

Facts & Fancies

Fairlawn Haven Care Center and West Haven Assisted Living



Celebrating November

Novel Writing Month

Gratitude Month

**Inspirational Role Models
Month**

All Saints' Day
November 1

Love Your Red Hair Day
November 5

World Kindness Day
November 13

Mickey Mouse Day
November 18

Thanksgiving Day: U.S.
November 22

Cider Monday
November 26

A Bunch of Hot Air

Is there any bigger spectacle than the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade marching down Broadway in New York City? And this big spectacle requires big balloons to capture the attention and dazzle the imagination of millions of onlookers.

The Thanksgiving Day parade did not always boast larger-than-life balloons. The first parade was held in 1924 when R.H. Macy & Co. decided to celebrate the opening of its new flagship store on 34th Street in Manhattan. This massive parade was not meant to celebrate Pilgrims and a feast of turkey but to usher in the Christmas shopping season. During its first three years, the parade featured live animals from the Central Park Zoo, including tigers, elephants, camels, and donkeys. However, the children lining Broadway were so scared by these beasts that parade organizers decided to feature some "lighter" entertainment: giant balloons in the shape of beloved cartoon characters.

The first inflatable star of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade was Felix the Cat, the preeminent cartoon megastar of the silent era. In those early days, the balloons were built by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Plant Company. They were not filled with helium but with air, and wranglers propped them up with long sticks. In 1929, balloons were filled with helium and wranglers had to both wrestle the gargantuan cartoons and keep their own feet firmly on the ground. Between 1929 and 1932, the balloons were released into the air at the finish of the parade. They could float to the ground anywhere in Manhattan, and the lucky ones who found them needed only to return the tag attached to the lost balloon to Macy's for a \$25 gift certificate. For over 90 years, balloons have floated through New York's skyscraper canyons. Felix the Cat has stepped aside for Raggedy Ann, Popeye, Snoopy, and current favorites like Iron Man and Pikachu, but the sense of wonder these balloons inspire carries on.

Flew the Coop

On November 24, 1971, an airline passenger traveling from Portland to Seattle handed a note to a flight attendant that read, "I have a bomb in my briefcase. I will use it if necessary. I want you to sit next to me. You are being hijacked."



So begins the legend of D.B. Cooper, the mysterious man at the center of the FBI's only unsolved case of air piracy. D.B. Cooper was not his real name. He used the name Dan Cooper to purchase the ticket but

a reporter erroneously dubbed him D.B. The crew eventually complied with Cooper's demands. They landed the plane in Seattle, where he was given \$200,000 and four parachutes. Then the jet took again to the skies with a skeleton crew headed for Reno, Nevada. But Cooper never made it to Reno. While flying over southwest Washington, the crew was alerted that the rear stairs had been opened. When they checked the back of the plane, they discovered that Cooper had jumped out, wearing a parachute and holding the \$200,000. Cooper was never seen again, and treasure hunters have scoured southwest Washington state ever since, hoping to find the loot and uncover the true identity of D.B. Cooper.

This past June, a team of FBI investigators made a startling announcement. They believed that they had finally uncovered the true identity of D.B. Cooper. After analyzing a series of letters allegedly written by Cooper in the months following the skyjacking, investigators think the thief was a Special Forces paratrooper and Vietnam veteran named Robert Rackstraw. Rackstraw was eliminated as a suspect by the FBI in 1979, yet the FBI has safeguarded evidence pointing to Rackstraw ever since. Rick Sherwood, an Army specialist in code cracking, believes that Rackstraw sent coded letters to various newspapers in the months following the heist, egging on investigators. Sherwood linked both the writing style and the codes back to other codes known to be Rackstraw's. Whether the FBI reopens the case against Rackstraw remains another mystery.

Where the Buffalo Roam

The first Saturday in November is Bison Day, a day to honor the majestic beasts of the American prairie. Many are familiar with the bison's history. Millions of bison roamed in herds in prehistoric North America, from Alaska to Mexico and from Nevada to the Appalachian mountains. Yet, by 1800, after massive overhunting and drought, only a few hundred bison remained. Thanks to herculean efforts by conservationists, the bison population has grown to 500,000, and today they can be enjoyed by visitors at parks across the plains and in the American West. The bison, often erroneously called the buffalo, is North America's largest mammal, but this is not the only reason the bison was declared the national mammal of the United States in 2016. Its history is one of the greatest conservation success stories of all time, much like that of another American symbol, the bald eagle. The bison remains a potent and enduring symbol of America and its rugged west.

Hat Trick



Don't let your head go bare on November 25—it's International Hat Day! Certainly, a baseball cap can fit the bill on this holiday, but why not explore some more exotic and symbolic fashions?

The fancy, floppy wool *beret* is instantly recognizable as French. It began as a hat worn by the poorest classes, such as farmers and artists. The wide-brimmed *sombrero* may be synonymous with Mexico, but hats like this were worn by horsemen in Mongolia as far back as the 13th century. If you feel a chill in the air, then opt for the Russian *ushanka*, the cylindrical fur hat with earflaps that can be tied up over its crown. The modern *ushanka* can be traced to the Russian Civil War when the ruler of Siberia ordered a winter hat be issued as part of the standard uniform. The *fez* of the Ottoman Empire was originally meant to be a symbol of equality and a means to show a common national identity amongst its wearers. Choose your hat wisely, for hats from any country are rich in both history and symbolism.

Lightning in a Bottle

What is the appeal of the mason jar? It conjures rustic romanticism and good, homemade food. Some even say that it captures summer in a jar, to be uncapped and enjoyed in the long, cold winter. Perhaps you'll even be inspired to preserve something tasty in a jar yourself on November 30, Mason Jar Day.



John L. Mason didn't set out to become famous when he invented the mason jar on November 30, 1858. In fact, he didn't invent the jar at all but rather the unique two-piece metal screw cap. Mason was, after all, a tinsmith, so he was well-versed in the utility

of metal. Heat-based canning as a method to preserve foods was common in kitchens prior to Mason's invention. The one problem common to this type of preservation was a faulty seal. As soon as air entered the jar or can, food began to spoil. Mason's airtight lid solved that problem beautifully, advancing the efficiency of the canning process. While his airtight lid kept food fresh, the clear glass jar made the contents appetizing.

The most popular mason jar manufactured today is the ubiquitous Ball brand jar. Ball jars were first manufactured in 1884, and today, they are created at a rate of 17 jars per second. Not only is the glass favored over plastic jars made with synthetic chemicals but these jars are also appreciated for their versatility. A mason jar is no longer singularly used to preserve foods like jam or pickles; the jars are also used as soap dispensers, planters, vases, and drinking glasses—not just for moonshine but for trendy cocktails.

A mason jar is as authentic a piece of Americana as a cowboy hat. Collectors even seek out rare and valuable mason jar specimens. The Universal jar is worth thousands. Produced in Buffalo in 1937, only 50 were ever manufactured. Even more highly prized is the extremely rare Buffalo jar made in amber glass by the Ball company, of which only four are known to exist. From the mundane to the magnificent, mason jars have captured both food and the public's imagination for over a century.

Noteworthy Notaries

You may not appreciate them until you need something notarized, but notaries can stand up and be recognized for their contributions to society on November 7, Notary Public Day. What is a notary public? A notary is a state government official whose job it is to maintain integrity. They act as an official witness during the signing of official documents as a means of thwarting fraud. Their duty is to screen signers by verifying their true identity. They also make sure people know what they are signing and that people aren't being forced to sign documents against their will. Notary publics often take center stage during many of life's important moments: signing papers to buy a house, granting power of attorney, even verifying college transcripts. Officials have carried this capacity since ancient Egypt when *sesh*, or scribes, acted as official witnesses and chroniclers of the pharaoh's bureaucracy. Today, anyone can become a notary public and, hence, a valued public servant for the community.

Easy-Baked Success



If only baking in a real oven was as delightful as baking in an Easy-Bake Oven. Enjoy the simplicity of baking in this child's toy on November 4, Easy-Bake Oven Day. In 1963, the first

Easy-Bake Oven was introduced in November just in time for the Christmas shopping season. Inventor Ronald Howes' idea was simple: create an oven that can be used by kids that looks just like Mom's oven. He was inspired by a visit to New York City, where he witnessed chestnut vendors cooking their nuts on what seemed like every street corner. His new toy used just two incandescent lightbulbs to generate enough heat (about 350°) to bake small brownies and cakes. In those first couple of months, the Kenner toy company sold 500,000 Easy-Bake Ovens, despite the price tag of \$15.95, which would be almost \$100 by today's standards. In 1963, it must have been a small price to pay for real home-baked goodies.

Champion of Chimpanzees



Jane Goodall had no formal training in animal behavior or anthropology when she ventured into the African jungle in Tanzania, East Africa. She simply wanted to observe chimpanzees in the wild. What she discovered on November 4, 1960, changed the way humans view animals forever. For the first time, a human witnessed another animal use a tool of any kind. In this case, a chimp used a twig to extract termites from their mounds. Humans are called *Homo sapiens*, which means “man the toolmaker.” Goodall’s discovery forced the scientific world to reconsider the idea that tool-making is not unique to humans.

As in 1960, Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania is still the best place to observe chimpanzees in their natural environment. Today, visitors are able to observe the three amazing discoveries that Goodall recorded in her research: (1) that chimpanzees are not herbivores but omnivores, (2) that chimps make their own tools, and (3) that chimps use these tools. In fact, chimps use an entire toolkit to help them accomplish tasks. Stone hammers are used to crack open nuts. Heavy sticks chisel holes into termite mounds. Blades of stiff grass are chewed until frayed at the end to better extract the termites. Chimps will even chew up leaves into a spongy mass and then use the sponge to soak up hard-to-reach water, which they then suck dry. Much like their human cousins, these clever animals have even been known to fashion sharp spear-like tools to hunt small animals.

When the famed paleoanthropologist Louis Leakey became aware of Goodall’s discovery, he said, “Now we must redefine *tool*, or redefine *man*, or accept chimpanzees as human.” Other scientists were not as accepting. Some even went so far as to suggest that Goodall had taught the chimps how to use tools. But after a lifetime of being a champion of chimpanzees, there may be no better-known chimp expert than Jane Goodall, who at her start, wanted nothing more than to be alone with the chimps.

November Birthdays

In astrology, Scorpios are those born between November 1–21. Scorpios are passionate and deep, qualities that help them counsel others in meaningful ways. Resourceful and determined, Scorpios make good managers. Those born between November 22–30 are Archers of Sagittarius. These open-minded travelers are in constant motion, searching the globe for meaning. Curious, optimistic, and enthusiastic, they are not afraid of change and treasure freedom.

Daniel Boone (frontiersman) – November 2, 1734
Roy Rogers (cowboy) – November 5, 1911
Carl Sagan (astronomer) – November 9, 1934
Grace Kelly (actress) – November 12, 1929
Robert Fulton (inventor) – November 14, 1765
Rock Hudson (actor) – November 17, 1925
Chester Gould (cartoonist) – November 20, 1900
Jamie Lee Curtis (actress) – November 22, 1958
Joe DiMaggio (athlete) – November 25, 1914
Tina Turner (singer) – November 26, 1939
Randy Newman (singer) – November 28, 1943
Samuel Clemens (writer) – November 30, 1835

Hockey’s First Masked Man



Jacques Plante was a goaltender for the Montreal Canadiens, an All-Star, and a six-time Stanley Cup champion, yet perhaps his greatest contribution to the sport was the hockey mask he invented.

In 1956, Plante had a sinusitis operation and so invented a mask to protect his face during hockey practices. His coach, Toe Blake, believed Plante’s vision would be impaired and forbade him to wear it during games. But on November 1, 1959, Plante’s nose was struck and broken by a puck. He was taken to the locker room for evaluation, and when he returned to the ice, he was wearing the same crude mask he had worn those years before. Coach Blake insisted he ditch the mask, but Plante refused. When the team went on an 18-game win streak, the mask was allowed to stay. Thanks to Plante, goaltenders ever since have enjoyed the added protection.