

Northern Pines News

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Celebrating March

**Irish-American Heritage
Month**

Optimism Month

Craft Month

Celebrate Your Name Week
March 3–9

Mardi Gras
March 5th

International Women's Day
March 8th

St. Patrick's Day
March 17th

Happy Birthday Irene
March 24th

**Make Up Your Own Holiday
Day**
March 26th

Religious Roots to Raucous Parties

As March arrives, many look forward to the holidays of St. Patrick's Day and Mardi Gras. Yet both of these holidays are more modern American inventions than age-old religious traditions.

St. Patrick's Day, as a religious celebration, has a lengthy history. It dates back to the mid-17th century and was initiated to honor Saint Patrick and his work to bring Christianity to Ireland. The Feast of St. Patrick was held each year on the date of his supposed death, on March 17, 461 AD. The observance of the date was a solemn occasion, mostly involving quiet prayer. As recently as the 1970s, pubs were closed in Ireland on St. Patrick's Day. The rollicking revelry typically associated with the day was decidedly un-Irish and an American invention. During the Irish Famine of 1845–1850, many Irish immigrated to America, where they were not welcome. As the Irish community in America grew and prospered, they began to celebrate both their Irish-ness and their newfound American-ness. Corned beef, shamrocks, and leprechauns were never part of true Irish St. Paddy's Day celebrations, but they were integrated into Irish-American identity and so became celebrated symbols of St. Patrick's Day. The American version of St. Patrick's Day is so strong that many Irish-American traditions have even returned to Ireland.

Mardi Gras, like St. Paddy's Day, originated as a solemn religious holiday. As the day before the start of the ritual fasting of Lent, it was an opportunity to indulge in sweet, fatty foods, giving rise to the name "Fat Tuesday." Over the centuries, these small indulgences led to greater hedonism, practices that were heavily discouraged by the Church. The elaborate Mardi Gras celebrations held in New Orleans emerged in 1857 when a group of men created a secret society called the Mistick Krewe of Comus. They held a lavish ball and parade, setting the secular foundations for many wild Mardi Gras to come.

Making Valentine's day bugs last month was a fun time for all.



We *LOVE* because he first loved us.

John 4:19 Happy *Valentine's* Day.



Our residents enjoyed making flower arrangements in honor of a wonderful lady. Thank you Teresa and Kathy for coming into Northern Pines. It is always a pleasure and a good time when you are here.

March Birthdays

In astrology, those born March 1–20 are the slippery Fish of Pisces. Selfless Pisces are very wise and empathetic, making them always willing to help others. These deep emotions also make Pisces talented artists and good friends. Those born March 21–31 are Rams of Aries. Like rams, Aries charge forward with courage, confidence, and enthusiasm. They embrace action, take risks, and will fight for their goals.

- Ron Howard (actor/director) – March 1, 1954
- Dr. Seuss (author) – March 2, 1904
- Jean Harlow (actress) – March 3, 1911
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning (poet) – March 6, 1806
- Bobby Fischer (chess champ) – March 9, 1943
- Liza Minnelli (entertainer) – March 12, 1946
- Albert Einstein (scientist) – March 14, 1879
- Moms Mabley (comedian) – March 19, 1894
- Fannie Farmer (culinary expert) – March 23, 1857
- Alan Arkin (actor) – March 26, 1934
- Sam Walton (businessman) – March 29, 1918
- Liz Claiborne (designer) – March 31, 1929

Night Owls

The International Festival of Owls, a celebration of these mysterious nighttime creatures, will occur during the first three days of March. Is it the owl's nocturnal nature, their swift silence, their chilling calls of "who," or their



bizarre rotating necks that make them so fascinating? These birds have figured prominently in our imaginations for millennia. In ancient Greece, the owl was the symbol of Athena, goddess of wisdom. It was believed that an "inner light" gave the owl its superb night vision, and it was considered a good omen if an owl was spied overhead watching you. Because an owl is a bird of darkness, it has often been associated with death. During the Middle Ages, owls were thought to be witches or witches' helpers. American Indians, too, held many beliefs about owls and death. To some, owls were the spirits of the dead. To others, owls were guides of the recently deceased to the underworld. During the Festival of Owls, take the time to encounter one of these magnificent animals up close and you, too, may begin to think they are more than just birds.

