

SPRING FUN FACTS

Frogs and toads
sing to greet spring.



In Latin, the
word vernal
means "spring"
& equinox means
"equal night."

Honeybees are
more likely to
swarm during
spring.



**"NATURE DOES
NOT HURRY, YET
EVERYTHING IS
ACCOMPLISHED."**

- LAO TZU



Musings from Activities . . .

~ Abbey LeRoy

Personally, I am not a fan of hiking. But a year after I stopped playing tennis at SMSU, I wanted to see if I was still fit enough to climb a mountain. So without any prior training or hiking experience, I decided to climb Mount Fuji that month. The Marines at Camp Fuji make an annual trek up the mountain every summer, so I decided to join them on July 29th, 2022. My dad asked his coworker, George, to watch out for me and make sure I was alright.



At 4:00 in the morning, we got on the bus from Camp Fuji to the base of the mountain. I didn't get much sleep the night before. We started climbing before 5AM. There are 10 stations to get to the top. And let me tell you, the first 3 stations were the worst. I quickly got altitude sickness, and I didn't talk to anybody for the first two hours of the climb. I almost didn't make it. All I could do was look at my feet. One...slow...step...at...a...time. I didn't want to quit, but I was having an internal battle with myself. *Why was I climbing a mountain at 6AM? I don't even like hiking. I shouldn't be here. I should go back down.* As George later said, I was going mental, where only my discipline and perseverance could push me through the tough obstacle. He told me that when you think you are done and out for the count, you have now made it halfway through your capabilities.

Once I got to the 4th station, my head started to clear. Ironically, the higher I got, the easier I could breathe. I could look around, talk to my fellow climbers, and truly appreciate the climb and the scenery. The trail was made out of rocks and dirt, and the pathway was roped. At times, it was a really wide path and at other times, only two people could walk side-by-side. At the stations, there were makeshift restaurants, toilets, and benches. I was with the last group of Marines, who were already drunk from the restaurant beers. The trail was a big zig-zag up the mountain, so we'd stop at every turn of the Z and take a break. We made it to the top of Mount Fuji at 1:30PM. I ate my snacks, took pictures at the Torii Gate, bought a Mount Fuji stuffed animal, and rested for half an hour while the Marines took a head count.



Then we headed down on another route, this time very steep downhill. It got to the point where it was easier to jog down the trail rather than to dig my heels in the gravel every step. I didn't know this at the time but there were no bathrooms on this downhill trail, so by the time we got to the bottom at 5:45PM I was very uncomfortable. I had a hydration backpack on so I was hydrated the whole time and it got lighter the further the day went on. Overall, it was a beautiful, once-in-a-lifetime experience but I will not be doing that again. I told myself as long as I climbed a mountain once, I was good. I learned to persevere through the difficult times by keeping my head down and focusing on one foot in front of the other. George was right after all.



PUT THIS on YOUR CALENDAR!

Upcoming Events . . .

Bus to Soup & Sermon	2 nd 9 th 16 th
Craft: Painting Watermelons	2 nd
MLC Library Outreach	3 rd
Men's Group: Environment	3 rd
500 Card Party	4 th
Sing Along with Dana Funk	6 th
Sakura Reflections	7 th
Virtual Voyage: Japan	8 th
Origami with Hope Harbor	8 th
Japanese Haiku Poetry	9 th
Severe Weather Meeting	10 th
Game Day: Rack-O	10 th
Joke Club	11 th
Card Makers	11 th 18 th 25 th
Movie: Mary Poppins I, II	11 th 12 th
Brain Games	11 th 18 th 25 th
Happy Hour	11 th 25 th
BINGO with the Lorenzo's - 50¢ to play	12 th 26 th
Music: F.R.O.G.S.	14 th
Lunch Outing: The Gym	15 th
Wii Bowling	16 th
Chautauqua: Aaron Ziemer	17 th
Easter Monday-Office Closed	21 st
Wheelchair & Walker Clinic	22 nd
Volunteer Appreciation	23 rd
Hill Street Place Home Movies	24 th
Monthly Birthday Party	28 th
Page Turners Discussion	29 th
Fold & Deliver	30 th
PO•KE•NO 50¢ to play	30 th

Page Turners Book Club will be reading *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. If you would like a copy stop into the Activities Office. Join us for a discussion in the Pool Table Room on Tuesday, April 29th.

Helping Hands at Hill Street Place - During the month of February, we recorded a total of **34** volunteer hours. Thank you all who recorded their hours.

Intergenerational Fun - Come listen to the Holy Redeemer 2nd Grade Readers at 8:30 Tues. mornings Mrs. Rettey's class on April 1st and Mrs. Klaith's class is here on April 8th. Holy Redeemer 3rd Grade will pray the Rosary on April 3rd. On April 25th, Mrs. Lenz' 2nd Grade music students will sing for us.

Display Case - In honor of Mother's Day, we are looking for teacups & photos of you with your mother or photos of you with your children for our display case. Please stop by the Activities office and let us know if you have something to share.

Last Month at a Glance . . .



On April 25, 1901, New York became the first state to require license plates on vehicles. At that time, the state didn't provide the plates. Rather, individuals created their own license plates out of leather, brass, or whatever was available. When people began to create unlawful plates, state governments stepped in and began making their own.

In 1903, Massachusetts became the first state to issue plates. The very first license plate was number 1, issued to a man named Frederick Tudor. Amazingly, his family still maintains an active registration, which gives them the right to use the number 1 on a modern plate.

The first plates were made of iron covered in porcelain enamel. The background was a dark blue with the numbers in white. There were no standard sizes back in the early days of license plates. The more numbers on the plate, the larger the plate got. Motorcycles, too, needed license plates. The first looked identical to car plates, but started with the letter Z.

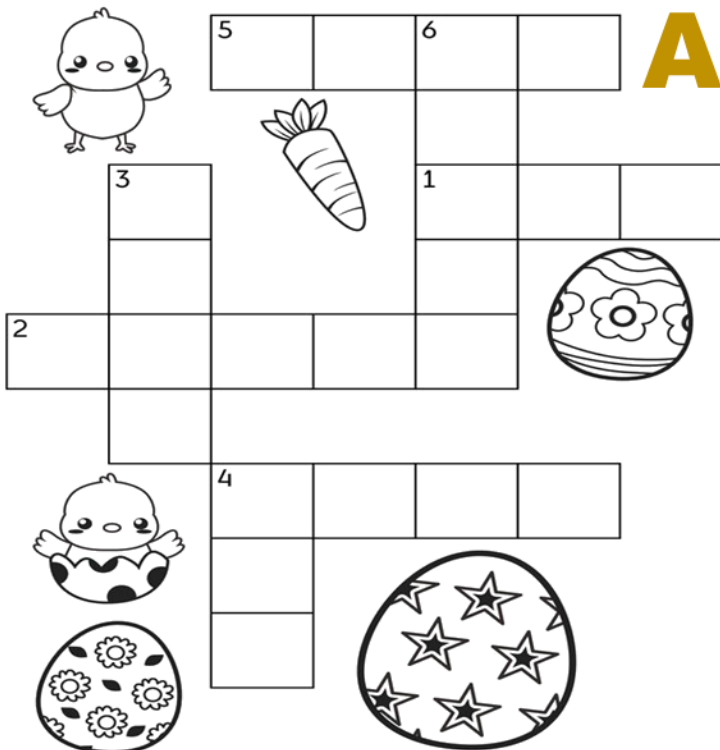
As if letters and numbers weren't enough, many plates have had slogans touting a state's fame or history. In our quiz below, try to connect each state with one of its license plate slogans.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Idaho | A. Sunshine State |
| 2. Missouri | B. Vacationland |
| 3. New Hampshire | C. Land of Lincoln |
| 4. Washington | D. Garden State |
| 5. Illinois | E. Stars Fell On |
| 6. New Jersey | F. America's Dairyland |
| 7. Pennsylvania | G. Live Free or Die |
| 8. Wisconsin | H. Show-Me State |
| 9. Florida | I. Keystone State |
| 10. Alabama | J. First in Flight |
| 11. Maine | K. Evergreen State |
| 12. North Carolina | L. Famous Potatoes |



Having trouble? Perhaps a road trip is in order...

Answers: 1. L; 2. H; 3. G; 4. K; 5. C; 6. D; 7. I; 8. F; 9. A; 10. E; 11. B; 12. J



April Flower Crossword

DOWN

- 3. Liquid falling from the sky
- 4. Common lunch meat
- 6. Small yellow easter marshmallow candy

ACROSS

- 1. A round object that is a symbol of easter
- 2. Animal that have two legs and two wings
- 4. To look for something or someone
- 5. Trust in a good outcome

Raspberry Coconut Balls

Ingredients:

- 1 package (12 ounces) vanilla wafers, crushed
- 3-1/3 cups sweetened shredded coconut, divided
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 3 teaspoon raspberry extract
- 1 teaspoon rum extract
- 1/4 cup pink sanding sugar



Instructions:

1. Mix wafer crumbs and 1-1/3 cups coconut. Stir in milk and extracts.
2. In a shallow bowl, combine sugar and remaining coconut.
3. Shape dough into 1-inch balls; roll in coconut mixture. Refrigerate in airtight containers.



Chasing Cherry Blossoms

~ Activity Connection

It lasts for only two weeks, but what a beautiful two weeks it is. *Hanami* is the Japanese term for enjoying the spring beauty of blossoming flowers. The most spectacular show of all is the viewing of the cherry blossoms, known as *sakura* by day and *yozakura* by night. It begins at the end of March and goes into the beginning of April.

The practice of *Hanami* began in seventh-century Japan, when wealthy elites and members of the Imperial court would gather to view plum blossoms. Soon, though, cherry blossoms became more highly regarded for their beauty. Before long, members of the “samurai class” joined in the viewing, and finally the practice became widespread among all people—rich or poor. The cherry blossom has even become Japan’s unofficial national flower.



The blossoming of the cherry trees also ushers in an entire season of *Hanami* parties. Many rush to parks and reserve spots, relaxing under the blossoming trees with blankets. The most popular spot in the country for *Hanami* is Tokyo’s Ueno Park, where there are more than 1,000 flowering cherry trees.

Japan’s best *Hanami* location may be the mountaintop town of Yoshino, where thousands of cherry trees resembling clouds slowly floats down the mountainside. The tiny lanes of this sleepy village become packed with visitors.

America’s most famous version of *Hanami* begins every March in Washington, D.C. In 1911, the city of Tokyo gifted 2,000 cherry trees to the U.S. Sadly, those trees were infested with insects and had to be destroyed. But Tokyo mayor Yukio Ozaki were undeterred. He sent a new shipment of 3,020 cherry trees, which arrived in Washington on March 26, 1912. Visitors have flocked to D.C.’s Tidal Basin to enjoy the cherry blossoms ever since.