

River Gardens



Celebrating December

Christmas Craft Sale
December 1st

Tree Lighting/Birthday Party with:
Conn Smythe
December 1st

Mennonite Youth Choir
December 3rd

Resident Christmas Parties
December 5th & 6th

Lunch Outing to: Swiss Chalet
December 13th

Christmas Light Tour
December 14th

Christmas Sing-a-long with:
Karen Goforth
December 22nd

Christmas Day
December 25th

New Years Eve Party!!!
December 29th

River Gardens News

- We will be having a Christmas Craft Sale on Fri. Dec 1st. There will be wreaths, ornaments and baking for purchase. This is a **cash only** sale.
- We will be having our Tree Lighting Ceremony/Birthday party on Fri. Dec 1st at 2:30pm with musical entertainment by: Conn Smythe
- Our resident/family Christmas dinners will be held Dec 5th and Dec 6th.
- We will be going on a lunch outing to Swiss Chalet on Wed. Dec 13th. If you wish to attend please sign-up with Ashley. Transportation fee is \$5 plus the cost of lunch.
- On Thurs. Dec 14th we will be going on a Christmas Light Tour. Please sign-up with Ashley if you wish to attend. Transportation fee is \$5.
- On Thurs. Dec 21st please wear your Christmas Sweaters OR red and green.
- On Fri. Dec 29th we will be ringing in the New Year - with musical entertainment by: Frank St. Germain
- Please let Pam or Audrene know if you will be going away this holiday season. It is important that they know of any absences.
- If you will be away and need medications prepared in your absence, please let Pam or Audrene know ONE week in advance.
- If you feel ill or feel you are coming down with the flu, please stay in your room and let our Care staff know. Contact the PSW at Ext. 735



Seeing the Light



On the 8th day of the 12th month, Buddhists celebrate Rohatsu, also known as Bodhi Day, which commemorates the Buddha's Awakening. This is the moment that the first Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, achieved Enlightenment, or *bodhi*, as it is called in Sanskrit.

Scholars know relatively little about Siddhartha Gautama. He was the son of a clan chieftan and a princess and so became a prince in his own right. But at age 29, Prince Siddhartha left his palace to walk among the people and was appalled at their pain and suffering. He abandoned his kingdom, family, and riches to become a wandering holy man searching for a means to release humanity from pain and suffering. At one critical moment, Siddhartha seated himself under a pipal tree, now known famously as the Bodhi tree, and vowed to never arise until he discovered the truth. After 49 days of deep meditation he supposedly attained Enlightenment and became known as the Buddha, or *Awakened One*.

What is Enlightenment, in this Buddhist sense? Some believe that at his moment he achieved liberation from the endless cycle of rebirth, suffering, and dying again. He achieved *nirvana*, extinguishing any sense of self and, along with it, any feelings of desire, hatred, or ignorance, which lead to suffering. Rather than abandon humanity and continue on his own path to enlightenment, the Buddha returned to the world to teach others this path to the end of suffering. For the remaining 45 years of his life, the Buddha travelled throughout India sharing his insights and teachings.

Modern day Rohatsu traditions include deep meditation in the manner of the Buddha. While very few ever reach Enlightenment, it is in this practice that we come to a better understanding of how to ease the suffering of ourselves and others. Perhaps the best way to commemorate Bodhi Day is to extend simple kindnesses that ease the suffering of others.

December Birthdays

In astrology, those born between December 1–21 are Archers of Sagittarius. Sagittarians are travelers, open-minded, and constantly in search for meaning. Extroverted and optimistic, Archers seek change and take concrete steps to achieve their goals. Those born between December 22–31 are Capricorn's Goats. Goats are practical, determined and focused on their ambitious goals. They follow a straightforward, well-planned path and persevere with grit and honesty. Their sympathetic and caring natures make them devoted friends.

Resident Birthdays

- Don B. – December 21st
- Lorna C. – December 23rd



Keep Your Footing



Scotland's Hogmanay is one of the world's greatest New Year's celebrations. *Hogmanay* is the Scottish word for the last day of the year. In Scotland, the celebration of Hogmanay was traditionally even more important than Christmas. The most important ritual of Hogmanay is the practice of *first-footing*, which begins immediately after midnight. This entails being the first person to cross over a friend or neighbor's threshold. Any first-footer must arrive bearing symbolic gifts of salt, coal, shortbread, whiskey, and black bun. Another ritual is *redding the house*, which involves cleaning the home and hearth, and then "reading" your fortune on the hearth's ashes. No Hogmanay is complete without singing "Auld Lang Syne," composed by Scotland's own national poet Robert Burns.