

## Illuminating the New Year



The Chinese Lantern Festival, also known as Yuan Xiao Jie, will be celebrated on February 12, 2025, marking the end of the Lunar New Year festivities. With a history that spans over

2,000 years, this festival has its origins in the Han Dynasty (206 BC–AD 220), when emperor Han Mingdi promoted the lighting of lanterns to honor Buddha. Over time, the tradition evolved into a broader celebration of family, community, and hope for the future.

At the heart of the festival are the colorful lantern displays, which light up streets, parks, and homes. In ancient times, these lanterns were simple paper creations illuminated by candles, but today's festivals feature intricate designs, often shaped like animals or iconic symbols. Lanterns are believed to symbolize letting go of the past and embracing good fortune for the coming year. A unique aspect of the festival is the tradition of solving riddles attached to the lanterns. Dating back to the Song Dynasty (960–1279), these riddles provide a fun, intellectual challenge for festival-goers, with puzzles that range from playful to deeply philosophical.

Tangyuan, sweet glutinous rice dumplings, are a key part of the festival's culinary traditions. Their round shape represents family unity and harmony, and they're often filled with sweet sesame paste, peanuts, or red beans. The festivities also include lively performances, such as lion and dragon dances, along with dazzling fireworks displays that heighten the joyful atmosphere. Historically, the festival was one of the few occasions when young women could venture out in public, adding a romantic element for couples strolling beneath the lantern-lit sky.

The Lantern Festival remains a cherished cultural event in China, blending ancient traditions with modern celebrations and offering a moment to reflect on the past while welcoming the future with hope and light.

## Presidential Corner



Dear Community,

As my time as your Resident Council President comes to an end, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve and connect with each and every one of you. When I first began this role, I never imagined how much I would grow, and I didn't anticipate how deeply I would come to appreciate the relationships and conversations we've had. Through this experience, I've come to realize that no matter what stage we are at in life, there is always room for growth. As I transition home and out of this position, I want to encourage you all to remember that it's never the end of the story – it's simply the beginning of a new chapter.

Allow yourself to be open to the opportunities that come your way. Each phase of life, whether it's a challenge, a transition, or a moment of success, can be a time for growth. Embrace it and think of every step as preparation for whatever comes next in your journey. I hope that my time here has been as meaningful for you as it has been for me. Keep moving forward, stay connected, and remember that life is full of potential at every stage.

Thank you for the chance to serve and for all the memories I will carry with me.

Warm regards,

Alan L, Resident Council President

February 2025

# Mountain Vista View

Mountain Vista Senior Living | 4800 Tabor Street Wheat Ridge, CO 80033 | 303.421.4161

## Celebrating February

### Birthdays

Anais B, Dietary – 2/4

Lindia C, CNA – 2/6

Anthony G, NHA – 2/7

Sandy F, Nurse – 2/15

Sheila A, CNA – 2/16

Carol W – 2/17

Juan C, Cook – 2/17

Nelli D, CNA – 2/19

Michele B, LPN – 2/20

Nancy B – 2/24

Anna W, Dietary Sup – 2/24

Charlotte T – 2/25

Sonya W, RN – 2/21

Mickey B – 2/26

Reggie M, CCM – 2/26

### Anniversaries

Shawanta W, CNA – 1 year

Mekhi B, CNA – 1 year

James H, CNA – 1 year

Gloria C, CNA – 1 year

Emmi B, DON – 1 year

Reggie M, CCM – 1 year

Margaret M, CNA – 1 year

Jennifer V, CNA – 1 year

Anysha J, Nurse – 6 years

Gabriela R, CNA – 6 years

Deb L, Admin – 9 years

Aurelio R, CNA – 11 years

Maria W, CNA – 26 years

## Goody Goody Gumdrops!

February is a sweet month for candy lovers, and Mountain Vista Senior Community has lined up a variety of delightful events to keep everyone smiling! From heartwarming celebrations with friends to indulgent sweet treat socials and a fun outing to the Tea Garden Chinese Restaurant, there's something special happening every week. Let's take a closer look at the exciting activities planned for this month:

On **February 13th**, we're celebrating the season of love with our **Pal-entine's Day Party!** It's a chance to gather with friends and fellow residents for a Happy Hour, complete with drinks, dancing, and karaoke. Whether you're hitting the dance floor or belting out your favorite tunes, it's all about enjoying the company of your pals. To capture the memories, don't miss our photo booth where you can snap fun photos with friends. It's the perfect way to spend Valentine's Day with those who make our community feel like home.

February isn't just about love for friends—it's also about showing gratitude! We're hosting a **Sweet Treat Social** to say a big thank you to our amazing **Food Services Department**. Their dedication to creating delicious, nutritious meals every day is something we all appreciate, and this event is our way of showing that appreciation. Residents can indulge in a variety of scrumptious treats while enjoying the company of neighbors and the Dietary Staff. It's a great time to share stories and thank the team that make our meals so memorable.

What better way to satisfy your cravings than with **Girl Scout cookies**? This month, the **Girl Scouts** will be on campus **twice** to sell their famous cookies, and we couldn't be more excited! Whether you prefer Thin Mints, Samoas, or Trefoils, you'll have the chance to stock up on your favorites while supporting a great cause. Be sure to bring your sweet tooth and grab a box (or two) before they're all gone! Whether you're celebrating love with friends or indulging in delicious food and treats, it's going to be a month to remember at Mountain Vista.



## Purely Refreshing



Judges in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, treat water like wine from February 20 to 22. Local connoisseurs will examine waters from around the world and declare the world's best water based on taste, aroma, appearance, mouth feel, and aftertaste. Not all water is created equal, so it is divided into categories: municipal (tap), bottled, purified, and carbonated. A separate category for package design is voted on as a People's Choice award.

Berkeley Springs has always attracted those interested in water. George Washington owned land in Berkeley Springs and visited often, perhaps lured there by the warm mineral springs believed to have medicinal qualities. Visitors can still marvel at his bathtub, a stone-lined basin dug into the earth that draws water directly from the mineral springs.

Saturday night brings high anxiety at the Country Inn of Berkeley Springs, where judges sip and sample before a crowd of spectators and water purveyors. Last year drew stiff competition in all water categories. More than 100 different waters sourced from 14 countries representing all six inhabited continents entered the competition.

The best tap water in the world was awarded to Independence, Missouri, a new contender in the category. Castle Rock Water of Dunsmuir, California, once again triumphed, beating entries from Italy and Australia to claim the title of the world's best bottled water. The top sparkling water was awarded to Smeraldina Natural Artesian Water from Sardinia, Italy, with strong runners-up from Bosnia and New Zealand. As for the best purified water, that honor stayed local, with H2Only Purified Water from Berkeley Springs clinching the win.

Hometown favoritism? Unlikely. The waters of Berkeley Springs have attracted international acclaim for more than 250 years.

## Food Services Month Appreciation

As we celebrate Food Services Month, we want to take a moment to extend our heartfelt thanks to Todd, our Dining Services Director, Anna, our Supervisor, and all the cooks and dietary aides who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Your dedication, passion, and attention to detail make every meal a delightful experience. Todd, your leadership ensures that everything runs smoothly and efficiently, and Anna, your support and coordination make sure every day is filled with warmth and organization. To all the cooks and dietary aides—your hard work and commitment to creating delicious, nutritious meals do not go unnoticed. We truly appreciate how you always go above and beyond to make every meal something special.

Thank you all for your unwavering dedication, creativity, and hard work. We are incredibly grateful for everything you do to keep us nourished and happy!

## The Many Faces of Valentine



While February 14 is widely celebrated as Valentine's Day, there is some confusion as to which Saint Valentine this day refers to. According to the Roman Catholic Church, 14 different saints are named Valentine. Some believe Valentine honors the bishop of Terni, in central Italy, who was condemned by Roman Emperor Claudius. Others believe Valentine was a Roman priest who secretly married Christian couples until he was discovered by the Roman authorities and sentenced to death. Perhaps the real identity of Saint Valentine is unnecessary since what is truly important is his enduring legacy of love.

## Curtains Up on Opera

With an explosion of media outlets available on the internet, some think the days of opera as an art form are numbered. Operas have been entertaining audiences for 400 years, so why not give one a chance on Opera Day, February 8?



In its heyday, opera was the most exciting and dramatic form of entertainment imaginable. The greatest composers, musicians, and singers performed in elaborate music halls. No expense was spared on the grand sets and fine costumes. The perfect marriage of music and

theater, opera was a thrill, even in America. During the 1920s, throngs of young fans would stop traffic in New York City just to catch a glimpse of their favorite soprano. The kids screamed, threw flowers and ribbons, waved American flags, and acted in a manner typically associated with fans of the Beatles. Yes, 100 years ago, opera was like rock 'n' roll.

So which opera should one see, or hear, to feel this exuberance of yesteryear? Many believe that the greatest opera is Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, a masterpiece that is serious, frightening, and funny all at the same time. Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* are two parts of the same story. Rossini's opera, a prequel to Mozart's, gives more detail to the life of the wily comedic hero Figaro. Verdi's *La Traviata*, one of the most performed operas in the world today, has come a long way from when it was first condemned as scandalous in 1853. Then there is always Bugs Bunny's *What's Opera, Doc?* Elmer Fudd is hunting wabbits again, but this time he is in full Viking gear in a parody of Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelungen*.

If the human voice is indeed "God's most beautiful instrument," then there may be no better way to enjoy it than listening to the opera.

## Cookie Cravings

It's the weekend you've been waiting for all year: February 24–25 is Girl Scout Cookie Weekend! The iconic flavors are all back: Thin Mints, Samoas, Trefoils, Tagalongs, Do-si-dos, and Lemon-Ups. Two other popular options this season are Adventurefuls, a brownie-inspired cookie with caramel-flavored crème, and a gluten-free option, Toffee-tastic, a buttery cookie packed with toffee bits.

This year, the price of Girl Scout Cookies has increased slightly to six dollars a box, which reflects rising costs. Every dollar goes toward supporting programs that help build our next generation of female leaders. The Girl Scout Cookie program continues to teach Girl Scouts five key life skills: goal-setting, decision-making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. Plus, scouts grow in courage, confidence, and character. There's something extra sweet about enjoying these cookies while knowing you're supporting such an impactful program.

## Crossing the Clouds



Perhaps one of the greatest sightseeing adventures in the world is a four-hour train ride on the Bernina Express from Switzerland to Italy through the Alps.

There may be no better time to travel the route than in February, when the land is glistening white with snow.

What makes the journey so special? The railway, which opened in 1904, crosses 196 bridges, passes through 55 tunnels, and climbs more than 7,000 feet (2,100 meters). This marvel of engineering was designed to open isolated mountain villages to the rest of the world. For these reasons, the rail line has been granted status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.