

# THE SWEATERGANG STANDARD

Monthly Newsletter for Seniors

**Valentine's Day – February 14**



## SWEATERGANG BOOK CLUB

The Mysterious Affair at Styles – by Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie's debut novel was the first to feature Hercule Poirot, her famously eccentric Belgian detective. A refugee of the Great War, Poirot is settling in England near Styles Court, the country estate of his wealthy benefactress, the elderly Emily Inglethorp. When Emily is poisoned and the authorities are baffled, Poirot puts his prodigious sleuthing skills to work. Suspects are plentiful, including the victim's much younger husband, her resentful stepsons, her longtime hired companion, a young family friend working as a nurse, and a London specialist on poisons who just happens to be visiting the nearby village. All of them have secrets they are desperate to keep, but none can outwit Poirot as he navigates the ingenious red herrings and plot twists that earned Agatha Christie her well-deserved reputation as the queen of mystery.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



## This Month in History Did You Know?

- In his first meteorological forecast in 1955, Ontario albino groundhog Wiarton Willie does not see his shadow and predicts an early spring.
- In 1879, Canadian scientist and engineer Sandford Fleming proposes a system to divide the world into 24 time zones. This system will gradually be adopted by all countries in the 19th and 20th centuries, and is now used worldwide.
- In 1870 Louis Riel is elected to head the Métis provisional government, which negotiates Manitoba's entry into Canadian Confederation with the federal government.
- In 1916 the first telephone call connects Montréal and Vancouver, 6,763 km apart.
- In 1965 for the first time, the new Canadian flag goes up the flagpole on the Peace Tower at Ottawa's Parliament Buildings. RCMP Officer Joseph Secours raises the Maple Leaf in place of the Red Ensign, which was Canada's flag from 1868 to 1965. Ever since, February 15 has been known as Flag Day in Canada.

*Sweatergang Companions can be reached at 1-800-927-0985 or by email at [sweatergangcompanions@gmail.com](mailto:sweatergangcompanions@gmail.com)*

## February Sudoku Puzzle

		7			5			9
					8			
2		5	7	3				
3		9	2	1				
								4
8				9	3			
	7					3		
							9	
		2		8		6		1

### Sudoku Instructions

Each row, column and square (9 spaces each) needs to be filled out with the numbers 1-9, without repeating any numbers within the row, column or square

### Ways to Beat the Winter Blues Without Medication

- Exercise:** Research has shown that even a 15-minute walk in the middle of the day is enough to increase crucial neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and norepinephrine, which help energise the brain and regulate circadian rhythms.
- Eat complex carbohydrates:** More complex carbohydrates, such as broccoli, spinach, courgettes and lentils take longer to digest, meaning they don't cause the sudden spikes in blood sugar that can play havoc with your mood.
- Take fish oil and vitamin D supplements:** Vitamin D plays a role in regulating mood, maintaining optimum blood sugar levels and boosting our immune systems, but one of the main natural sources of vitamin D is sunlight.
- Meditate:** By relaxing the body and mind through stimulating the release of the hormone melatonin, meditation can lead to increased activity in the left prefrontal cortex, a part of the brain associated with happiness, and decreased activity in brain regions linked to stress.

[www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

## Brioche French Toast with Brown Sugar-Cranberry Sauce

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, thawed and chopped
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- 4 large strips of orange zest
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
- 1/4 cup heavy cream

### French Toast:

- 6 large eggs
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Unsalted butter, for greasing
- Twelve 1-inch-thick slices of brioche (1 pound)
- Lightly sweetened whipped cream, for serving

### Directions:

**1. Make the cranberry sauce:** In a medium saucepan, combine the chopped cranberries with the light brown sugar, orange zest, salt and 2 tablespoons of water and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries are soft and the sauce is ruby-colored, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove the cranberry mixture from the heat and whisk in the butter and heavy cream. Cook over moderately low heat, whisking, until the butter is completely melted and the sauce is hot, about 3 minutes. Discard the orange zest. Keep the cranberry sauce warm over very low heat.

**2. Make the french toast:** Preheat the oven to 225°. In a large baking dish, whisk the eggs with the heavy cream, light brown sugar, vanilla extract and salt. Heat a large cast-iron griddle and lightly butter it. Working in batches, dip half of the brioche slices in the egg mixture, turning them, until they are well-moistened. Transfer the soaked brioche to the griddle and cook over moderate heat, turning once, until the French toast is golden and cooked through, about 4 minutes. Transfer the French toast to a baking sheet, cover loosely with aluminum foil and keep warm in the oven. Repeat with the remaining brioche slices. Serve the French toast with the cranberry sauce and whipped cream.

**Make Ahead:** The cranberry sauce can be refrigerated for up to 3 days. Reheat gently before serving.

[www.foodandwine.com](http://www.foodandwine.com)

## Why 2020 is a Leap Year and Why it's Necessary

The last leap year was 2016, and the next one is 2020! Leap days are extra days added to the calendar to help synchronize it with Earth's orbit around the sun and the actual passing of the seasons. Why do we need them? Blame Earth's orbit around the sun, which takes approximately 365.25 days. It's that .25 that creates the need for a leap year every four years.

During non-leap years, aka common years – like 2019 – the calendar doesn't take into account the extra quarter of a day actually required by Earth to complete a single orbit around the sun. In essence, the calendar year, which is a human artifact, is faster than the actual solar year, or year as defined by our planet's motion through space.

Over time and without correction, the calendar year would drift away from the solar year and the drift would add up quickly. For example, without correction the calendar year would be off by about one day after four years. It'd be off by about 25 days after 100 years. You can see that, if even more time were to pass without the leap year as a calendar correction, eventually February would be a summer month in the Northern Hemisphere.

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII revised the Julian calendar by creating the Gregorian calendar with the assistance of Christopher Clavius, a German mathematician and astronomer. The Gregorian calendar further stated that leap days should not be added in years ending in "00" unless that year is also divisible by 400. This additional correction was added to stabilize the calendar over a period of thousands of years and was necessary because solar years are actually slightly less than 365.25 days. In fact, a solar year occurs over a period of 365.2422 days.

[www.earthsky.org](http://www.earthsky.org)

## Sweatergang Companions

“Providing Lifestyle Assistance to Seniors”

Our services include:

- Companionship/respice
- Personal Support Services
- Overnight Companionship
- Light housekeeping
- Meal preparation/coordination
- Activities to stimulate mental awareness
- Transportation to appointments
- Grocery Shopping
- Medication reminders
- Planned outings

Our team is bonded and has completed the Ontario Provincial Police Vulnerable Sector Check

**Call Us Today: 1-800-927-0985**

[www.sweatergangcompanions.ca](http://www.sweatergangcompanions.ca)

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS – February 2020

1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> – Cabin Fever – The Kingston Winter Antique Show –  
Portsmouth Olympic Harbour – 53 Yonge St. 10:00 am – 5:00 pm on  
the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11-4 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. For more information call Bill Dobson at  
613-283-5270.

8<sup>th</sup> – Peggy's Song – Theatre Kingston - Baby Grand – 218 Princess St.  
2:30 pm. For more information call 613-530-2050.

11<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday Night Live Jazz – Olivea Restaurant, 39 Brock St. 6:00  
pm – 9:00 pm. For more information please visit [www.olivea.ca](http://www.olivea.ca) or call  
613-547-5483.

14<sup>th</sup> – Heart's Desire Valentine's Fashion Show – Kingsbridge  
Retirement Community – 950 Centennial Dr. 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm.  
\$25/person.

20<sup>th</sup> – The Irish Rovers – Grand Theatre – 218 Princess St. 7:30 pm.  
Tickets \$44.50 and \$49.50 + HST and handling fee. For more  
information call 613-530-2050.

25<sup>th</sup> – Armchair Travel – Quebec – The Seniors Centre – 56 Francis St.  
11:30 am – 1:00 pm. \$12.50/member, \$14.50/non-member.