

Willows Whistler

Willows Landing | 9872 Hart Blvd, Monticello, MN | 320-428-9586

Staff Directory

Main Number
(320) 428-9586

Julie Maruska
763-269-1944

Community Director
director@willows-landing.com

Quinn Glessing, RN
Health Care Coordinator
hcc@willows-landing.com

Laura LaTour
Marketing Coordinator
welcome@willows-landing.com

Tim Gallus
Maintenance Director
maintenance@willows-
landing.com

Linda Johnson
Life Enrichment Coordinator
lifeenrichment@willows-
landing.com

Jackie Hemingsen
Culinary Coordinator
culinary@willows-landing.com

Abby Hanzlik
Administrative Assistant
asstdirector@willows-
landing.com

Concierge/Front Desk
Polly, Jessica, Jody
320-428-9586

A Fresh Take on Peppermint

Peppermint bark. Peppermint lattes. Peppermint candy canes. There is no doubt about it—peppermint is the undisputed flavor of the winter season. Mint is full of the chemical menthol, which, when tasted, activates the same nerve sensors that allow us to feel cold. We love the refreshing, cooling sensation of mint in our mouths and are reminded of winter each time we take a taste. But there is more to the story of peppermint's hold on the winter season than its chemical composition.

Mint-flavored hard candies have been made for hundreds of years. Before the invention of air-conditioning, hard candy could be made only during the cool, dry months of winter, for heat and humidity would spoil the candy. Mint is a reliable flavoring because it does not cook off during the manufacturing process. Its flavor remains incredibly strong. For this reason, mint-flavored hard candy has always been a wintertime treat.

Legend has it that the first candy canes were invented in the 17th century by a German choirmaster who bribed his choirboys with peppermint candy sticks to keep them complacent during mass. Candy in church was not exactly solemn, so the choirmaster asked the candy maker to fashion the candy sticks into shepherds' crooks, honoring Jesus.

It wasn't until 1847 that a German Swedish immigrant to America named August Imgard used the candy cane as a Christmas decoration. He spun white hard candy into its crooked shape and hung the canes along with paper ornaments from a blue spruce. It would take a few more decades and the advent of mass production techniques for candy canes to get their red stripes. Why red? Some say this color represents the blood shed by Jesus on the cross, while others attribute it to the red berries and green garland of evergreen holly that has been associated with Yule traditions. Don't wait until December 26, Candy Cane Day, to enjoy candy canes. Most people start buying them the day after Thanksgiving.

Still Living in Infamy



U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt called December 7, 1941, “a date which will live in infamy.” 81 years later, we still remember the attack on Pearl Harbor and pause to honor all who were lost.

Pearl Harbor is a U.S. naval base located near Honolulu, Hawaii. It was home to the bulk of the U.S. Navy’s Pacific Fleet, hundreds of airplanes, and thousands of soldiers. American intelligence officials never expected Japanese forces to start a war with the United States with an attack on Hawaii, 4,000 miles away. For this reason, Pearl Harbor was left largely undefended on December 7, 1941. As a target, Pearl Harbor was too good of an opportunity for the Japanese to ignore.

In an audacious sneak attack, without any declaration of war, Japanese forces began their assault on Pearl Harbor at around 8 a.m. At 8:10, a 1,800-pound bomb fell through the deck of the battleship USS *Arizona* and struck an ammunition store, resulting in a massive explosion and killing thousands. After two hours of fighting, 20 American ships (including every battleship in Pearl Harbor) were crippled; 300 airplanes were destroyed; 2,403 sailors, soldiers, and civilians were killed; and a thousand more were wounded.

Luckily—amazingly—the Pacific Fleet was left intact. Despite losing its powerful battleships, the Fleet’s aircraft carriers had been off base during the attack and were safe. Pearl Harbor’s vital infrastructure, including repair shops, oil storage depots, shipyards, and submarine docks, had been largely untouched. The U.S. Navy would be able to rebuild itself for a sustained war effort.

The day following the attack, President Roosevelt declared war on Japan. And though history remembers America and its Allies as the brave victors of a long and bloody world war, scars of that war remain. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is a time to reflect on all that was lost and a celebration of the freedoms that were won.

December Activity Highlights

We are going to “Light Up Your World” in the Month of December!

12/1 Holiday Craft – We will be making Holiday Centerpieces.

12/5 Holiday Bingo – Fun and Exciting Holiday Prizes!

12/6 All Aboard the Polar Express Holiday Party at Willows Landing from 3:00pm to 6:00pm for our amazing Residents. Hearty appetizers and beverages will be served. Entertainment by riddleMEmusic.

12/7 Shopping outing to Walmart

12/8 Resident Counsel Meeting

12/9 Group outing to see Riverside Church’s Production of...“A Christmas Carol” .

12/14 Baking Pies

12/14 Scenic Holiday Lights Drive

12/15 Monthly Birthday Party

12/21 Shopping at Cocoa Maas in Big Lake (Gift shop with homemade candy and ice cream)

12/22 Christmas Caroling

12/23 Music by Relan Grove in the Pub.

12/30 We will say Goodbye to 2022 and Hello to a New Year 2023!

Plunge in Head-First



One of December’s strangest holidays falls on December 18. It’s Wear a Plunger on Your Head Day. An internet search will tell you that an ex-bounty hunter named Vern Halsey might be the only person in the world who celebrates this holiday along with his pet

Komodo dragon Felix, of course. If you’d like to keep Vern and Felix company this December 18, here’s a tip: Make sure you wear the correct type of plunger on your head. plungers often come in two designs. Those that narrow at the bottom are specifically designed to fit into a toilet and are called flange plungers, while plungers designed for the sink and shower are flat and are known as cup plungers. If you’re keen on celebrating, a new, clean, store-bought cup plunger is the way to go. Happy Wear a Plunger on Your Head Day!

News from Nurse Quinn: Feeling Low Energy

While it might seem like being tired is synonymous with being older, it is not something you or your elderly loved ones need to just accept. There are many different causes of low energy in the elderly, and once you determine the cause, you can work on finding a solution.

What Causes Low Energy in Seniors?

Low energy in seniors can be caused by a few different illnesses or conditions, including:

- Sleep Disorders
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Heart Disease
- Arthritis
- Anemia
- Kidney Disorders
- Depression

Some medications, especially antidepressants and the antihistamines you may take for allergies, can also cause fatigue.

One of the easiest ways to fight fatigue is by changing your diet. Using food to help with low energy is a great solution that is relatively easy and helps you avoid adding another prescription to your life.

Best Foods for Low Energy

When people think of energy-boosting food, they generally think of coffee, soda, or energy drinks. While the debate over whether or not caffeine is good for you rages on (remember the debates about eggs? It's like that), there are better ways to get caffeine than drinking soda or energy drinks, which have tons of bad stuff in them.

The best drink for energy is green tea, specifically matcha if you want to be really fancy. A cup of green tea has about the same amount of caffeine as a third of a cup of coffee - but it has many other benefits coffee doesn't have. It is packed with antioxidants, it's good for digestive health, and amino acids that are good for focus.

Other foods you should add to your diet for low energy and fatigue include:

Fish - Fish is a lean protein and a great source of omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids help prevent heart attacks, relieve joint pain, and prevent cognitive decline.

Whole grains - Whole grains maintain their nutrient content, unlike white and wheat flour products. Whole grains contain complex carbohydrates, which you need for overall health, and have a lower impact on your blood sugar, so your energy levels stay stable rather than going up and down.

Fruits and Vegetables - this isn't very specific, but it is a good reminder to make sure you have lots of color in your diet. Fruits and vegetables contain plenty of nutrients without too many calories. They also contain fiber for your digestive health.

Low-fat dairy products - Dairy products contain the calcium and vitamin D your body needs to absorb the calcium. They also contain the carbohydrates you need for energy. Look for low-fat options to help with your weight control while also gaining energy.

Foods high in iron - Anemia, or low iron levels, can cause fatigue in older adults. Foods rich in iron include eggs, spinach, and red meat.

The most important food to avoid when struggling with low energy is refined carbs. Refined carbs have too much sugar, which can cause your blood sugar to spike and then crash, leading to fatigue. When avoiding refined carbs, you want to avoid white: white bread, white rice, crackers, pasta made with white or wheat flour, and sugary snacks.

As always, if you are struggling with a lot of fatigue and eating a well-balanced diet isn't helping, check in with your doctor. Your fatigue could be caused by an underlying condition that they can treat.

Chasing Tradition

At precisely 8:15 p.m. on December 5, the eve of St. Nicholas Day, all the lights in the Swiss hamlet of Küssnacht are turned off, plunging the village along Lake Lucerne into darkness. So begins the *Klausjagen*, or “Santa Chase,” one of Europe’s most impressive St. Nicholas Day traditions.

Thousands of spectators line the cobbled street that has wended its way through town since the medieval era. Suddenly, explosions as loud as gunshots pierce the darkness. Spectators shrink back from the street, fearing that they may be struck by the long sheep whips wielded by the men leading the procession.



The cracking whips passing through the pitch announce the arrival of the magnificent, glowing *iffelen*. These are massive cardboard hats, some over six feet tall, worn by robed dancers. The *iffelen* are shaped like bishops’ miters. They have been painstakingly cut and colored with tissue paper, showcasing intricate patterns that mimic beautiful stained-glass windows. The most elaborate easily take 500 hours to complete. As if this spectacle isn’t magnificent enough, the spectators hold their breath and await the arrival of Santa Claus.

Santa, or St. Nicholas, arrives with a cacophony of clanking cowbells, tooting cow horns, and a band that plays the “Santa song,” a melody of only six notes, repeated over and over again. Santa may be the star of the show, but he is not alone. *Schmutzli* walks by his side, a sinister figure robed in black who carries a broom of twigs, traditionally for whipping children who have been bad all year. This *Schmutzli*, luckily, is more benevolent, and he hands out pastries along the parade route.

This ancient procession owes its origins to pagan winter rites where loud noises were used to scare away evil spirits. Over the centuries, Christian and pagan traditions blended to create the famous *Klausjagen* procession that attracts thousands of spectators today.

December Birthdays

Employees:

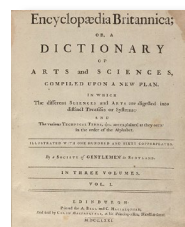
Bernice 12/1
Mary 12/7
Savannah 12/10
Gladys 12/12
Rachel 12/17
Nichole 12/20

Residents:

Harold 12/8
Lenny 12/20
Joseph 12/23
Oliver 12/27

Encyclopedic Memory

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* was conceived by printer Colin Macfarquhar and engraver Andrew Bell, both from Edinburgh. The two



chose William Smellie as their editor, and while Smellie wrote many of the entries, he borrowed most, admitting that he “snipped out from books enough material for the printer. With pastepot and scissors I composed it!” What made the *Britannica* different was that it grouped related topics together into larger essays and organized those alphabetically, rather than separating entries by alphabetical order. Release of the first edition was announced on December 10, 1768. Critics called it the “Gospel of Satan,” while doctors complained that it undermined their authority. The prose was so vivid and the organization so easy to navigate that demand for a second edition was instantaneous, despite the first edition’s imperfect scholarship.