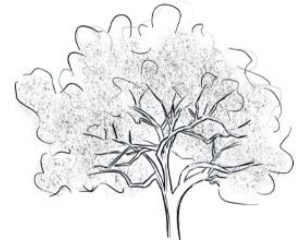


Gardens of Oak Hollow

A SMALL COMMUNITY WITH A BIG HEART

Neighborly News



Number 077

2 January 2024

New Year's Traditions



On New Years Day, I began wondering why we eat black-eye peas for good luck on New Years Day. So I did a bit of digging and found "35 Popular New Year's Traditions to Bring You Good Fortune in 2024" by Marisa Lascala. So, I decided to share the first eight with you.

Have Hoppin' John

Many believe that anyone who makes this dish of black-eyed peas, pork and rice on January 1 will experience luck and peace for the rest of the year. And maybe prosperity, too: According to History.com, "Hoppin' John was, and still is, often eaten with collard greens, which can resemble paper money, and 'golden' cornbread. The peas themselves represent coins. Some families boost the potential of their Hoppin' John by placing a penny underneath the dishes — or adding extra pork, which is thought to bring more luck."

Or Try Something Else Round

Many cultures believe eating round foods on New Year's Eve will lead to prosperity. In Italy, lentils serve the same function as the black-eyed peas in Hoppin' John, with their round shape representing coins. And in the Philippines, it's customary to eat 12 round fruits, one for every month, to ensure a year of abundance.

Dress in Dots

And in the Philippines, revelers don't just try to eat circles — partygoers wear them, too. Polka dots are all the rage on December 31, increasing the chances for good luck in the new year.

Watch ball (or something) drop

Crowds have been gathering in New York City's Times Square to watch the ball drop since 1907. Nowadays, hundreds of thousands of revelers pack Times Square, waiting for hours before midnight, while an estimated more than one billion people watch the ball drop on TV, according to Times Square's official website.

Or, you can see something else fall as a visual countdown to the new year: Plymouth, Wisconsin hosts a Big Cheese Drop; Kennett Square, PA uses a giant mushroom and New Orleans drops a fleur de lis (formerly a big gumbo pot). No matter what symbol is used, it does make for a dramatic countdown.

Wearing white

Brazil makes it easier to choose your New Year's Eve outfit — everyone wears white for good luck and peace. Plus, matching outfits make for classy-looking photos!

Jump waves

Also in Brazil, if you head to the beach, you can increase your luck by heading to the water and jumping over seven waves. You get one wish for each wave, so think up your want list before heading into the water.

Giving gifts

Christmas was forbidden in Soviet Russia, so New Year's became the big gift-giving occasion during that time. Presents were delivered not by Santa but by Ded Moroz, or Father Frost, often aided by his granddaughter, Snegourochka. Anyone ready for another round of gift-giving?

Make a Resolution

You might think that making resolutions for the new years is a relatively recent trend, historically speaking, but the tradition is very old — and likely dates back more than 4,000 years. Historians believe Babylonians, one of the first cultures to actually celebrate the changing of the year, made promises to pay debts or return borrowed objects.

Success!!!!

Successful Sock+ Drive

A big THANK YOU to all of you in our Community that pulled together to make this "Garden Gives" 2023 Project a roaring success.



If you have an idea of some type of Community Project that we may take on later in 2024, feel free to suggest it.

Thank You Note



"Thank you residents for your generous donations of socks, clothing, hygiene products and under garments. Your generosity helps us serve our clients with life affirming necessities every day. Your love saves lives." Ashley O'Leary, Morgan

Who Was Caleb Brewster?

Sea-bound Boy

Without Caleb Brewster (1747-1827), it is entirely possible that we may be living under the Union Jack (English flag) now.

Young Caleb grew up along the shores of Long Island Sound in New York, undoubtedly dreaming of sailing the Sound and the far greater expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. At 19 years old, Caleb began his sea-bound adventure when he signed on to a Nantucket whaler. When he tired of

whaling, he pursued a life at sea as a mate on a merchant ship. Caleb was familiar with every cove and eddy on both sides of the sound and soon became well known for his resourcefulness and expert seamanship.

American Revolution

As news of the American Revolution and the battles of Lexington and Concord reached his ship, Caleb quickly returned home to fight the war against British oppression. General George Washington was utilizing a spy ring in support of the Continental Army. The Culper Spy Ring, headed by Benjamin Tallmadge from 1778 to 1783, was a group of patriots was primarily based in New York City and Long Island. They recognized Caleb for his expert navigation and maritime skills and set out to recruit him.

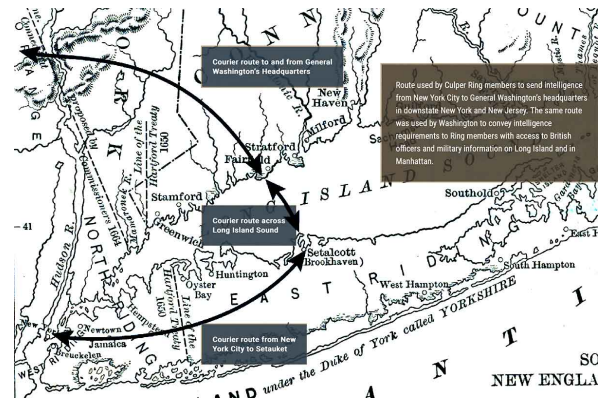
Within the Spy Ring, Caleb primarily serve as a courier utilizing his whaling boats and expertise. Few could navigate the Long Island Sound between New York City and General Washington's headquarters in New Jersey as Caleb could. He conducted precise navigation throughout the Sound at night and through inclement weather while out-maneuvering British ships to deliver crucial information.

His resourcefulness is evidenced by one account of an encounter with a British officer who discovered him while he waited to receive information from another member of the Culper Ring. He knocked the officer from his horse and forcibly took some of the man's possessions before fleeing. By doing this, Caleb disguised this encounter as a simply robbery rather than a matter of espionage.

Washington's Spy Ring

The Culper Spy Ring used a variety of clandestine methods such as invisible ink on

documents and codes to protect communications regarding British troops and warnings to General Washington and the Continental Army. These reports were of utmost importance in making strategic decisions when combating British troop movements and potential attacks. The secrecy and effectiveness of the Culper Spy



Ring along with Caleb Brewster's maritime skills required to relay the information played a significant role in the success of Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

The spy ring's methods and Caleb's efforts are recognized as pivotal in the outcome of the war and are considered the roots of American espionage. Historians surmise that without Caleb Brewster's maritime skills and bravery, the American Revolution may have had a far different ending.

Information provided by The Sons of the American Revolution (SAR).
If you are interested and want to learn more about SAR or membership,
contact Bob Watson, Beaglebud@satx.rr.com



Why do you need a jeweler on New Year's Eve? To ring in the new year.

What was Dr. Frankenstein's New Year's

resolution? To make new friends.



Last year, I was able to keep all of my New Year's resolutions... tucked away in a journal on my bookshelf.

What did the chef make for his New Year's dinner? New Year's filet.

I made a New Year's resolution to drink more water. So far I've only gotten as far as "drink more."

What New Year's resolution should a basketball player never make? To travel more.

Why did the man sprinkle sugar on his pillow on New Year's Eve? He wanted to start the year with sweet dreams.

My resolution was to read more... So I put the subtitles on my TV.

Join the Group



6PM, Thursday, February 15

Hostess: Mary Jane Medlin

1923 Shadow Park North

Come and join us for a festive evening to catch up with one another during this Holiday Season.