HAPPY NEW YEAR – The Nugget - January 2026

Traditions we enjoy and their origins …

Candles - were burned at Christmas as companions to the Yule log, which were used to represent the divine light that shines over the world. Candles we set in our windows were brought to America by the Irish as symbol to guide Mary and Joseph to their homes.

Wreath – its circular shape symbolizes eternal peace and joy and expresses good wishes to everyone who walks past your door.

Evergreens – the ancient symbol of longevity and immortality. Romans filled their homes with greenery and exchanged holly wreaths as tokens of friendship. Ritual still thrives today with garlands, wreaths, etc.

Poinsettia – legend has it a poor Mexican boy sheepishly approached the creche in his village on Christmas Eve. It was customary to leave gifts for the Christ Child, the boy had nothing to give. As he knelt in the snow to pray, a scarlet plant emerged from the frozen ground; the boy gave it to the babe in the manger. In 1928 Joel Roberts Poinsett visited Mexico and brought the plant to America. The flower was named after him - Poinsettia.

New Year is good time to check your personal files/records – and suggested time-frame to retain

Bank Records/credit card statements and paycheck stubs **Retain 5 years**

Checks/Bills related to home/taxes or business **Retain 7 years**

Home Improvements Retain statements since cost of replacing, remodeling can lower capital gain on house when it is sold

Investments /quarterly statements hold monthly then …… Retain to year-end

Last WILL and Testament (always shred outdated LWT) Retain latest version in secure/safe place

Legal Documents (Life Insurance, Baptism/Marriage/Divorce/Death certificates Retain for Life

Military Discharge - **Retain for life** (discharge papers needed for burial in a Military Cemetery)

Medical Records - Retain 1 year

Bills/Receipts - Retain 1-3 months

TAX Files (Follow IRS guidelines) it is advised, for safety to retain records 7 years

IMPORTANT: Avoid Personal Identity Theft. Purchase a Shredder, Fire Proof Safes to retain vital papers. NEVER toss personal information with your name, address, social security number or account numbers into general Trash. LIFE LOCK is a service that monitors activity on credit cards. It is worth the yearly fee, remember to update all cards when new ones are issued to you.

Senior Nugget articles may be viewed on Atholton's website.
February's issue will highlight "How To Display Our Flag"

Medication and Food Interactions ... it does matter what you consume when taking medications.

Antibiotics – Sumycin, Dynacin, Monodox or generic tetracycline, doxycycline or minocycline – avoid daily, milk, yogurt and cheese, calcium supplements and fortified food for a couple hours before or after taking the medicine. Calcium and dairy products binds to antibiotic preventing body absorbing and making it ineffective.

Antidepressants. Marplan, Nardil, Emsam, Parnate or generic isocarboxazid, phenelzine, selegiline or tranylcypromine, avoid aged cheeses, chocolate, alcohol, cured meats – they raise BP.

Anti-Anxiety Medications – Xanax, Klonopin, Valium, Ativan or generic alprazolam, clonazepam, diazepam or lorazepam . these are sedatives, binding with brain's natural tranquilizers to calm you down.

Cholesterol Medication (Liptor, Zocor, Altoprev, Mevacor or generic atorvastatin, simvastatin or lovastatin – avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice, it raises level of the drug in blood stream and can cause side effects, especially leg pain.

Blood Pressure Medicine – ACE inhibitor (Capoten, Vasotec, Monopril, Zestril, and others to lower BP, limit food with potassium like: bananas, oranges, tomatoes, spinach and other leafy greens, sweet potatoes, and salt substitutes containing potassium. Too much can cause irregular heartbeat and palpitations.

Blood Thinners - Coumadin, Jantoven, or generic warfarin – limit kale, other greens, including broccoli, cabbage, spinach and brussels sprouts that contain vitamin K. These food block effect of blood thinning meds putting you at risk for developing blood clots. Watch out for garlic, vitamin E and fish oil supplements, they can increase blood-thinning abilities risking possible excessive bleeding.

Thyroid Medication – Synthroid, Levoxyl, Levothroid or generic levothyroxine – avoid eating tofu and walnuts and drinking soymilk. All of these prevent your body from absorbing these medications.

To find more dietary guidance on drugs you take see www.medlineplus.gov or www.mayclinic.org or AARP book "Don't Eat This If You're Taking That: The Hidden Risks of Mixing Food and Medicine."

BEST WISHES TO ALL HAVING A JANUARY BIRTHDAY

- **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH … "To be prepared is half the victory"**
- **" Remember today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday"**

FROM ATHOLTON'S SENIOR MINISTRIES

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