

December 2023

Northern Pines News

Northern Pines Assisted Living | 130 Mary Ann St. Grayling, MI 49738 | (989) 344-2010



Celebrating December

Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Clerc-Gallaudet Week
December 3–9

Dice Day
December 4

Bathtub Party Day
December 5

Salesperson Day
December 8

Gingerbread House Day
December 12

Humbug Day
December 21

Christmas
December 25

Thank-You Note Day
December 26

Happy Birthday Pat!!!
December 28

New Year's Eve
December 31

A Perfect NYC Christmas

There are hundreds of things to do in New York City any day of the year, but the city takes on a sparkle during the Christmas season that makes it feel like you've stepped into a Hallmark movie. The bustle and constant activity can be overwhelming, but they also add to the festive atmosphere.

There's nothing like staring up at the magical tree at Rockefeller Center, which towers 80 feet above the crowd and twinkles with more than five miles of lights! After admiring the tree, many people don some ice skates for a few laps around the famed Rink at Rockefeller Center. Others swear that Wollman Rink at Central Park, featured in movies such as *Home Alone 2*, is a superior choice.

Strolling along Fifth Avenue to take in the window displays is another iconic holiday activity. Stores like Bergdorf Goodman, Tiffany & Co., Barney's, and Macy's create extravagant themed windows that attract tourists and other holiday-fun seekers. The windows showcase fairytale wonderlands, glittery winter landscapes, and magical scenes of Santa and his elves hard at work.

In a town known for its shows, going to see a Christmas performance should be on every list. The Rockettes' *Christmas Spectacular* is filled with the expected high kicks and beloved Christmas tunes. An outing to see Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* is a holiday tradition for families all over the country, but the Lincoln Center's production is one of the most admired performances of this 1892 classic.

The Christmas season isn't complete without picking up some presents for family and friends. Shopping options in the Big Apple are always plentiful, but the European-style Christmas markets have some truly unique gift items. The atmosphere is festive—chilly air, twinkling lights, bustling stalls, and the scent of baked goods create the perfect backdrop for discovering local and handmade goods. For native New Yorkers and visitors alike, nothing beats Christmas in New York. Additionally, indulging in some seasonal treats like sipping on hot cocoa or munching on roasted chestnuts from street vendors can add a delicious layer to your New York City Christmas experience. The combination of delightful flavors and festive sights truly makes the holiday season in the Big Apple a cherished memory.

From Meek to Mighty



December 15 is a day to root for the little guy with the big heart, for it is Underdog Day. What makes underdogs so appealing? They must win against all odds. Whether it's strength, courage, heart, or a little bit of luck, these heroes prevail against the most overwhelming odds. Here's a list of some of the best underdogs, real and fictitious:

Sports is the most likely place to start searching for memorable underdogs, and no team may have pulled off a more surprising win than the 1980 men's Olympic hockey team. A team made up of amateurs and college stars defeated a tough Soviet team during the middle of the Cold War. Sportscaster Al Michaels famously asked, "Do you believe in miracles?" You bet we do.

No story about underdogs would be complete without a mention of racehorse Seabiscuit. Seabiscuit was short with crooked legs and, after first failing as a racehorse, was used as a workhorse. His jockey was a visually impaired former boxer. At Maryland's legendary Pimlico Race Course, Seabiscuit defeated the accomplished War Admiral in what many believe to be the greatest horse race in history.

Literature is filled with underdog stories, and J.R.R. Tolkien's hero Frodo Baggins from his *Lord of the Rings* trilogy is practically the size of a dog. This tiny hobbit, best known for eating, drinking, and living in peace, crosses an entire continent full of beasts and demons to save the world from evil and destruction.

Harry Potter may well be another great literary underdog, but so is his creator, J.K. Rowling. This unknown writer and unemployed single mother created an international sensation and hooked thousands of children on reading.

December Birthdays

If you were born from December 1–21, you are a Sagittarius, the Archer. Archers are not only confident but also lucky, so they often find success. Their enthusiasm is infectious, so people often help them achieve their ambitious goals. Those born from December 22–31 are Capricorns, the Goat. As sure-footed goats climb mountains, Capricorns pursue worthwhile, nonfrivolous goals by taking practical steps.

Andy Williams (singer) – Dec. 3, 1927
 Dave Brubeck (pianist) – Dec. 6, 1920
 Buck Henry (writer/actor) – Dec. 9, 1930
 Rita Moreno (entertainer) – Dec. 11, 1931
 Christopher Plummer (actor) – Dec. 13, 1929
 Betty Grable (actress) – Dec. 18, 1916
 Branch Rickey (manager) – Dec. 20, 1881
 Louis Chevrolet (engineer) – Dec. 25, 1878
 Donna Summer (singer) – Dec. 31, 1948

Spectacular Soda



With its hundreds of uses, bicarbonate of soda certainly deserves its own day on December 30. Baking soda, as it is commonly called, is used for far more than baking. Make homemade toothpaste by mixing

baking soda with hydrogen peroxide. Mix a 3-to-1 ratio of baking soda and water to create a gentle exfoliant for your skin or to relieve the itch of insect bites. Add a sprinkle of baking soda to your shampoo to add extra cleaning power. Out of deodorant? Just apply a thin dusting of baking soda under your arms.

Even the ancient Egyptians were wise to the uses of baking soda. They found natural deposits of bicarbonate of soda and used them to create soaps. It's time to put that box of baking soda front and center in the cupboard.