

The Legacy of the Birkebeiner



Covered in snow, north Wisconsin heats up in February, thanks to "Birkie Fever." On February 21, around 10,000 skiers from more than 25 countries will participate in the American

Birkebeiner, a cross-country skiing marathon. At 53 kilometers, Wisconsin's "Birkie" is the largest cross-country ski race in North America. Of the numerous cross-country ski marathons worldwide, the American Birkie is considered one of the toughest. With temperatures hovering around zero degrees Celsius and an undulating course of hills and valleys, it's no wonder the race has been dubbed the "Greatest Show on Snow," where world-class athletes are tested to the limits of their endurance.

The origins of the Birkebeiner races date back to the early 1200s, commemorating an event that inspires much pride among those with Norwegian ancestry. All Birkebeiner races recall a heroic moment in Norway's history. Historian Sigvart Sorensen told of how, on January 1, 1204, King Haakon III of Norway died suddenly, possibly by poisoning. After the king's death, a civil war erupted, pitting the wealthy Bagler faction against the Birkebeiners.

A year later, it was decided that the king's hitherto-unknown heir, an 18-month-old prince, would have to flee. This could be done only with the help of long-distance skiers. Two skiers from the Birkebeiner faction, Torstein Skjleva and Skjervald Skrukka, struck out on a 60-mile journey in the midst of a storm over treacherous mountains to deliver the babe to his mother, Queen Inga, in Trondheim.

The prince, whom we now know as King Haakon IV, would eventually unite Norway, all thanks to two brave Birkebeiners.

February Birthdays

In astrology, those born February 1–18 are Aquarian Water Bearers. Aquarians have attractive personalities, vivid imaginations, strong intuition, and a thirst for knowledge. They also share a strong desire to help humanity and create unity. Those born between February 19–29 are Pisces. These Fish are spiritual types who feel comfortable in their introspective natures. As passionate, romantic, creative dreamers, they are charitable helpers who go with the flow.

Resident Birthdays

Nanette B. – Feb. 1
Susan M. – Feb. 1
Mildred W. – Feb. 3
Ora T. – Feb. 5
Josephine S. – Feb. 5
Carol G. – Feb. 9
Elizabeth M. – Feb. 12
Ronald W. – Feb. 19
Velvia L. – Feb. 21
Cora Sue M. – Feb. 26



Team Puakea Birthdays

Eunice B. – Feb. 2
Sharon M. – Feb. 5
Clarito M. – Feb. 6
Erin B. – Feb. 9
Desiree C. – Feb. 13
Tessie I. – Feb. 14



The Coconut Wireless

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 Bringing Independence to Living and Quality of Life

Celebrating February

Time Management Month

Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month

Spunky Old Broads Day

February 1

Groundhog Day

February 2

Periodic Table Day

February 7

Valentine's Day

February 14

Random Acts of Kindness Week

February 15–21

Chinese New Year (Year of the Horse)

February 17

International Mother Language Day

February 21

Tell a Fairy Tale Day

February 26



Wala'au (Talk Story) with Pacita Jiminez

By Ada Henne Koene



This month I did Wala'au with Pacita Jimenez. Her family came from The Patucannay, The Philippines. It is a barangay in the municipality of Tayum in the province of Abra.

Her father came to work on the Olokele Sugar Plantation. He first came alone and once he was settled, he sent for his wife. Together they had five children, two boys and three girls. Pacita was born in Lihue in 1927.

Pacita married her husband who was half Filipino and half Puerto Rican. He went into the army and after he came back, he worked as a surveyor for the State of Hawaii.

Meanwhile Pacita taught Sunday School at Lihue Christian Church, she was a nursery schoolteacher and did typing work for local Filipino newspaper.

Together Pacita and her husband had four children. Regrettably three have passed away. Her surviving son, Ryan, was Circuit court judge in Hawaii and is still on call.

One of her fond memories was when her sister's friend, who was a teacher at University of the Philippines invited her and her husband to the PI for a visit. She stayed on and eventually went with a cousin to rice country in Banue, Cordillera Mountain in the Ifugao Province on Luzon Island. Her cousin was a medical dispenser and serviced the people who tended to the rice paddies. They stayed for three months.

This area was carved out of the Cordillera mountain some 2,000 years ago. They are often referred to as Eight Wonder of the World. They are more than just rice paddies; they represent a way of life for the indigenous peoples. They were inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage site.



While there, Pacita observed the ladies who maintained the rice fields. "The ladies took care of the fields which was unique. No men worked in the mountainous rice paddies. The ladies who were barefooted would carry little buckets of water to wet the rice rows of seeds for growth. After watering one part of the seeds, they would go down to the stream, fill the buckets, then go to another row. At the end of the day, they would put the buckets away, then walk out of the fields and go to rest. They would find a rock to sit on, and they would chew on a green Piper betel leaf which was filled with an areca nut and white powder. After that they would leave the rock. Going home for this group meant climbing the hill and heading home. No one was seen on the premises during the evening or night,"

If you see it, this beautiful area you will understand why they spent so much time there. She pointed out that she speaks Ilocano fluently.

Pacita says she has many stories to share. Some are about her travels in Europe. Welcome to Regency Puakea. We look forward to hearing more of them

The Long Sleep

Karolina Olsson of Sweden became known as the "Sleeping Beauty of Oknö" when, on February 22, 1876, at age 14, she fell into a deep sleep and did not awake for 32 years.



How did she survive? Legend has it that family members diligently spoon-fed her sweetened milk each day. Over the years, they sometimes observed her sleepwalking or crawling. Her family and much of her small remote village believed the girl bewitched. When Olsson finally awoke, she looked in the mirror and burst into tears.

She hardly recognized herself. And yet, she seemed to have aged only to her mid-20s, when she should have been 46. Doctors examined her to find no lasting physical or mental damage, only that her mind was still that of a 14-year-old. Olsson had amazingly, inexplicably "hibernated," though today's doctors suggest she might have been in a state of catatonia.

February Aloha

For those dwelling in the northern hemisphere, February brings a chill to both the air and the spirit. Spring is just a month away, but who can think of spring when the snow's still falling? Drive away the chill on February 1 with Hula in the Coola Day.



Hula dancing is an integral part of Hawaii's Polynesian history and culture. The dance is far more than swaying the hips in a grass skirt; it's a ritual way to explain Hawaiian gods and goddesses, the history of the people, and the mysteries of natural phenomena through chanting, singing, and dancing. Hula has been performed during religious rituals, rites of

passage, social gatherings, and even football games. So if you're looking to warm your spirit this February 1 with a little *aloha*, find a real *kumu hula* teacher. Ditch the grass skirt for one made of *kapa*, a traditional fabric handcrafted from the bark of the paper mulberry tree.

Since hula is Hawaii's iconic dance, the ukulele must be Hawaii's iconic instrument. In the 1900s, the ukulele became part of the musical backdrop to hula dances, so it stands to reason that World Ukulele Day falls on February 2, the day after Hula in the Coola. Famed Hawaiian musician Samuel Kamaka explained that the ukulele was first played in the islands in 1879 by João Fernandes, an immigrant from Portugal. His fingers rapidly strummed a four-stringed *braguinha*, which the native Hawaiians nicknamed *ukulele*, a word meaning "jumping fleas."

Perhaps no ukulele musician was as beloved as Israel "IZ" Kamakawiwo'ole. Raised in a musical family from Honolulu (his uncle was Moe Keale), he was exposed to entertainers like Don Ho and Palani Vaughan. His version of "Over the Rainbow" may rival Judy Garland's. It will, no doubt, be strummed the world over on World Ukulele Day.

Health and Wellness



February is American Heart Month, a national observance to raise awareness about heart disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S., encouraging everyone to learn about cardiovascular health, adopt healthier lifestyles, and manage risks like high blood pressure and cholesterol through diet, exercise, and stress management. Join us in wearing RED "GO Red for Women" campaign and National Wear Red Day (first Friday in February).

Key Goals of American Heart Month:

- Awareness:** Educate people on heart disease risks and symptoms (chest pain, shortness of breath, fatigue).
- Action:** Promote lifestyle changes like healthy eating (nuts, lean meats, less processed food), regular physical activity (150 mins/week), and good sleep.
- Management:** Focus on controlling high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and obesity.

Why It Matters:

Heart disease remains the top killer in the U.S., but it's largely preventable, making this month crucial for community and personal heart health. Cardiologists generally advise avoiding processed meats, sugary drinks/foods, and deep-fried/trans fat-laden foods (like fast-food fries, doughnuts) due to their high sodium, unhealthy fats, and sugar content, which increase bad cholesterol (LDL), blood pressure, inflammation, and risk of heart attack and stroke. Refined grains and excessive salt/sugar are also key culprits, pushing for diet rich in whole foods, fruits, and vegetables.

Key Takeaway: Focus on whole foods, fruits, vegetable, and lean proteins, while reducing intake of anything highly processed, sugary, salty, or deep-fried.