



I honestly don't think I recall there being a January this year. I feel like 2020 is already flying by and here we are in February; typically the shortest month. However, 2020 is a Leap Year, so savor the extra day we get this month (especially if it's your birthday!).

February 7th First Friday, Gettysburg Style kicks off a new event for GARMA. Join us for our First Annual Cocoa Crawl. This family friendly event kicks off at our two "warming stations" located at ABC on Steinwehr Ave. and The Gettysburg Hotel Atrium. There you will receive a map and list of participating businesses and can also purchase your souvenir GARMA First Friday mug to take along with you on your journey to sampling cocoa inspired treats. While you're checking in at a "warming station" you can enter to win prizes that will be drawn that evening during First Friday. Crawlers can also vote for their favorite GARMA Member Cocoa-inspired treat on Facebook and win prizes! We hope to see you out and about that night enjoying some great cocoa treats!

How can I write about events in February without acknowledging the most celebrated of all; Valentine's Day. It is a festival of romance that celebrates love and relationships. Celebrated on February 14th, it is often marked by giving gifts to, and spending time with, loved ones. Valentine's Day traditions include exchanging gifts such as chocolates or roses and having a romantic night out on the town. Obviously, the color we associate with Valentine's Day is Red. Hearts are red, but you *can* have a "heart of gold".

So what exactly does the phrase "heart of gold" mean? Generally, it means someone who is very kind and good natured. The expression alludes to gold in the sense of "something valued for its goodness". I'm sure we all know someone who fits this meaning. Other phrases that are related to the heart are "getting to the heart of the matter", "wearing your heart on your sleeve" and "having a heart of stone". Some heart phrases you may not want to hear such as "heart murmur", "heart disease", "heart attack" and "heart failure". February is also American Heart Month.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions. A great opportunity to learn about heart disease and other heart health issues is to register to attend "Love Your Heart", a FREE educational event being sponsored by Wellspan, Gettysburg Hospital on Saturday, February 29, 2020. Free blood pressure screenings are provided at the event. Visit www.wellspan.org/programs/heart-vascular/ and click on the link for Adams County.

February takeaways: Take care of yourself – there's only one YOU! Celebrate yourself and your loved ones this Valentine's Day (and every day). Get out and have fun on First Friday at GARMA's First Annual Cocoa Crawl! For more information visit www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com.

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