

Christopher Columbus



Christopher Columbus (c. 31 October 1451 – 20 May 1506) was a navigator, colonizer, and explorer from Genoa, Italy, whose voyages across the Atlantic Ocean led to general European awareness of the American continents in the Western Hemisphere. With his four voyages of exploration and several attempts at establishing a settlement on the island of Hispaniola, all funded by Isabella I of Castile, he initiated the process of Spanish colonization which foreshadowed general European colonization of the "New World".

Although not the first to reach the Americas from Europe—he was preceded by at least one other group, the Norse, led by Leif Ericson, who built a temporary settlement 500 years earlier at L'Anse aux Meadows—Columbus initiated widespread contact between Europeans and indigenous Americans.

The term "pre-Columbian" is usually used to refer to the peoples and cultures of the Americas before the arrival of Columbus and his European successors.

The name *Christopher Columbus* is the Anglicisation of the Latin *Christophorus Columbus*. The original name in 15th century Genoese language was *Christoffa*^[6] *Corombo*), although the Italian language version of the name is Cristoforo Colombo.

Columbus's initial 1492 voyage came at a critical time of emerging modern western imperialism and economic competition between developing kingdoms seeking wealth from the establishment of trade routes and colonies. In this sociopolitical climate, Columbus's far-fetched scheme won the attention of Isabella I of Castile. Severely underestimating the circumference of the Earth, he estimated that a westward route from Iberia to the Indies would be shorter than the overland trade route through Arabia. If true, this would allow Spain entry into the lucrative spice trade — heretofore commanded by the Arabs and Italians. Following his plotted course, he instead landed within the Bahamas Archipelago at a locale he named *San Salvador*. Mistaking the lands he encountered for Asia, he referred to the inhabitants as "*indios*" (Spanish for "Indians").

The anniversary of Columbus's 1492 landing in the Americas is usually observed as Columbus Day on 12 October in Spain and throughout the Americas, except Canada. In the United States it is observed annually on the second Monday in October.

Arna Bontemps



Bontemps was born in the city of Alexandria in the U.S. state of Louisiana, the son of Paul Bontemps and Marie Pembroke Bontemps. His birthplace at 1327 Third Street has been recently restored and converted for use as the Bontemps African American Museum. It is included on the Louisiana African American Heritage Trail.

When he was three, his family moved to the Watts district of Los Angeles, California in the Great Migration of blacks out of the South to cities of the North, Midwest and West. He graduated from Pacific Union College in California in 1923. After graduation he went to New York to teach at Harlem Academy. In New York he became an important contributor to the Harlem Renaissance.

He began writing while a student at Pacific Union College and became the author of many children's books. His critically most important work, *The Story of the Negro* (1948), received the Jane Addams Book Award and was also a Newbery Honor Book. He is best known for the 1931 novel *God Sends Sunday*. He also wrote the 1946 play *St. Louis Woman* with Countee Cullen.

In 1943, after graduating from the University of Chicago with a masters degree in library science, Bontemps was appointed librarian at Fisk University in Nashville, TN. He held that position for 22 years and developed important collections and archives of African-American literature and culture. Through his librarianship and bibliographic work, Bontemps became a leading figure in establishing African-American literature as a legitimate object of study and preservation.^[1]

Bontemps died June 4, 1973 from a heart attack, while working on his autobiography.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Pink for October began when Matthew Oliphant created a joke website that contained a lot of pink for his coworker. The coworker made fun of it, and then Matthew decided to ask people on 9rules for a list of sites that looked great with the color pink, to show the coworker that pink looked fine on websites. It was then that he realized that October is the month for Breast Cancer Awareness, and said the following on his blog in a post and also on the forums:

"So much pink around... maybe we should pinkify our sites for Breast Cancer Awareness Month which is October. Somewhat in the vein of Dustin's Get Naked Day. That'd be sweet to get 200+ 9r member sites (and hopefully influence others) to go pink for a month. Could publicise it, get more traffic, accolades, etc. Plus raise awareness of Breast Cancer research, raise money... It could be a fun group activity that also helps a good cause. Would that be of interest to anyone?"

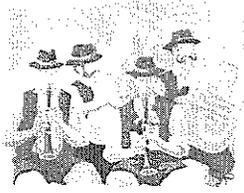
The official site also allows users to post their personal stories relating to breast cancer.

Child Health Day
October 3, 2011



Child Health Day is a national observance in the U.S., not a public holiday. On Child Health Day, the emphasis is to help raise awareness and a commitment to teaching children the benefits of good health and teaching parents how they can help and protect their children with good nutrition, year round fitness and exercise. The day was proclaimed in 1928 by Calvin Coolidge to increase awareness of health issues facing the children in the U.S. including health issues, healthy eating, fitness, child's development, immunizations, preventing injuries, and more.

German-American Heritage Month



German Americans comprise about 51 million people, or 17% of the U.S. population, the country's largest self-reported ancestral group. California, Texas and Pennsylvania have the largest numbers of German origin, although upper Midwestern states, including Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and The Dakotas, have the highest proportion of German Americans at over one-third.

None of the historical German states had overseas colonies, so not until the 1680s did the first significant groups of German immigrants arrive in the British colonies, settling primarily in New York and Pennsylvania. Immigration continued in very large numbers during the 19th century, with some eight million arrivals from Germany. They were pulled by the attractions of land and religious freedom, and pushed out of Europe by shortages of land and religious or political oppression. Many arrived seeking religious or political freedom, others for economic opportunities greater than those in Europe, and others simply for the chance to start fresh in the New World. The arrivals before 1850 were mostly farmers and sought out the most productive land, where their intensive farming techniques would pay off. After 1840 many came to cities, where "Germania"—German-speaking districts—soon emerged.

German Americans have been influential in almost every field in American society, from science to architecture, industry, sports, entertainment, theology, government, and the military. German American generals Baron von Steuben, John Pershing, Dwight Eisenhower, and Norman Schwarzkopf commanded the United States Army in the American Revolutionary War, the First World War, the Second World War, and the Persian Gulf War respectively. Many German Americans have played a prominent role in industry and business, including names like John D. Rockefeller, William Boeing, Walter Chrysler, and Donald Trump. Some, like Brooklyn Bridge engineer John A. Roebling or architect Walter Gropius, left behind visible landmarks. Others, like Albert Einstein and Wernher von Braun, set intellectual landmarks. Still others, like Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Jack Nicklaus, Doris Day, and Leonardo DiCaprio became prominent athletes or actors.

German Americans established the first kindergartens in the United States, introduced the Christmas tree tradition, and originated popular American foods such as hot dogs and hamburgers. German Americans have also dominated beer brewing for much of American history beginning with breweries founded in the 19th century by German immigrants Eberhard Anheuser, Adolphus Busch, Adolph Coors, Frederick Miller, Frederick Pabst, and Joseph Schlitz, and carried down to the present day by microbrewers such as Karl Strauss.

German American celebrations are held throughout the country; one of the most well-known being the German-American Steuben Parade in New York City, held every third Saturday in September. There are also major annual events in Chicago, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, St. Louis and other cities. Like many other immigrants that came to the United States, an overwhelming number of people of German or partial German descent have essentially become Americanized.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Historian Nicholas Rogers, exploring the origins of Halloween, notes that while "some folklorists have detected its origins in the Roman feast of Pomona, the goddess of fruits and seeds, or in the festival of the dead called Parentalia, it is more typically linked to the Celtic festival of Samhain, whose original spelling was Samuin (pronounced *sow-an* or *sow-in*)". The name is derived from Old Irish and means roughly "summer's end". A similar festival was held by the ancient Britons and is known as Calan Gaeaf (pronounced *Kálan Gái av*).

The festival of Samhain celebrates the end of the "lighter half" of the year and beginning of the "darker half", and is sometimes regarded as the "Celtic New Year".

The ancient Celts believed that the border between this world and the Otherworld became thin on Samhain, allowing spirits (both harmless and harmful) to pass through. The family's ancestors were honoured and invited home while harmful spirits were warded off. It is believed that the need to ward off harmful spirits led to the wearing of costumes and masks. Their purpose was to disguise oneself as a harmful spirit and thus avoid harm. In Scotland the spirits were impersonated by young men dressed in white with masked, veiled or blackened faces. Samhain was also a time to take stock of food supplies and slaughter livestock for winter stores. Bonfires played a large part in the festivities. All other fires were doused and each home lit their hearth from the bonfire. The bones of slaughtered livestock were cast into its flames. Sometimes two bonfires would be built side-by-side, and people and their livestock would walk between them as a cleansing ritual.

Another common practice was divination, which often involved the use of food and drink. The name 'Halloween' and many of its present-day traditions derive from the Old English era. The word *Halloween* is first attested in the 16th century and represents a Scottish variant of the fuller *All-Hallows-Even* ("*evening*"), that is, the night before All Hallows Day. Up through the early twentieth century, the spelling "Hallowe'en" was frequently used, eliding the "v" and shortening the word. Although the phrase *All Hallows* is found in Old English (*eaþra hálþena mæssedæȝ*, the feast of all saints), *All-Hallows-Even* is itself not attested until 1556.

How to Pick a Pumpkin

Here are a few quick tips for picking your own pumpkin. Many would apply to selecting a pre-picked pumpkin, too.

Difficulty: Easy

Time required: 30 minutes

Here's How:

The very best place to purchase a pumpkin is at a pick-your-own pumpkin patch, as that way you're assured that the pumpkin is fresh from the field.

A farm stand would probably be the second best bet, as at least the pumpkins were picked right there and did not have to endure the jostling that might occur during shipment to supermarkets.

It's important to look at the pumpkin from all sides before picking it. Look to make sure that the entire pumpkin is colored bright orange and that there are no bruises, soft spots, scars or signs of mold.

If it is possible, sit the pumpkin upright while it is still on the vine to make sure that it will sit level once you've brought it home to display.

It's important to make sure that the stem stays attached to the pumpkin. Pumpkins that are ready for picking should have dried somewhat brittle stems that make them easy to pluck from the vine.

Carry the pumpkin by the bottom so as not to risk damage to the stem. Pumpkins should be stored in a cool, dry place prior to carving/displaying them.

Tips:

If the pumpkin is a heavy one, be sure to follow conventional strategies for hoisting heavy objects, i.e., lift with your legs, not with your back.

Frost is a big enemy to pumpkins, so bring them indoors if freezing weather threatens.

**October is:
LGBT History Month
National Coming out Day**



LGBT History Month originated in the United States and was first celebrated in 1994. It was founded by Missouri high-school history teacher Rodney Wilson. Among early supporters and members of the first coordinating committee were Kevin Jennings of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN); Kevin Boyer of Gerber/Hart Gay and Lesbian Library and Archives in Chicago; Paul Varnell, writer for the Windy City Times; Torey Wilson, Chicago area teacher; Johnda Boyce, women's studies major at Columbus State University and Jessea Greenman of UC-Berkeley. Many gay and lesbian organizations supported the concept early on. In 1995, the National Education Association indicated support of LGBT History Month as well as other history months by resolution at its General Assembly.

October was chosen by Wilson as the month for the celebration because National Coming out Day already was established as a widely known event, on October 11, and October commemorated the first march on Washington by LGBT people in 1979. LGBT History Month is intended to encourage honesty and openness about being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

While it was first known as Lesbian and Gay History Month, the Coordinating Committee soon added "Bisexual" to the title. It has subsequently become known as LGBT History Month. The event has received criticism from, for example, the Concerned Women for America and others who believe it to be a form of indoctrination.

On June 2, 2000, President Bill Clinton declared June 2000 "Gay & Lesbian Pride Month". President Barack Obama declared June 2009 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Pride Month 2009 on June 1, 2009.



Mahatma Gandhi
Indian Spiritual/Political
Leader and Humanitarian

1869 - 1948

**“Truth, purity, self-control, firmness, fearlessness, humility, unity, peace,
and renunciation—These are the inherent qualities of a civil resister.”**

—Mahatma Gandhi

Ronald Ervin McNair, the second African American to fly in space, was born October 21, 1950, in Lake City, South Carolina. In 1971, he received a bachelor's degree in physics, magna cum laude, from North Carolina A&T State University (Greensboro). In 1976, he received his Ph.D. in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Ronald McNair was nationally recognized for his work in the field of laser physics; selected as one of thirty-five applicants from a pool of ten thousand for the astronaut program in 1978; received three honorary doctorates, a score of fellowships and commendations; achieved a black belt in karate; and was an accomplished saxophonist.

Ronald McNair died on January 28, 1986, in a fiery explosion nine miles above the Atlantic Ocean along with six other crew members aboard the space shuttle Challenger.



Dr. Ronald Ervin McNair, Ph.D.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month



US Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao announces that "America's People, America's Talent, America's Strength" is the theme for this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month, which will be observed nationwide in October.

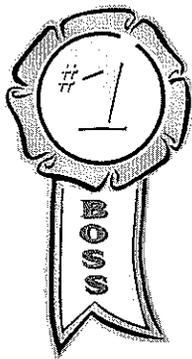
Chao says the theme captures the accomplishments highlighted in the 2007 progress report on President Bush's New Freedom Initiative for people with disabilities.

"Full access to community life for Americans with disabilities is an imperative, and this year's theme conveys the tremendous contributions that these Americans can make in the workplace," Chao says.

Each October, the Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) leads the nation's activities and produces materials to increase the public's awareness of the contributions and skills of American workers with disabilities. Private sector, federal, state, and local government, and advocacy organizations, piggyback on the same theme to plan events and programs that showcase the abilities of employees and job candidates with disabilities.

"It is important to note that having people with disabilities in the workplace is valuable to the individual and to businesses," says Neil Romano, assistant secretary at the Labor Department's ODEP. "People with disabilities are the next great wave of diversity, and diversity fosters innovation to drive our economy and our nation into the future."

National Boss's Day



Boss's Day (also known as Bosses Day or National Boss Day) is a secular holiday celebrated on October 16 in the United States. It has traditionally been a day for employees to thank their boss for being kind and fair throughout the year. The holiday has been the source of some controversy and criticism in the United States, where it is often mocked as a Hallmark Holiday.

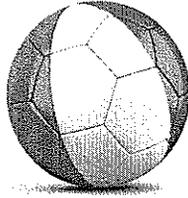
Patricia Bays Haroski registered "National Boss' Day" with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1958. She was working as a secretary for State Farm Insurance Company in Deerfield, Illinois at the time and chose October 16 because she forgot that the birthday of her boss, who was her father, was actually on the 16th. Four years later in 1962, Illinois Governor Otto Kerner backed Haroski's registration and officially proclaimed the day.

National Boss' Day has become an international celebration in recent years and now is observed in countries such as Australia, India and South Africa and very recently Ireland and the UK.

Hallmark did not offer a Boss' Day card for sale until 1979. It increased the size of its National Boss Day line by 90 percent in 2007.

According to Emily Post, you should not give a gift to your boss unless it is from a group of employees. This will avoid the appearance of currying favor from your boss.

National Italian American Heritage Month



Celebrate the many achievements and successes of Italian Americans

Every year the U.S. president signs an executive order designating the month of October as **National Italian American Heritage Month**. Coinciding with the festivities surrounding Columbus Day, the proclamation is recognition of the many achievements, contributions, and successes of Americans of Italian descent as well as Italians in America.

Over 5.4 million Italians immigrated to the United States between 1820 and 1992. Today there are over 26 million Americans of Italian descent in the United States, making them the fifth largest ethnic group. The country was even named after an Italian, the explorer and geographer Amerigo Vespucci. One way to celebrate Italian American heritage is with *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Italian History and Culture*, which includes the accomplishments and successes of many Italian Americans.

Federico Fellini, the movie director, once said that "language is culture and culture is the language," and nowhere is this truer than in Italy. There was a time when speaking Italian was considered a crime, but nowadays many Italian Americans are learning Italian to discover more about their family heritage. Looking for ways to identify, understand, and bond with their family's ethnic background, they getting in touch with their family heritage by learning their ancestors' native language.



Casimir Pulaski
(March 4, 1746 – October 11, 1779)

Casimir Pulaski was a Polish soldier and politician who has been called "the father of American cavalry."

A member of the Polish landed gentry, (Polish):*szlachta*, he was a military commander for the Bar Confederation and fought against Russian domination of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. When this uprising failed, he immigrated to North America, where he became a General in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War. He died of wounds suffered at the Battle of Savannah.

John Brown's Raid, 1859

[Printer Friendly Version >>>](#)

Just after sundown on the evening of Sunday October 16, 1859 John Brown led a group of 21 men (16 white and 5 black) across the Potomac River from Maryland to Virginia. Their immediate objective was the capture of the cache of weapons stored at the U.S. Arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Brown's ultimate goal was to destroy the slave system of the South. The arms

captured by the raid would allow Brown and his followers to establish a stronghold in the near-by mountains from which they could attack slaveholders and draw liberated slaves into their ranks.

Brown's raid attained initial success. Slashing the telegraph wires to cut off the town from the outside world, the raiders captured the local armory, arsenal and rifle manufacturing plant. They then rounded up 60 townspeople as hostages. Unfortunately, the raiders were unsuccessful in their attempt to isolate the town. A B&O Railroad train was detained as it passed through, but allowed to continue on its journey to Baltimore. Once it reached its destination, the alarm was raised and federal troops sent to the rescue. In the meantime, the local militia surrounded the town preventing the raiders' escape. Realizing his predicament, John Brown led his men, along with nine hostages, to the small fire engine house adjacent to the armory.



John Brown, 1854

From a contemporary photograph

Federal forces arrived on Monday evening and successfully stormed the stronghold the following day, seriously wounding Brown. He was tried and convicted of treason against the Commonwealth of Virginia. Just before his hanging on December 2, 1859, Brown uttered a prophetic forewarning of the coming Civil War: "I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood."

John Brown's raid and subsequent trial inflamed the dispute between the country's abolitionist and pro-slavery factions hardening the lines that separated the North and the South.

"I determined to summon the insurgents to surrender... I did not expect it would be accepted."

The Creation of American Indian Heritage Month

A Brief History

What started at the turn of the century as an effort to gain a day of recognition for the significant contributions the first Americans made to the establishment and growth of the U.S., has resulted in a whole month being designated for that purpose.

Early Proponents

One of the very proponents of an American Indian Day was Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian, who was the director of the Museum of Arts and Science in Rochester, N.Y. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for the "First Americans" and for three years they adopted such a day. In 1915, the annual Congress of the American Indian Association meeting in Lawrence, Kans., formally approved a plan concerning American Indian Day. It directed its president, Rev. Sherman Coolidge, an Arapahoe, to call upon the country to observe such a day. Coolidge issued a proclamation on Sept. 28, 1915, which declared the second Saturday of each May as an American Indian Day and contained the first formal appeal for recognition of Indians as citizens.

The year before this proclamation was issued, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor Indians. On December 14, 1915, he presented the endorsements of 24 state governments at the White House. There is no record, however, of such a national day being proclaimed.

State Celebrations

The first American Indian Day in a state was declared on the second Saturday in May 1916 by the governor of N.Y. Several states celebrate the fourth Friday in September. In Illinois, for example, legislators enacted such a day in 1919. Presently, several states have designated Columbus Day as Native American Day, but it continues to be a day we observe without any recognition as a national legal holiday.

Heritage Months

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994.

Pumpkin Waffles

To save time in the morning, mix the dry ingredients the night before. Top the waffles with fresh fruits in season and whipped cream for added elegance.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 2 Tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 4 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/4 cup finely chopped apple, peeled and cored
- 1/3 cup ground toasted walnuts

In a large bowl, sift together the flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg; set aside. In a separate large bowl, beat together the eggs and brown sugar. Add the buttermilk, butter, and pumpkin; beat well. Add the liquid mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just blended. Fold in the apples and nuts.

Ladle the batter into a hot, well-oiled waffle iron (or non-oiled no-stick waffle pan) and cook until done. Serve with butter and a choice of warmed syrups such as maple, blueberry, and raspberry.

Hot Spiced Cider

Ingredients

- 6 cups fresh apple cider
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup (more or less, to taste)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 6 whole cloves
- 6 whole allspice berries
- 6 strips orange peel
- 6 strips lemon peel

Pour the apple cider and maple syrup into a large stainless steel saucepan. Place the cinnamon sticks, cloves, allspice berries, orange peel and lemon peel in the center of a washed square of cheesecloth; fold up the sides of the cheesecloth to enclose the bundle, then tie it up with a length of kitchen string. Drop the spice bundle into the cider mixture.

Place the saucepan over moderate heat for 5 to 10 minutes, or until the cider is very hot but not boiling.

Remove the cider from the heat. Discard the spice bundle. Ladle the cider into big cups or mugs, adding a fresh cinnamon stick to each serving, if you like.

Caramel Apples

Ingredients

1 1/2 tbsp. butter
1 1/2 cups light brown sugar
6 tbsp. water
Popsicle sticks
8 to 10 apples (McIntoshes work well)

Melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the brown sugar and water. Stir until it has a smooth consistency. Gently bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 3 minutes, until the pan's sides get steamy and the mixture is thin but somewhat sticky. Remove from heat. Pierce the center of each apple with a Popsicle stick, and then swirl in the caramel syrup until coated. Place apples on a greased cookie sheet to harden. Refrigerate for at least 1 to 2 hours. Serves 8 to 10.