



## Center Services

### Commission on Aging



The next Commission on Aging meeting will be held on April 17, 2012 at 9:30am. All interested persons are welcome to attend.

### Free Blood Pressure Screening



There is a free Blood Pressure screening every Tuesday done by the VNA. The hours are 10:00am to 12:00pm. No appointment necessary.

### Probate Information



The Probate Court is commonly thought of as the means to distribute a person's property after death. However, there are many functions of the Court which assist the living. Matters dealing with the custody, guardianship and adoption of minors, the appointment of conservators for adults who can no longer manage their affairs, applications for change of name and the processing of passport applications are all within the jurisdiction of the Probate Court.

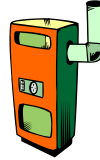
Middlebury Social and Elderly Services offer this service on the last Thursday of each month beginning at 2:00pm. The Probate Judge Hon. Peter Mariano, will meet with you on a one to one basis to discuss matters of concern or probate issues. If you would like to make an appointment, please call 203-720-7046 and speak only to Patty Aleggi.

### Free Hearing Screening



The free hearing screening this month will be on Wednesday, April 11, 2012... Please call for an appointment at 203-577-4166.

### Energy Assistance



Applications for the Energy Assistance Program for heating season 2011/2012 are now being taken at the Middlebury Social Services office between the hours of 9:00am and 12:00pm Monday through Friday. In order to process your application, the following information is needed:

- Dates of Birth and social security numbers for all household members.
- Verification of the gross income, from all sources, for all household members (tax forms are not acceptable).
- Current bank statements verifying liquid assets for all household members.
- Current electric or gas bill utility heated households.
- Deliverable fuel vendor's name for deliverable fuel heated households.

Eligibility for winter heating assistance is based on household size, gross income and liquid assets.

For more information, please call the Middlebury Social Services office at 203-577-4166.

### ATTENTION

AARP Chapter 4960's current President is retiring. The Chapter is looking for a new AARP member volunteer for President. Please contact Vincent Cavalea at 203-758-2655.

## EASTER SEALS PROGRAM



The Easter Seals Outreach program was established to fund the medically necessary needs of seniors requiring hearing aids or dental work. Individuals must be at least 65 years old of age and reside in the Greater Waterbury area.

Final decisions on eligibility are based on the financial needs of the candidates.



Please contact us to request an application or call 203-754-5141 ext. 225 for more information on the program.

## Medicare's New Preventative Benefit

A new preventative benefit has been added to Medicare's list of growing preventative benefits, "**Annual Depression Screening**".

Depression is a medical disorder that affects a person's emotional or mental state. Symptoms are feeling sad with no energy to do the things that make you happy.

This screening is important. Among people over 65, 1 in 6 suffers from depression. Many are not diagnosed or treated, which can lead to other health problems, even death. This screening can help you get treatment to improve your quality of life.

Medicare covers the cost of one depression screening per year. You pay nothing for the cost of this service if you have **Original Medicare**. If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, the plan cannot charge you for this service as long as you see an "in-network" provider, meaning a doctor who has an agreement to treat people who belong to the plan. If you use a provider outside your plan's network, it may cost you money.

We strongly encourage this screening, your opportunity to take control and help you live a fulfilling life.

## Computers & Your Eyes

Dr. Kent Daum from the University of Alabama recommends that people over age 50 get prescription glasses designed specifically for computer use.

People tend to blink less when using a computer, older computer users may also be bothered by a dry eye condition. This can be compounded by aging changes that tend to make eyes drier. Artificial tears, ranging from the simple to the exotic, may help. For severe dry eye conditions, tear drainage ducts can be plugged.

Older computer users should discuss their computer use and any vision-related difficulties they are experiencing with their optometrist.

## Please be Aware

### Cell Phone Numbers Go Public this Month



All cell phone numbers are being released to telemarketing companies and you will start to receive sales calls.

**....YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THESE CALLS....**

**To prevent this, call the following number from your cell phone: 888-382-1222.**

It is the National DO NOT CALL LIST. It will only take a minute of your time...It blocks your number for five (5) years. You must call from the cell phone number you want to have blocked. You cannot call from a different phone number.



Applications are still available for the Elderly Homeowners, Totally Disabled Homeowners and Additional Veterans; Tax Credit programs.

Qualifications for these programs include residency, income, age or disability.

Applications must be accompanied by all income statements and Social Security benefits and must be filed no later than Tuesday, May 15.

No application will be accepted without proof of income and Social Security statement.

Qualifying income is based on 2011 adjusted gross income; married applicants must submit combined adjusted gross income plus 2011 Social security benefits payments.

Income limits for 2012 are \$32,300 for single applicants and \$39,500 for married applicants.

Elderly Homeowner applicants must reside in Middlebury, qualify under the income limits, and must be 65 years of age or older.

Totally Disabled Homeowner applicants must be eligible to receive permanent total disability benefits under Social Security or other federal, state or local plan.

Additional Veteran's deadline with the Assessor's Office is October 1.

Applications can be picked up from 9 am to 1 pm at the Social Service Department at Shepardson, 1172 Whittemore Road.

### **AARP MONTHLY MEETING**

***The AARP Chapter 4960 will be holding its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 12:30pm***

***Health Care Specialist and WATR 1320 radio commentator, Michael Reagan will be here to discuss "Things we should know as seniors regarding health care".***

***Pizza Lunch & refreshments follows discussion***

***For more information -- 203-577-4166.***

## **AARP CT Tax Aide**

### **Need Free Help with Your Taxes?**

Free income tax assistance is provided at the Middlebury Senior Center at 1172 Whittemore Road, in Middlebury by the AARP Tax Aide program for low to moderate income taxpayers of all ages, with special attention to those 60 and older.

Call 203-577-4166 to obtain additional information or schedule an appointment with a certified AARP Tax Aide counselor.

## **Don't Forget**



Taxes are due April 16, 2012

## **Renter Rebate Program**

**Effective May 15, 2012**

**Elderly residents of Middlebury or totally disabled persons who rent may apply for the Renter Rebate Program at the Department of Social Services office located in the Shepardson Community Building, Rm. #20 between the hours of 9:00am and 12:30 pm. You must also be a resident of Middlebury and provide proof of income and rent expense for the year 2011. If utilities are not included in your rent, you must provide proof of your utilities expense. If you filed a tax return you must bring a copy.**

**Further questions regarding this program must be directed to JoAnn Cappelletti at 203-577-4166.**

## Current & Future Programs

### Dial-A Ride Program



The Greater Waterbury Transit District (Dial a Ride) runs on Thursdays. All out of town rides must be planned on Thursdays as the mini bus will only be used in town.

### Pilates



The Pilates classes are held Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 am. The cost is \$30.00 for eight classes.

### Yoga



The Yoga classes are held on Tuesdays, 9:30–10:30; Thursdays 9:00–10:30; & Friday, 9:30–10:30. Fee is \$25.00 for 6 classes.

### Line Dancing



The Line Dancing classes are held on Thursdays, 10:00 am. to 11:00am. Fee is \$30.00 for 10 classes.

### Billiards



Our billiard room is open daily. There is no charge to play.

### Sewing



Sewing classes are held every Tuesday at 10:00 am. The fee for this class is \$1.00.

### Knitting & Crocheting

Knitting & crocheting classes will be held on Tuesdays at 10:00am. This class is free of charge.

### Mah-jongg



Mah-jongg is a Chinese game for four players that is played using 144 domino-like tiles. Middlebury has mah-jongg games every Monday at 10:30 am, Tuesdays at 10:3am & 5:30pm. The fee is \$1.00.

### Bingo



Bingo parties continue every Tuesday & Wednesday at 12:30 pm. Our host will be Angela Voytek. Anyone interested in having our lunch before bingo should give us a two day notice.

Lunch donation is \$2.50

### Adult Strengthening Classes



Jim Demeis, a Physical Therapist from Access Rehab will be at the Middlebury Senior Center to teach older adults strength training exercises on Friday afternoons from 12:30 to 1:30.

Fee is \$3.00 per class.



### Tai Chi

The Tai Chi classes are held every Wednesday at 11:00am. The Tai Chi Certified Instructor will be Sherry Galvin.

If interested, please call the Center at 203-577-4166 to sign up

### WII Bowling



Join us on Fridays at 11:00am in the Media room at the Middlebury Senior Center where our friends are playing WII Bowling. It's great fun and the exercise is good for us



Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 10:00am to 11:30am, Roberta Winters from TLC Homecare will be giving an "April Shower Safety Class" and will have prizes like bath mats etc. to all who participate. Registration is required. Please sign in at the Senior Center office or call 203-577-4166.

## Beginners Computer Fundamentals Class



The “Beginners Computer fundamentals class will begin on Monday May 14, 2012 from 1:00 – 3:00pm. This class is for fairly “new” users who want to learn the beginning basics of using a computer. The class includes descriptions of parts of a computer, practice in using a mouse and the keyboard, basic word processing, basic “paint” fundamentals, and an introduction to the internet and email. This class is a good introduction for those who want to go on and take a “ Course in computer Fundamentals” for more in-depth instruction.

For more information or to reserve your seat, call:

**203-577-4166.**

### **Senior Dance Class**

**Marcia Nelken, originator and sole teacher of “Music & Me” will be holding a walking and moving to music – A movement class for Seniors.**

**There will be a free “open house” on Tuesday, April 10, 2012 at 10am. Stop in a see what it’s all about.**

### Introduction to Apple Computers

Are you thinking of obtaining an Apple Computer?

Angelo Malagrino will give one-on-one discussion on what you should know about the differences, from the Microsoft units. Your questions and wants are the objective. He will show you how you can (on your) find answers to now to use the various software products or set-up.

Call the Center 203-577-4166 for an appointment, Tuesday or Wednesday.

## AARP Driver Safety Program



The AARP Driver Safety course is the nation’s first and largest driver refresher course. The course covers:

- Learn new defensive driving techniques
- Refresher in new laws and regulations
- How to deal with aggressive drivers
- How ageing affects reaction time, seeing and hearing
- New materials and new videos

Drivers who attend this class will receive a completion certificate and may be entitled to a discount on automobile insurance (contact your insurance company for details).

The next class will be held on Monday, May 7, 2012 from 9:00am to 1:30pm at the Middlebury Senior Center 1172 Whittemore Road in Middlebury. AARP membership is not required and drivers of all ages are invited to attend.

The cost to participate is only \$12.00 for AARP members & \$14.00 for AARP” non-members. All checks must be made out to “AARP”.



**Bob Baron will be giving his next “Computer Fundamentals” class on Wednesday, May 9, 2012; 9:00am to 12:00pm.**

Cost for this class is \$35.00 for the eight week course which includes the class instruction book.

For reservations: call the Middlebury Senior Center at (203) 577- 4166

## Don's Computer Schedule for April 2012

### Computer Security Class

Class is one session either April 17 or April 19, from 12:30 to 2:30pm. Is your computer and information SECURE?? Learn how to safeguard personal information. Learn to detect and avoid those nasty computer viruses. CREDIT CARD & ON LINE BANKING is SAFE IF YOU FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE RULES. .  
**Fee \$10.00** each class.

### Basic Digital Photo class

Meets April 9 & 11<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 to 2:30pm. Learn to download, edit, organize and create online photo albums you can share with family / friends. Bring your cameras and laptops.  
**Fee \$20.00.**

### Skype Class

This one session class meets April 24 from 12:30 to 2:30pm. We've all seen SKYPE on newscast programs during interviews. We'll learn how to set-up your own FREE SKYPE account that allows you to chat with anyone else who has a computer with SKYPE also installed. Chat FACE to FACE with that old school chum who lives in Texas, California, even Italy or any place in the world ALL FOR FREE !!! Bring your laptops and get set-up during class. **Fee \$10.00.**

### Google Voice Class

This class explains / explores this free TELEPHONE MANAGER from Google. During 2012 you can make free telephone calls from our cell, computer, home, office phones through-out the US & Canada. Get FREE telephone number that can record, transcribe conversations or VOICE MAIL and send them to your cell phones as text messages. "TALK ABOUT STAYING IN TOUCH" with the WORLD... Class meets April 26<sup>th</sup> from 12.30 to 2:30pm. **Fee is \$10.00.**

**Anyone interested in these classes, please call 203-577-4166 to reserve your seat; classes are limited.**

## TURNING 65?????

Educate yourself on your Medicare rights & options.

If you are turning 65 and have questions about Medicare part A, B, advantage, supplements & drug plan options Please take advantage of the educational resource you have through the senior center. Please call or stop in to set up a time to meet one on one or find out when there will be a public **Turning 65 educational seminar.**

We are here to help you through this educational process.

### LEARN HOW TO USE YOUR SILVER CONNECT CARD

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT STATE ASSISTANCE?  
HAVE YOU RECEIVED A SILVER STATE OF CONNECTICUT CONNECT CARD IN THE MAIL?  
WHAT IS QMB, SLMB ?

The State of Connecticut offers assistance in many ways but educating yourself on what is available and how it might help you are areas we can help you with.

Please call 203-577-4166 or stop in the senior center and make an appointment to learn about qualifying for State Assistance and find out when we will be holding public forums on **THE SIVER CONNECT CARD.**

If you have it.....learn how to use it.  
If you don't have one...let's see if you qualify.

**Insurance specialist, Nancy Cimino, will be here on Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am... will do one on one meetings.**



### Table tennis anyone?

For anyone who is interested in learning to play table tennis, the Middlebury Senior center is having lessons on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm free of charge.

You can learn strokes, play games, even play in tournaments.

If interested, please call the Senior Center at 203-577-4166

### It's not too early to think about plans for the Community Garden.



The Community Garden provides fresh produce for persons in the community who are interested in gardening. Last year was the first community garden experience. With a group of dedicated volunteers of all ages the garden produced tomatoes, potatoes, lettuce, beans, peppers, squash, and a variety of herbs, such as parsley, sage, basil, oregano, .rosemary etc.

The plants were donated through the generosity of a local farmer and private donations.

Instructions on how to start a garden, prepare the soil and properly plant the plants was provided by Rosewita.

Preparing the garden for planting will begin in late March or April. Other tasks will include planting, watering, weeding and harvesting. All interested persons, including local groups, are invited to participate.

In order to make this a successful community event your help is desperately needed.

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact the Middlebury Senior Center at 203 577-4166.

### Intergenerational Event



Join us on Wednesday, May 2, 2012 at the Shepardson Community Center where we will have a Bingo Party with our local school children.

Prizes will be given to winners. Party begins after lunch at 12:00pm.

### ITALIAN NIGHT BUFFET

The Middlebury Republican Town Committee will be giving a buffet dinner on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup> 4:00pm – 6:30pm at the Middlebury Fire House. Dinner includes: Choice of 5 Entrees, Salad, beverages and Dessert.

Advance ticket sales:

Adult / Senior: \$10

Children: (under 12) \$6 (under 5) Free

Family of 5: \$40

For more information call 203-228-1769

At the door ticket price: \$12

### THIMBLE ISLAND CRUISE

THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2012

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



We will be visiting

Thimble Islands for a Sea Mist cruise on Thursday, May 31, 2012.

The islands are located off the coast of Branford, CT. They were used for everything from farming to quarrying its famous pink granite and bootlegging to hiding Captain Kidd's treasure who sailed here in 1665....you can still feel his presence today. Come aboard the Sea Mist, relax and enjoy yourself as we cruise around 25 inhabited islands.

Bus will be leaving Middlebury Senior Center at 10:00am for the 12:15 cruise. Call 203-577-4166 to reserve your seat. Admission and transportation will be \$17.00.

**June 18, 2012  
Monday  
Grand Oak Villa presents:**

**“The Queen of Bingo”**

Jeanne Michels and Phyllis Murphy’s **“The Queen of Bingo”** explores the world of Bingo, family ties, diet crazes, widowhood, hot flashes and winning! The audience joins in the fun during the **“Middle Bird Special”** – a real Bingo game where some lucky audience member wins a **FREE 10lb. frozen turkey** at every performance! Theatre goes young and old will howl with laughter as two zany guys, playing two crazy gals, light up the stage in the comedy hit

**“The Queen of Bingo”**

**The Menu:**

Upon arrival, served buffet style, Pepperoni, Cheese and Crackers. Family Style Meal will consist of Fresh Salad with Red Wine vinaigrette, Italian Bread, Pasta & House Sauce, Chicken Francaise and Pork Loin w/gravy, Roasted Potato, vegetable medley, Dessert and Coffee. **Wine for Everyone!!**

Cost is \$62.00 per person  
For reservations call 203-577-4166

**BEARDSLEY ZOO  
Thursday, June 7, 2012**

The Middlebury Senior Bus will be going to the Beardsley Zoo on Thursday, June 7, 2012 We will leave the Senior center at 10:00am. There are 300 animals at the zoo to view also you can learn about endangered and threatened species.

You can enjoy lunch at the Peacock Café and eat in the picnic grove. You can also ride the colorful carousel.

Admission to the park is \$8.00

Transportation cost is \$10.00.

Call 203-577-4166 for reservations.

**Middlebury Senior Center along with  
Friendship Tours have a number of  
exciting cruises for 2012 & 2013**

- A Canada cruise on Carnival Glory for 8 days from \$499.00 per person. Sails from NYC Pier September 8-15, 2012.
- Pacific Northwest, Celebrity’s Millennium. September 14-22, 2012. \$1679.00 9 days including air fare.
- Italy Cruise on the New Celebrity Silhouette. October 22 – November 3, 2012, 13 day/11nights. \$3049. Per person includes air fare.
- Transatlantic Cruise on the Celebrity Equinox. November 25–December 10, 2012, 16 days/14nights Flights included to Rome and home from Fort Lauderdale; \$1699.00.]
- Eastern Caribbean on the Explorer of the Seas. January 13-22, 2013 or February 24-March 5, 2013; 10 days, starting from \$759.00. Transportation to Pier included.
- Norwegian Gem: Starting in New York to San Juan, St Maarten, St. Thomas, Dominican Republic, and New York. \$779. 10 days/9nights. January – March 2013. Transportation to Pier included.
- Caribbean Cruise on the Celebrity Equinox. Leaves from Fort Lauderdale. March 4-15, 2013, 12 days/11nights. \$1699. Includes air fare.
- Great Southern Caribbean Itinerary! First time cruising from New York. Norwegian Pearl January 2013; 13 days/ 12nights. From \$899.00 per person, includes air fare.



“Happy Birthday”  
April 2012

**Here's a posy of flowers, and a basket too,  
With Birthday greetings all for you. – Anonymous**

*Doris Stocker 4/2*  
*Pat Little 4/3*  
*Joan Felon 4/3*  
*Leroy Gibbs 4/4*  
*Sandy Goldberg 4/4*  
*Pauline Malaspina 4/6*  
*Syed Ather 4/6*  
*Alfred Mormile 4/10*  
*Eleanor Smith 4/10*  
*Joyce Pallman 4/10*  
*Joe Como 4/11*  
*Helen Capristo 4/12*  
*Anna Mastroianna 4/12*  
*Charles Roman 4/12*  
*Betsy Robb 4/12*

*Nancy Stack 4/13*  
*Mary Stiber 4/13*  
*Daniel Clifford 4/14*  
*Alice Kelly 4/14*  
*Dolores Rose 4/15*  
*Dora Devino 4/16*  
*Peter Arduino 4/16*  
*Louise Greene 4/18*  
*Nancy Richardson 4/18*  
*Annamae Hardwick 4/19*  
*David Lockhart 4/19*  
*Emily Mohrmann 4/19*  
*Al King 4/20*  
*Don Gabianelli 4/21*  
*Elaine Clifford 4/22*

*Barbara Cisco 4/22*  
*Florence Karpavich 4/23*  
*Marilyn Terrell 4/23*  
*Hope Crutcher 4/27*  
*Irene Shirk 4/27*  
*James Killeen 4/28*  
*Amelia Daly 4/28*  
*Robert Staselunas 4/28*  
*Dorothy Darrah 4/29*  
*Anita Field 4/30*  
*Evelyn Meier 4/30*

**If your birthday is in April, you are entitled to a free lunch compliments of the Middlebury Senior Center. Please give one week advance notice.**

## Birthday Recipes

### Taartjes from the Netherlands

Individual tart shells  
instant pudding mix  
sliced fruit such as strawberries or bananas  
whipped cream or dessert topping

1. Prepare pudding mix according to the instructions on the box.
2. When the pudding is set, mix in the fruit.
3. Fill the tart shells with the pudding mixture.
4. Decorate with whipped cream or fruit.

# April Holidays

## April Fool's Day

April 1, 2012



**April Fool's Day** or **All Fool's Day**, holiday of uncertain origin, known for practical joking and celebrated on the first of April. Prior to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1564, the date was observed as New Year's Day by cultures as varied as the Roman and the Hindu. The holiday is considered to be related to the festival of the vernal equinox, which occurs on Mar. 21. The English gave April Fool's Day its first widespread celebration during the 18th century.

### SOME FAMOUS HOAXES:

**1957:** The respected BBC news show *Panorama* announced that thanks to a very mild winter and the virtual elimination of the dreaded spaghetti weevil, Swiss farmers were enjoying a bumper spaghetti crop. It accompanied this announcement with footage of Swiss peasants pulling strands of spaghetti down from trees. Huge numbers of viewers were taken in. Many called the BBC wanting to know how they could grow their own spaghetti tree. To this the BBC diplomatically replied, "Place a sprig of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best."

**1985:** *Sports Illustrated* published a story about a new rookie pitcher who planned to play for the Mets. His name was Sidd Finch, and he could reportedly throw a baseball at 168 mph with pinpoint accuracy. This was 65 mph faster than the previous record. Surprisingly, Sidd Finch had never even played the game before. Instead, he had mastered the "art of the pitch" in a Tibetan monastery under the guidance of the "great poet-saint Lama Milaraspa." Mets fans celebrated their teams' amazing luck at having found such a gifted player, and *Sports Illustrated* was flooded with requests for more information. In reality this legendary player only existed in the imagination of the author of the article, George Plimpton.

**1962:** In 1962 there was only one tv channel in Sweden, and it broadcast in black and white. The station's technical expert, Kjell Stensson, appeared on the news to announce that, thanks to a new technology, viewers could convert their existing sets to display color reception. All they had to do was pull a nylon stocking over their tv screen. Stensson proceeded to demonstrate the process. Thousands of people were taken in. Regular color broadcasts only commenced in Sweden on April 1, 1970.

**1996:** The Taco Bell Corporation announced it had bought the Liberty Bell and was renaming it the Taco Liberty Bell. Hundreds of outraged citizens called the National Historic Park in Philadelphia where the bell was housed to express their anger. Their nerves were only calmed when Taco Bell revealed, a few hours later, that it was all a practical joke. The best line of the day came when White House press secretary Mike McCurry was asked about the sale. Thinking on his feet, he responded that the Lincoln Memorial had also been sold. It would now be known, he said, as the Ford Lincoln Mercury Memorial

**1992:** National Public Radio's *Talk of the Nation* program announced that Richard Nixon, in a surprise move, was running for President again. His new campaign slogan was, "I didn't do anything wrong, and I won't do it again." Accompanying this announcement were audio clips of Nixon delivering his candidacy speech. Listeners responded viscerally to the announcement, flooding the show with calls expressing shock and outrage. Only during the second half of the show did the host John Hockenberry reveal that the announcement was a practical joke. Nixon's voice was impersonated by comedian Rich Little

# Palm Sunday

## April 1, 2012



**Palm Sunday**, in the Christian calendar, the Sunday before Easter, sixth and last Sunday in Lent, and the first day of Holy Week.

It recalls the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, when his followers shouted “Hosanna” and scattered palms in his path. In the Roman Catholic and some Protestant churches, ceremonies of the day are the blessing and distribution of crosses made from palm leaves and the recitation of one of the three synoptic accounts of the Passion. Many wear crosses made of the palm

## Passover

*Celebration of the Exodus*



The holiday of *Pesach*, or Passover, celebrates God's freeing the Jews from bondage in Egypt through the leadership of Moses. Passover begins on the 15th day of Nissan, the first month of the Jewish calendar. It usually takes place in April, and may be the single holiday most widely celebrated among Jews. In **2012**, Passover begins at sundown on **April 6**. Passover is celebrated for seven days in Israel, and eight days in other countries. (Reform Jews observe seven days everywhere.)

Passover is most closely associated with two observances: the *seder*, and eating matzoh instead of leavened foods.

## Good Friday

**April 6, 2012**



Good Friday, anniversary of Jesus' death on the cross.

According to the Gospels, Jesus was put to death on the Friday before Easter Day. Since the early church, Good Friday has been observed by fasting and penance.

In the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican traditions, the celebration of the Eucharist is suspended; liturgical service involves veneration of the cross, the Passion narrative from the Gospel of St. John, and communion using bread and wine consecrated the previous day, Maundy Thursday. Other forms of observance include prayer and meditation at the Stations of the Cross, a succession of 14 images, usually on wooden crosses, depicting Christ's crucifixion and the events leading up to it.

# Easter Sunday

## Sunday, April 8, 2012



The real meaning of Easter is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To Christians, it is the most special day of the year. Yes, the birth of Christ is quite important. But, his resurrection offers the hope of everlasting life to everyone! The Lenten season leading up to Easter Sunday is a time of fasting, sacrifice and prayer. It is the Christian way of replicating in a small way what Christ sacrificed for us, both in his fasting and his final death on the cross.

Easter also is celebrated with the Easter Bunny, colored eggs, jelly beans, and lots of chocolate. He (or she, as we are never quite sure about this) comes on Saturday night leading to Easter Sunday morning. He brings lots of chocolates and other candies. That's one meaning to Easter, especially if you are a kid or a "Chocoholic".

There is a famous Easter game called the Easter Egg Hunt. Early morning kids go outside to find the many colored Easter eggs that the Easter bunny has hidden the night before. The Easter Egg Hunt was the first game ever invented. It is said that the reason this tradition started was because the Easter Bunny dropped the eggs on the way to deliver them and they hide themselves. That is how the Easter Egg Hunt was supposedly invented..

Most of us will celebrate both parts of this spring holiday. Upon awakening Easter Sunday morning, the children will hunt for the Easter basket left by the Easter Bunny. Then the family will dress in their finest new spring clothes, and go off to church to celebrate Christ's resurrection. From there, the holiday tradition varies. Some have a big breakfast or brunch feast. Other families will have a big main meal with baked ham being the most common meat. Brightly colored hard boiled eggs will also be popular. It is not a day for high cholesterol diets. It is a day to feast as the long Lenten season is over and Christ has arisen.

### SOME EASTER SYMBOLS

#### Easter Eggs



In Medieval Europe, eggs were forbidden during Lent. Eggs laid during that time were often boiled or otherwise preserved. Eggs were thus a mainstay of Easter meals, and a prized Easter gift for children and servants.

In addition, eggs have been viewed as symbols of new life and fertility through the ages. It is believed that for this reason many ancient cultures, including the Ancient Egyptians, Persians, and Romans, used eggs during their spring festivals.

Many traditions and practices have formed around Easter eggs. The coloring of eggs is an established art, and eggs are often dyed, painted, and otherwise decorated. Eggs were also used in various holiday games: parents would hide eggs for children to find, and children would roll eggs down hills. These practices live on in Easter egg hunts and egg rolls. The most famous egg roll takes place on the White House lawn every year.

## The Easter Bunny



Hares and rabbits have long been symbols of fertility. The inclusion of the hare into Easter customs appears to have originated in Germany, where tales were told of an "Easter hare" who laid eggs for children to find. German immigrants to America -- particularly Pennsylvania -- brought the tradition with them and spread it to a wider public. They also baked cakes for Easter in the shape of hares, and may have pioneered the practice of making chocolate bunnies and eggs.

## Easter Cards



Easter cards arrived in Victorian England, when a stationer added a greeting to a drawing of a rabbit. According to American Greetings, Easter is now the fourth most popular holiday for sending cards, behind Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Mother's Day.

## Easter Parades



After their baptisms, early Christians wore white robes all through Easter week to indicate their new lives. Those who had already been baptized wore new clothes instead to symbolize their sharing a new life with Christ.

In Medieval Europe, churchgoers would take a walk after Easter Mass, led by a crucifix or the Easter candle. Today these walks endure as Easter Parades. People show off their spring finery, including lovely bonnets decorated for spring

## Different Traditions

Orthodox Christians in the Middle East and in Greece painted eggs bright red to symbolize the blood of Christ. Hollow eggs (created by piercing the shell with a needle and blowing out the contents) were decorated with pictures of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and other religious figures in Armenia.

Germans gave green eggs as gifts on Holy Thursday, and hung hollow eggs on trees. Austrians placed tiny plants around the egg and then boiled them. When the plants were removed, white patterns were created.

## Artistic Creations



The most elaborate Easter egg traditions appear to have emerged in Eastern Europe. In Poland and Ukraine, eggs were often painted silver and gold. *Pysanky* (to design or write) eggs were created by carefully applying wax in patterns to an egg. The egg was then dyed, wax would be reapplied in spots to preserve that color, and the egg was boiled again in other shades. The result was a multi-color striped or patterned egg.

# April Trivia

The exact origin of the name of April is unknown but there are two theories. The first one is the name was derived from the Latin verb *aperire* meaning “to open”, referring to the opening of leaves and buds in the springtime. The second theory is it was derived from the Latin *Aprilis* that stems from *aperire*, corrupted from *Aphrodite*, the Greek name for Venus, the goddess for love and beauty.



The diamond is April's birthstone ( Innocence)

Flowers for April are the sweet pea  and the daisy 

April's colors are Yellow and Red

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Here are some interesting historical trivia facts about April you may not know.



On April 3rd 1860 the Pony Express began



World Health Day is recognized on April 7th.



On April 9th in the year 1865 General Robert E. Lee commander of the Confederate Army surrendered to U.S. Grant and the official end of the American Civil War took place.



On April 14th 2002, Tiger Woods won his 3rd Masters Golf Tournament.



15th April 1912 R.M.S. Titanic struck an iceberg and sank.



The American Revolutionary War began on April 19, 1775.



Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd.



On April 30th, television first publicly broadcast, from the Empire State Building, 1939.



April 1969 saw the Concorde's maiden flight.

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## DID YOU KNOW?



Acupuncture was first used as a medical treatment in 2700 BC by Chinese emperor Shen-Nung.



Armored knights raised their visors to identify themselves when they rode past their king. This custom has become the modern military salute.



Canada declared national beauty contests canceled as of 1992, claiming they were degrading to women.



Chicago's Lincoln Park was created in 1864. The original 120 acre cemetery had most of its graves removed and was expanded to more than 1000 acres for recreational use.



Everyone in the Middle Ages believed -- as Aristotle had -- that the heart was the seat of intelligence



From the Middle Ages up until the end of the 19th century, barbers performed a number of medical duties including bloodletting, wound treatment, dentistry, minor operations and bone-setting. The barber's striped red pole originated in the Middle Ages, when it was a staff the patient would grip while the barber bled the patient.



Any month that starts on a Sunday will have a Friday the 13th in it.