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CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February marks Black History Month, an annual celebration of achievements and recognition of the role of African Americans in U.S. History.

Black History Month, also known as African American History Month, has its roots in the pioneering efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, an African American historian, author, and journalist. Born in 1875, Woodson dedicated his life to promoting the study and appreciation of African American history, which was largely overlooked and marginalized in mainstream education and historical narratives during his time.

The inception of Black History Month can be traced back to 1926 when Dr. Woodson, along with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now known as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History), initiated the first Negro History Week.

The chosen week, which coincided with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass in February, aimed to highlight the significant contributions of African Americans to the fabric of American society.

Dr. Woodson envisioned Negro History Week as an opportunity to address the historical inaccuracies and omissions perpetuated by conventional historical accounts. He sought to underscore the achievements and cultural richness

of the African American community throughout history, fostering a sense of pride and awareness.

Over the years, the observance gained momentum and recognition, evolving into a month-long celebration. In 1976, the United States officially recognized February as Black History Month, coinciding with the bicentennial celebration of the nation. The extension of the commemoration to an entire month provided a dedicated space to delve deeper into the diverse tapestry of African American history, acknowledging the struggles, triumphs, and enduring legacy of a community that has played a pivotal role in shaping the nation.

Black History Month serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing journey toward equality and justice, encouraging individuals of all backgrounds to appreciate the multifaceted contributions of African Americans to the nation's cultural, social, political, and economic development.

It stands as a testament to the importance of acknowledging and understanding the richness of America's historical narrative, embracing the diversity that has fueled its growth and progress.

LET'S LEAP TO NEW HEIGHTS



Hey Team Bloomfield:

Welcome to the month of February, a special one that comes once every four years!!! There's a lot going on this month, so let's be glad there is an extra day, with holiday observances, national federal holidays, and days of recognition. In one way or another, much of it circles back around love. A part of expressing love is to take care

of what we love. Whether that be ourselves (self-love), our family, friends, pets, or our community. Love isn't just something we feel but something we express. So, this month, we encourage you to celebrate and express all the varieties of love, care, and kindness to ensure that everyone feels seen, valued and included.

In addition, in February we take a pause, to remember and reflect during Black History Month. Let us all be reminded of the importance of building a sense of community within this organization. A team that works well together and respects each other's differences can deliver the results that are expected from the entire Bloomfield community! Let this be the continuation to show up daily and give our absolute best!

There is no better way to show love, care and compassion than to take part in Random Acts of Kindness Week, February 11 – 17th. The following link below is a 2024

calendar, showing daily examples on how to initiate and express random acts of kindness.

https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/work/2024_RAK_kindness_at_work_calendar.pdf

In closing, let's begin to understand the true importance of self-care and the benefits to enhance self-confidence, increased productivity, and happiness. As we navigate through our daily tasks and challenges, it's important to remember the power of encouragement and the impact it can have on ourselves and those around us. Please consider exercising the following:

- Believe in Yourself
- Embrace Growth and Learning
- Emphasize Positivity
- Celebrate Progress
- Support and Encourage Others
- Take Care of Yourself
- Keep Going

I believe in each and every one of you. Your dedication, hard work, and positive attitude contribute to the success of this organization. Keep shining, keep growing and keep making a difference!!!

Thank you again for everything you do!

India Rodgers, MFP
Director of Strategic Communications & Government Affairs

Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 11-17)

Imagine a world where you can succeed by being nice.

Where we all pay it forward.

Where people look out for each other.

It all starts with an act.

**make
kindness
the norm.**
randomactsofkindness.org

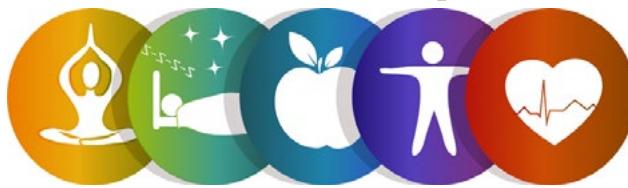


Leading up to Random Acts of Kindness Week, step outside of your comfort zone and perform at least one random act of kindness for someone each day.

If you're wondering how to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day, here are 10 ideas for random acts of kindness that you can do for the benefit of those around you.

1. Offer to help a neighbor with chores or errands.
2. Pay for someone's meal or coffee.
3. Leave a kind note for someone to find.
4. Volunteer at a local charity, homeless shelter, animal shelter, or other nonprofit organization.
5. Donate items to a shelter or food bank.
6. Offer to give someone a ride or help with transportation.
7. Listen and offer support to someone who needs it.
8. Compliment a stranger and make them smile.
9. Hold the door open for someone or offer assistance when their hands are full.
10. Write a positive review or recommendation for a local business or service provider.

HR News And Updates



All benefited employees are invited to participate in the Town's Wellness Incentive Program. Participation in this program is voluntary and confidential. The incentives are based on what healthcare plan you choose.

CIGNA OPEN ACCESS PLUS (PPO) PLAN

If you are in the PPO plan, you can earn up to (2) \$50.00 checks from Accounts Payable. You must complete these steps:

- Get a yearly checkup with your doctor and earn one \$50.00 check.
- Fill out a Health Assessment form on CIGNA's Website and earn another \$50.00 check.

CIGNA CHOICE FUND (H.S.A/HRA) PLAN

If you are in the CIGNA CHOICE FUND H.S.A/HRA Plan, you can earn up to \$250.00. You must complete these steps:

- Get a yearly checkup with your doctor and receive a \$125.00 deposit into your account.
- Fill out a Health Assessment form on CIGNA's Website and receive an additional \$125.00 into your H.S.A/HRA account.

The deadline for completing this process is June 30, 2024.

If you have questions about this program, you may contact Human Resources at (860) 769- 3544.

Recipe Corner

India's Famous Party Punch

Orange Sherbet Punch with Sprite is a punch drink made with lemon and lime flavored Sprite soda, cranapple juice, and scoops of frozen orange sherbet, giving it that famous fizzy texture.

Ingredients

- 2 – 2 liters Sprite
- 2 - quarts Orange Sherbet
- 2 – 64 oz. Ocean Spray Cranapple Juice

Chill the Sprite and Cranapple juice before preparing this punch.

Make cran apple juice ice cubes with some of the cran apple juice to keep the punch chilled after making it, especially if you're serving it in a warm environment.

Instructions

- Combine sprite, cranapple juice and orange sherbet in a large punch bowl.
- Using an ice cream scoop, add scoops of orange sherbet into the liquid mix.
- Stir in frozen cranapple ice cubes.
- Garnish with a twist of lime and mint leaf and serve!



Have a recipe you want to share with your fellow co-workers? Send it to Brian Wolff at bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! YOU ROCK

February Work Anniversaries

Sharon Carpenter-Embrosky - 2/22/10 (Library)
 Ramon Flores - 2/9/09 (Leisure Services)
 Tonya Mullin - 2/21/23 (Senior Services)
 Warren Plummer - 2/12/13 (ITI)
 Sarah Cote - 2/22/21 (Engineering)
 Rohan Green - 2/12/02 (Police)
 Shaun Gallant - 2/10/11 (Police)
 Jonathan Sykes - 2/23/15 (Police)
 Michael Giroux - 2/14/05 (Public Works)
 Davin Thomas - 2/9/09 (Public Works)
 Quantas Forsythe - 2/18/20 (Facilities)
 Tonya Mullin - 2/21/23 (Facilities)



JOKE CORNER



Q: Where do bad rainbows go?



A: Prism, it's a light sentence.

GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

We want to hear from you!!! This newsletter is meant to be a means of two-way communication. In each issue, you can give us your opinion on articles for the future or ask questions about articles you just read. If you have ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improvement, please don't hesitate to share them with us. Your input is invaluable in shaping our workplace culture and enhancing our work environment. Please direct any feedback to India Rodgers (irodgers@bloomfieldct.gov) or Brian Wolff (bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov).

Feedback



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS COLUMN

Fitness Focus

If you are member of a gym and would like the Town of Bloomfield to reimburse you for membership (up to \$19.99), reach out to HR for the applicable form and forward it to the Town Manager's Office. You are responsible to participate for 8 hours a week and it is your responsibility to get that in signed documentation.

Exercises to Relax and Unwind

Relaxation doesn't have to take up lots of your time. Just stepping away from something stressful for a few minutes or taking time away from your normal routines and thoughts can give you enough space and distance to feel calmer. Learning to breathe more deeply can help you feel a lot calmer. It takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere. Remember, Making space in your life for relaxation is only one part of managing your mental health.



MARCH IS EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION MONTH

Employee Appreciation Day falls on the first Friday of March—it'll be on **Friday, March 1st in 2024!**

On this day, employers around the world make the extra effort to appreciate their employees' effort and dedication.

Here at the Town of Bloomfield, we will use the month of March to celebrate our employees and everything you do for our residents and our local businesses on a daily basis.



What would you like to see for Employee Appreciation Month? Have a co-worker you would like us to spotlight?

Contact India Rodgers (irodgers@bloomfieldct.gov) and Brian Wolff (bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov) with your ideas.

WHAT'S ON THE CALENDAR

February 2 – National Wear Red Day – Heart Disease Awareness/

Groundhog Day

February 7-14 - Congenital Heart Defects Awareness Week

February 9 - National Pizza Day

February 11 – 17 – Random Acts of Kindness Week

February 11 – Super Bowl Sunday (Chiefs vs. 49ers)

February 14 – Valentine's Day

February 19 – President's Day – OFF

February 29 - Leap Day

