30 Morning Exercise, AR 2:00 Graham Cracker Gingerbread House, AR 4:00 Story Reading by the Fireplace, FP	<b>14</b> 9:30 Brain Teasers, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Gingerbread Ornament, AR 2:00 Christmas Movie, AR 4:00 Evening Walk 	<b>15</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Travel Tales, AR	<b>16</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Gingerbread Arts and Crafts, AR 2:00 Gingerbread Tasting, AR 4:00 Brain Teasers, AR	<b>17</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Christmas Movie, AR 	<b>18</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Christmas Art Project, AR 2:00 Ugly Sweater Party, AR 4:00 Gingerbread Mocktails, AR	<b>19</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Wreath Decorating Project, AR 2:00 Bingo, AR <b>4:00 Root Beer Floats, AR</b>
<b>20</b> 9:30 Christmas Trivia, AR 10:30 Morning Prayer Service, Chapel 11:30 Morning Exercise, AR 2:00 Movie/It's a Wonderful Life, AR 4:00 Social Hour, AR 	<b>WINTER BEGINS 21</b> 9:30 Brain Teasers, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Christmas Story by the Fireplace, FP 2:00 Winter Art Project, AR 4:00 Evening Walk	<b>22</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Decorate An Ornament, AR 	<b>23</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 'Twas the Night Before Christmas Story, FP 2:00 Arts and Crafts, AR 4:00 Cocoa and Conversation, AR 	<b>24</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> Christmas Eve 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY 25</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Christmas Prayers, FP 2:00 Christmas Movie, AR	<b>26</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR <b>4:00 Root Beer Floats, AR</b>
<b>27</b> 9:30 Brain Teasers, AR 10:30 Morning Prayer Service, Chapel 11:30 Morning Exercise, AR 2:00 Snowflake Art, AR 4:00 Evening Walk	<b>28</b> 9:30 Brain Teasers, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Chocolate Candy Taste Testing, AR 2:00 Arts and Crafts, AR	<b>29</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 Fireside Conversation, FP	<b>30</b> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Cornhole Game, AR 2:00 Arts and Crafts, AR 4:00 Cocoa and Conversation, AR 	<b>NEW YEAR'S EVE 31</b> <b>Doctor Appointment Day</b> 9:30 Word scramble game, AR 10:30 Morning Exercise, AR 11:30 Spiritual Devotions, FP 2:00 Bingo, AR 4:00 New Year's Eve Social		



## My Best Friend and I Board the Banana Boat Cruise

My Best Friend and I Board the Banana Boat Cruise: In Honor of Claude Brenner

Author: Robert A. Summers

Two best friends and world travelers decided to embark upon a unique experience boarding the banana boat cruise together. My dear friend Claude Brenner and I met in the early 1950s during a very memorable time in our lives when we were students studying at the graduate house of MIT.

Many factors made our time as students at MIT unique and special.

Officially called Ashdown House, the graduate house of MIT created a close community by being one of the first universities to offer housing for graduate students. The university created a dynamic and diverse culture, welcoming students from all around the world. I'm very grateful my time at MIT helped me make friendships that would change my life for the better, such as my friendship with Claude. His friendship meant so much to me, and we were friends until his passing in 2015, sharing a wonderful friendship of over 60 years.

Claude truly was a unique and fascinating person with many stories of courage and adventures. He began his adventures early in life when he moved to the United States from South Africa with his mother and older sister to be in a safe place and for the chance to have a better life. Remarkably intelligent from an early age, Claude began his first year of high school at the age of 12.

The same year, the well-known radio show called Quiz Kids invited him to join the cast members on the show. Claude continued working for the show throughout the 1940s. Due to his outstanding performance, Quiz Kids invited him to take on the role of the host on a few occasions when the hosts weren't available. Among all the topics covered by the radio show, Claude's favorite topic was aeronautics.

One of my favorite memories with Claude takes me back in time to our adventures aboard the banana boat cruise. At the time, taking a cruise on a banana boat was a wonderful way to travel while keeping the costs down. Sailing from one tropical island to the next as the captain and crew delivered bananas to the locals, we enjoyed the sights and company of our fellow travelers. Although our cruise was simplistic in style compared to a fancy cruise, we appreciated how unique our experiences were.

However, one strange aspect of our cruise ship experience could never be forgotten. Beginning with the first day aboard the banana boat cruise, Claude and I were taken aback by the bugs that we noticed in every corner of the officers' mess where we ate our meals with our new friends. And these bugs weren't simply everyday ordinary bugs I recognized from my hometown back in Potomac, Maryland. Here in the tropical climate amidst the cruise, it was common to find roaches. That was one part of the cruise ship experience I wasn't quite prepared for!

My family and I will always remember and honor my best friend Claude. He had such a unique personality and unforgettable list of accomplishments. Even after graduation, he devoted time to serving the MIT community, taking on many roles, including his leadership role as the president of the MIT Alumni Association. Other interesting accomplishments of his which come to mind include his knowledge about a vast number of topics, the elegant pillows he taught himself to needlepoint and his journey across Massachusetts, driving the full length of each state highway.

I had the honor of being invited to give a presentation at his memorial service, which was held by the MIT Chapel. He was happiest when he was with family and friends, pursuing adventures, engaging in





meaningful and intellectual conversations, enriching MIT with his time volunteering and building his expertise on his favorite topics, including mathematics and the arts.

Meaningful friendships truly change our lives for the better, often altering our lives in unexpected ways. My family and I were very happy for Claude when by surprise he met his life partner when he traveled to Boothbay Harbor to attend my son's wedding. By coincidence, she had been staying in the hotel room next door, and one night they were both reading books on their balconies, which sparked a conversation and connection. I'll always be thankful for the many ways our friendship touched each other's lives for the better. He will be missed and loved by his family and friends forever.

## A Bit About Gingerbread

Gingerbread and the many shapes it takes has a long history. First appearing in ancient Greece and Egypt, gingerbread was used more for ceremonial purposes. Later, gingerbread found its way to Europe when 11th-century Crusaders brought back ginger from the Middle East for the aristocrats' cooks to experiment with. As ginger and other spices became more affordable to the masses, gingerbread caught on and eventually became the gingerbread we know and love today!

### **Gingerbread take form in Europe**

An early European recipe for gingerbread consisted of ground almonds, stale breadcrumbs, rosewater, sugar and naturally, ginger. The resultant paste was pressed into wooden molds. These carved works of art served as a sort of story board that told the news of the day, bearing the likeness of new kings, emperors and queens, or religious symbols. The finished cookie might be decorated with edible gold paint or flat white icing to bring out the details in relief.

In the 16th century, the English replaced the breadcrumbs with flour and added eggs and sweeteners, resulting in a lighter product. The first gingerbread man is credited to Queen Elizabeth I, who knocked the socks off visiting dignitaries by presenting them with one baked in their own likeness.

### **Gingerbread Today**

Today, gingerbread is a baked sweet containing ginger and sometimes cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom and anise, and sweetened with any combination of brown sugar, molasses, light or dark corn syrup, or honey. Gingerbread can take the shape of thin, crisp cookies like snaps, it can be a dark, spicy and cake-like, sometimes, with lemon glaze or even in the form of a house!

### **Gingerbread Houses**

The gingerbread house became popular in Germany after the Brothers Grimm published their fairy tale collection which included "Hansel and Gretel" in the 19th century. Early German settlers brought this tradition to the Americas.



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*It's always Warm at*

Birchwoods at Canco  
Assisted Living Community

We invite you to experience the warmth of our community. Our caring staff is here for you any time, day or night. We take care of the cooking, cleaning, and maintenance, leaving you more time to enjoy your lifestyle. We'll even drive you to appointments, shopping and other outings.

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