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The Philippines: “Pearl of the Orient”



The Philippine Islands became a Spanish colony during the 16th century. Following the Spanish-American War in 1898, they were ceded to the United States. The Filipinos conducted an insurgency against U.S. rule from 1899-1902, although some fighting continued in outlying islands as late as 1913. In 1935, the Philippines became a self-governing commonwealth. Manuel Quezon was elected president and was tasked with preparing the country for independence after a 10-year transition. The islands fell under Japanese occupation during World War II, and US forces and Filipinos fought together during 1944-45 to regain control. On July 4, 1946, the Republic of the Philippines attained its independence.

Head of State: President Ferdinand “BongBong” Marcos, Jr.

Capital City: Manila • **Population:** 118m • **Currency:** Pesos-PHP

Fun Facts About the Philippines

Philippines has 7641 islands – making it one of the largest archipelagos globally. Surprisingly, more than 5,000 of these islands remain unnamed on most international maps, waiting to be discovered. **It is an Asian nation that is predominantly Christian.** More than 86% of the population identifies as Roman Catholic and religion is still a big influence in the country.

The largest and most expensive pearl in the world was found in the Philippines! It was found in Palawan, weighing a staggering 75 pounds and valued at an astonishing \$100 million.

Filipinos celebrate Christmas longer than you think! The Philippines take Christmas celebrations to the next level. Beginning in September, celebrations last until the “Feast of the Three Kings,” in January. The festive atmosphere includes decorations and numerous parties.

The Philippines is known as the texting capital of the world, with approximately 400 million text messages sent daily, equating to around 142 billion texts per year.

Philippines has some delicious and unique delicacies that you should try! Filipinos are known for their creativity in the kitchen, whipping up unique dishes enjoyed by many across the globe. *They have adobo, sinigang, bibingka, puto bumbong, sisig, lechon, menudo, and more!*

Tarsier, one of the world’s smallest primates, can only be found in the Philippines. It is known for its enormous eyes relative to its body size, aiding in night vision. **Fertilized duck embryo is the famous street snack.** Filipinos enjoy eating it. They call it ‘balut’.

The Philippines is known as the largest supplier of nurses to the world, with over 25% of all overseas nurses. **Philippines is the only country** where the flag is flown upside down to indicate the state of war.

The Philippines is the second largest producer of coconut products in the world. Locally known as *buko*, coconut is a top export product of the Philippines. Each year, the country produces and ships more than 19.50 million tons of coconuts to buyers worldwide.

The SM Supermalls, two of the world’s largest shopping malls are located in the Philippines, offering clients incredible shopping and leisure experiences. The SM Megamall,” with a total floor area of over 5.5 million sq. ft., is located in Mandaluyong city, while Pasay City, is the home of the “SM Shopping Center of Asia”, with more than 4.4 million sq. ft., of retail space.

The Philippines founded Asia’s first basketball league, the Philippines Basketball Association, in 1975, making basketball a beloved sport in the country. However, **boxing is one of the most popular sports in the Philippines.** Manny Pacquiao, one of the world’s greatest professional boxers, hails from the Philippines. Interestingly, crime rates in Manila reportedly drop to zero during his matches.

The Philippines has the largest underground river. Many people visit the Philippines because of its cultural history of famous water bodies. In fact, this nation is home to the largest underground river. It is in the Puerta Princesa Subterranean River National Park.

The word, “November”, is derived from the Latin word “novem” meaning “nine” because it was the ninth month of the Roman calendar, and December, derived from the Latin word “decem” meaning “ten”, was originally the tenth month. January and February were added when the Gregorian calendar was introduced in 1582, and the anomaly of the names for the last two months of the year has existed ever since.

November marks the beginning of the winter holiday season, and it has become a social time of community suppers, Thanksgiving feasts, and general elections.

Our featured country this month is The Philippines. We are certain that you’ll enjoy learning a few fun facts about the Pearl of the Orient. We welcome Ms. Viktoria Riley, Honorary Consul of Sweden in Miami to our community and congratulate our new Protocol Officer – Axel Tullmann for receiving the October 2024 Miami-Dade Aviation Department’s Employee of the Month Award.

We salute the nations celebrating their Independence or National Day this month. As the holiday season approaches, we take a moment to express our sincere gratitude to our readers and well-wishers for their continued support, partnership, and collaboration. Your trust means the world to us, and it’s our pleasure working with you. We wish you all the best for the holidays. As always, please be safe.

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DIPLOMATIC & CONSULAR RELATIONS

Meet Sweden's new Honorary Consul in Miami, Florida



Ms. Vicktoria Riley was appointed Honorary Consul of Sweden to the State of Florida in October 2024. She is the Director of The Ocean Club, a Four Seasons Resort on Paradise Island in The Bahamas. Her vibrant, welcoming personality and big vision have set the stage for The Ocean Club's successes during her tenure with the legendary Caribbean resort, which had banner years in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Ms. Riley spearheaded much of the Resort's growth since 2016, including reopening post-renovations, navigating through the pandemic and the Resort's one-of-a-kind 60th anniversary celebration.

The Resort was featured in the 2006 James Bond film *Casino Royale* - with scenes filmed on the Resort's front drive, in the Martini Bar, in the four-bedroom Villa Residence, and by the Versailles Pool. For a marketing leader, exposure does not get much better than being featured in a blockbuster movie. Ms. Riley is proud of collaborating with the esteemed publishing house Assouline, on the Resort's first ever custom coffee table book, *The Ocean Club*.

Ms. Riley was born and raised in Sweden, where her family still lives, and keeps her heritage close by staying active with the local Swedish Community in South Florida through the Swedish American Chamber of Commerce (SACC) and the nonprofit Swedish Women's Educational Association (SWEA). She has served as President of the SWEA Florida Chapter since 2020, and as a member since 2005. In 2022, she chaired the global SWEA World Meeting, welcoming 200 SWEA chapters. In 2023, Riley stepped down from the SWEA board and took on the role of Vice President for SACC-Florida. Since 2024, she serves as President of the SACC Florida Chapter supported by a strong board and advisory board.

A travel industry and luxury hotel specialist, she brings more than 27 years of leisure and hospitality experience. She has headed the Marketing Division of The Ocean Club under the Four Seasons flag since November 2017, when the Resort transitioned from One&Only, where Riley was Director of Sales & Marketing since June 2016. Previously, Ms. Riley opened the North American Global Sales Office for Minor Hotel Group, and before moving to the United States, she served as Cluster Director of Sales & Marketing for Anantara Phuket Mai Khao Villas and Anantara Phuket Layan Resort & Residences, two luxury boutique resorts in Thailand affiliated with Virtuoso, among others. She has held leadership positions with Marriott International Inc., Starwood Hotels & Resorts, and Meliá International amongst others in Europe, North America, Asia and the Caribbean. Throughout her career, she has had the opportunity to work with people of different cultures from around the world, including esteemed dignitaries, celebrities, royal families, and other distinguished world leaders. She and her husband, Robert, reside in Wellington, Florida, along with their beloved rescue dogs, Jackie, a Chihuahua Corgi mix and Lily, a Maltese Poodle Havanese mix, who joined the family in March.

In her spare time, Ms. Riley loves to support Big Dog Ranch Rescue, traveling, cooking, shopping, and visiting her stepdaughter, Alyssa, and grandson Carsten, in Arizona. She and Robert also love to entertain and host parties. When she's not cooking, shopping, or hosting guests, Ms. Riley is likely to be seen at a Swedish community event in South Florida, traveling to The Bahamas, or visiting her homeland of Sweden.

She received her education in Social Science, at Lund University, Sweden. She is fluent in English, Swedish, and Danish; moderate in German, Spanish, and Hungarian. An avid shoe and purse collector, Ms. Riley has a strong love of fashion and is always dressed to impress. Suffice to say, for Riley, as Director of Marketing of The Ocean Club, the shoe fits and she wears it well.

Protocol Officer Axel Tullmann garners MDAD's October 2024 "Employee of the Month"



L-R: U. Desmond Alufohai, MDAD's Director & CEO, Ralph Cutié, and Protocol Officer Axel Tullmann.

On Friday, August 30th a distressed passenger was found at the Concourse E Information Counter. The gentleman was in a wheelchair with his luggage scattered around him. He spoke very little English. Upon further investigation it was determined that he had been stranded at the airport for the last 4 days, and due to his poor health, he was not allowed to board his international flight.

Customer Service and Terminal Operations personnel tried to assist the passenger but were unable to get him onto his original flight. When Officer Tullmann observed the situation at the check-in counter, he intervened. He approached several airlines, trying to arrange a new flight for the passenger, but his initial attempts were unsuccessful. While trying to resolve the situation, Axel stayed with the distressed passenger and took him to lunch at the Burger King. At the end of his shift, he notified the senior agent on duty about the passenger's dilemma and requested permission to stay for the next shift to continue assisting him.

Eventually, Axel and senior agent Michael Casellas, used the Airport gym to shower the passenger and dress him in clean clothing. They then used their own funds to purchase a new ticket with a different airline and successfully boarded the passenger to his final destination.

Mr. Tullman received the employee recognition from Mr. Ralph Cutié during the Rewards & Recognition ceremony held at MIA's Consular Lounge.

DIPLOMATIC & CONSULAR RELATIONS

The Future of Diplomacy in a Changing World of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The [integration of AI in diplomacy](#) brings with it exciting prospects but also significant risks that could compromise the very essence of diplomatic practice, writes the Graduate Institute's Dr Jérôme Duberry. From the corridors of the Palais des Nations in Geneva to bustling embassies around the world, diplomats are increasingly relying on artificial intelligence (AI) to implement foreign policy, with a range of services and routine operations opening up to the prospect of AI. [AI diplomacy encompasses artificial intelligence](#) at the intersection of geopolitics, diplomacy, and international relations. Advanced AI capabilities confer military, economic, and societal power to nations. Diplomatic agendas now include negotiations on AI-related agreements and treaties. AI also serves as a practical tool in diplomacy, aiding decision-making, drafting, translation, negotiation, and trend analysis.

As AI increasingly influences [international relations](#), it necessitates greater scrutiny due to its potential to shape the global agenda, alter geostrategic dynamics, and pose challenges and opportunities for human rights protection. AI is an umbrella term that refers to several technologies. There are many definitions, but for simplification, we'll refer to it here as "a system's ability to [correctly interpret external data](#), to learn from such data, and to use those learnings to achieve specific goals and tasks through flexible adaptation." AI holds significant potential in various government sectors such as education, transportation, telecommunications, data security and management, finance, healthcare, law and justice, to name a few.

Enhancing Efficiency and Decision-Making

AI is set to revolutionize various aspects of diplomatic practice, making it more efficient and informed. Here are some keyways AI is impacting diplomacy:

[Data Analysis and Trend Forecasting](#): AI can analyze large datasets to identify trends, predict future developments, and provide insights into geopolitical dynamics. This capability helps diplomats make informed policy decisions by processing vast amounts of information more efficiently than human analysts.

[Language Translation and Communication](#): Tools like Google's language-translating glasses can smooth negotiations by reducing the need for live language interpreters, enabling seamless communication across different languages ^[1].

[Simulation and Scenario Testing](#): AI allows diplomats to simulate negotiations and test various positions and scenarios quickly and at a lower cost, helping them prepare for real-world negotiations more effectively. AI systems can also provide real-time, data-informed counsel during negotiations, assisting negotiators with complex questions and scenarios, such as IBM's Cognitive Trade Advisor that demonstrated its utility in trade negotiations.

Public Diplomacy and Information Management

AI is also transforming public diplomacy by enhancing the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information:

[Sentiment Analysis and Media Monitoring](#): AI tools can analyze how foreign media portray a country's national interests and help diplomats understand prevailing perceptions and reactions to national policies. This allows for more targeted and effective public diplomacy efforts. AI can also streamline the curation of internal information collections, including diplomatic documents, media summaries, and intelligence briefings, freeing public diplomacy officers to focus on building relationships with key audiences.

Citizen Engagement and Transparency

AI facilitates greater citizen engagement and transparency in diplomatic processes:

[Citizen Input and Feedback](#): Platforms like Indonesia's UKP4 allow citizens to submit complaints and feedback, which can be analyzed by AI to provide real-time insights for policymakers. While AI introduces risks such as bias and opacity, it also offers tools to identify and combat misinformation and manipulation. Ensuring transparency and accountability in AI-driven decision-making is crucial to maintaining the integrity of diplomatic processes. ^[2]

Challenges and Risks

Despite the benefits, the integration of AI into diplomacy comes with significant challenges and risks:

[Bias and Neutrality](#): AI systems can make skewed decisions if trained on biased data, which can compromise the neutrality and fairness of diplomatic decisions. The increased reliance on AI makes diplomatic systems more vulnerable to cyberattacks, highlighting the need for robust cybersecurity measures. The delegation of decisions to opaque AI systems could lead to an algorithmic system, where computer-coded algorithms structure and manipulate human behavior, potentially compromising the essence of diplomatic practice.

Future Vision and Adaptation

As AI continues to shape diplomacy, several key considerations emerge:

[Human Oversight and Adaptation](#): While AI will enhance human diplomacy, it will not replace it. Diplomats need to adapt to new AI-driven tools and ensure that human oversight and judgment remain integral to the decision-making process. ^[3] The absence of common global technical standards and a unified regulatory framework for AI in diplomacy adds uncertainty. Establishing clear guidelines and standards is essential to mitigate risks and ensure ethical use. Also, diplomats need training to effectively use AI tools, understand their limitations, and navigate the ethical and security implications of AI integration. ^[4]

Sources: (1), (2), (3), and (4).

Important Social Decorum - Rules to Know

Social decorum is the knowable and often unwritten rulebook setting down appropriate social behavior and propriety—it's all about etiquette and good manners. Behavior that is calm, steady, courteous, and kind is the language of self-command.

My Rules of Social Decorum

We comply with formal and informal rules and procedures as we get along with others and build personal and professional relationships. One way to look at the whole process is to think of yourself as building social capital. What rules help you navigate social situations and foster positive relationships? I have found that creating a list of self-imposed guidelines helps me know what to do when I might otherwise lose confidence, freeze or become tongue-tied in a social environment.

My Top Fifteen List of Rules of Social Decorum:

- * Pay attention to where you are and what your purpose is in being there.
- * Your best handshake begins when webs touch.
- * Do not interrupt another person when that person is talking. If you do, interrupt yourself and say, "I'm sorry; please do go on."
- * When you disagree, stay calm. Do not become negative or emotional.
- * When you invite others to dinner, inquire about their dietary restrictions and preferences.
- * Use appropriate language for the situation you are in.
- * Make sure that what you wear fits the situation.
- * Check your attitude before entering the company of others and employ your pleasing personality.
- * Aim for humility and forgive yourself when you fail at it.
- * With your inward compass set for refinement, Improve yourself daily.
- * Always be ready to help someone save their face!
- * Say, "Excuse me; Thank you," while moving through a crowd.
- * Work at remembering people's names and asking for a refresh when your mind has misplaced one.
- * Holding a door for others if you're the first one there.
- * Always ask yourself in situations that you aren't sure about, "What would be most etiquette-full to say right now?"

Putting the Rules in Action

Social decorum involves knowing the right and wrong times to do or say something. We teach children that it is okay to feel many things, but not okay to hurt others by blurting them out when with friends or family. An attitude of helpfulness is the best assistance for navigating social decorum. Imagining how another person feels and doing what you can to make them feel comfortable and uplifted in each moment is always the goal.

Building networks of social relationships helps us have a sense of belonging. Your encouraging nature will serve you, as others will perceive you in a good light and treat you well. You are creating lasting impressions that establish trust and reliance. The most interesting thing of all is that aiming to be the best you can be in all social situations helps others to act as their better selves, too.

Source: [Etiquette for the Business of Life](#)

New automatic airline refund rules are now in effect — here's what's covered

The [U.S. Department of Transportation's new rules](#) mandating automatic refunds for significantly delayed or canceled flights are in effect just in time for the holiday travel season. While these changes don't significantly change what you're entitled to, they provide clarity and should make it easier to receive refunds for flight cancellations and significant delays. It can still make sense to have supplemental [travel insurance](#) or pay with a [travel credit card](#) with built-in insurance benefits to ensure you're fully covered. Here's what you need to know about the new rules and how you'll be impacted.

When airlines owe you a refund

The new rules make it easier for you to get your money back because they require airlines to automatically provide prompt cash refunds when you're entitled to one. The new guidelines strictly define prompt as seven business days for credit card purchases and 20 calendar days if you used any other form of payment. You'll receive the full amount you paid minus any portion of the travel you've already used. The refund must be in cash or made to the original form of payment (credit card, miles, etc.).

You're entitled to an automatic refund if you don't accept alternative transportation options offered by the airline or travel credits when one of the following happens:

- * Your flight is canceled
- * Your domestic flight is delayed by three hours or more
- * Your international flight is delayed by six hours or more
- * Your departure or arrival airport changes
- * The number of connections increases
- * Your cabin class has been downgraded
- * A change in aircraft or connecting airport is "less accessible or accommodating" to your disability

You're also entitled to a refund if you pay for an additional service such as inflight [Wi-Fi](#) or seat selection, and the airline fails to provide the service. [Checked bag fees](#) are refundable when your baggage is delayed by:

- * 12 or more hours for a domestic flight
- * 15 to 30 hours for an international flight (depending on the length of the flight)

When airlines don't owe you a refund

If you purchased a non-refundable ticket and your flight delay doesn't qualify as "significant" under the new guidelines, the airline isn't required to provide you with a refund. In the U.S., airlines also aren't required to refund you for delays that are considered uncontrollable. You typically won't be eligible for a refund for unsatisfactory service or delays caused by: Personal reasons (sickness, late for your flight, etc.), weather or natural disasters, air traffic, and Safety or security issues.

Airlines aren't required to reimburse you for incidental expenses you incur because of a delay, such as meals and lodging. However, depending on the situation and the airline, they may provide meals or hotel vouchers or reimburse you for additional expenses you incur. So be sure to reach out to the airline as soon as possible if your flight is delayed or canceled.

Source: [CNBC.com](#)

BRIEFS & NOTES

This Is What the “O” in “O’clock” Stands For by Jo Ann Liguori

In today’s fast-moving world, it can be tough to keep up with all the new words we read or hear. But what about the words we use every day without a second thought? Take the term **o’clock**, for instance. Have you ever asked yourself: **What does the “o” in o’clock stand for?**

The punctuation mark after the o and before the clock signifies that something is missing—the apostrophe is taking the place of one (or more) words or letters. But which words or letters got the boot at some point in history? I talked to two linguists to find out.

What does the “o” in o’clock stand for?

Though some folks think that the o in o’clock stands for “on the,” it comes from the phrase of the clock. When we use the word o’clock, we’re saying that it’s a particular hour “according to the clock.” For example, “it’s almost 4 o’clock” means the same thing as “it is almost 4 according to the clock.”

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the phrase of the clock can trace its origin back to 1384. This coincides with the growing popularity of mechanical clocks in Europe, the first of which were thought to have been built between 1270 and 1300 in northern Italy and southern Germany. Before this, time was often measured by sundials or shadow clocks. As clocks became more prevalent, of the clock became a standard way to indicate time.

Why did people start shortening this phrase?

These days no one says, “I’ll meet you at 6 of the clock.” We say, “See ya at 6 o’clock.” The Oxford English Dictionary cites 1419 as the first known use of the contraction o’clock, just a few decades after the debut of the phrase of the clock. So how did of the clock morph into o’clock? As they do with many cumbersome words and phrases, people naturally shortened of the clock to o’clock for quicker and easier communication. “Because it’s a set phrase for telling time, it’s not surprising that it got shortened over time because we’re saying it fast,” says Anne Curzan, PhD, a professor of English, linguistics and education at the University of Michigan.

As Michael Adams, PhD, a professor of English and linguistics at Indiana University, explains, the abbreviation makes sense when you understand how the English language evolves. “It’s unusual for English speakers to retain a lot of words in unstressed positions in a phrase,” he says. “In ‘1 of the clock,’ you’ve got two unstressed words there: the of and the the. And it is an invitation to a type of abbreviation. So it’s not ‘1 of the clock’ but ‘1 o’clock.’ You get that nice alternating rhythm there, which is so typical of the cadence of English.” As literacy increased and written language became more standardized, the shortened form o’clock took hold. “Part of what you have here is that, because these are early enough, the spelling comes to reflect the pronunciation,” adds Curzan.

Where does the clock in o’clock come from?

Now that you know what the o in o’clock stands for, you may wonder where the clock comes from. Here’s a fascinating fact for you: It has roots in Christianity. See, the earliest mechanical clocks were in church towers and indicated the time by striking a bell, calling worshippers to Mass or prayer. The Latin word for bell is *clocca*. Sound familiar? So, people referred to time in terms of chimes. “If you are a monk or a nun, you think of time in terms of bells because the bells will toll, and if it’s nine bells, then you know where you’re supposed to be praying or singing hymns,” says Adams.

Eventually, smaller clocks became popular, and more homes could afford them. And many of those timepieces (grandfather clocks or spring-run clocks) employed a bell that would chime on the quarter hour, half hour or hour. “So, the bell doesn’t go away,” says Adams. “The word for bell gets adopted for the thing that tells the time. And then suddenly we’re using the word clock in English.”

What are some fun variants of the phrase?

The standard way to state a precise time is by putting a number in front of o’clock. But according to Curzan, by the mid-1800s, you could put a word in front of o’clock as an informal indication of the time of an event. “So, this is when you’ll start to see ‘dinner o’clock,’ ” she says. Though Curzan says the phrase wine o’clock is new, the Oxford English Dictionary cites this example from a 1910 San Francisco Chronicle article: “I’ve been here ever since beer o’clock.”

Here are some other fun expressions that describe time based on an activity or even emotion: Nap o’clock, Brunch o’clock, Self-care o’clock, Party o’clock, Movie o’clock, and Stupid o’clock.

What are other uses for o’clock?

Today we ask each other, “What time is it?” In the past, according to Curzan, you could have asked, “What o’clock is it?” We probably don’t have to tell you that you won’t find that use in the dictionary anymore. It’s now obsolete. But there are other uses of o’clock that have stuck around. “Something that we still do today, which we have recorded back to the 1700s, is using ‘x o’clock’ in terms of directions,” says Curzan. Say you want to alert your friend that her boss is in the restaurant. You could say, “He’s with the woman in the green dress,” or you could say, “He’s at 9 o’clock.” We also drive with our hands on the steering wheel in the 10 and 2 o’clock positions, “which makes no sense unless you know how we’re using those to orient,” she adds.

Source: [Reader’s Digest](#)

BRIEFS & NOTES

November is Aviation History Month



November marks **Aviation History Month**, a holiday mainly celebrated in America that is dedicated to learning about the history of aircraft. The celebratory month began as a single day, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt set **August 19th as Aviation History Day** in 1939. However, with the industry's expansion and numerous technological advancements, the holiday was eventually extended to a full month.

Aviation History Month celebrates the remarkable achievements in aviation and honors the pioneers who made flying possible. People celebrate this month to recognize progress in aviation technology. This celebration also emphasizes the importance of aviation in connecting people globally.

[According to nationaltoday.com](https://www.nationaltoday.com), aviation "started in 350 B.C. when the Chinese began making kites using bamboo frames covered in paper and silk." Watching objects, they had created take to the skies, humans were inspired and determined to lift themselves into the air.

We can attribute the modern aviation technologies of parachutes and helicopters to Leonardo da Vinci's early designs, leading to the first version of the glider in 1799, built by Englishman Sir George Cayley. Of course, aviation as we know it didn't truly "take flight" until the early 20th century.

In December of 1903, the famed **Wright brothers Orville and Wilbur** "succeeded in flying the first free, controlled flight of a power-driven, heavier than airplane" when "Wilbur flew their plane for 59 seconds, over a distance of 852 feet". Just 11 years later, the first commercial flight would be made between St. Petersburg and Tampa. Only a few years after the **Wright Brothers** succeeded with their invention, aircraft became more commonplace and many of the names we associate with early flight entered the industry.

Frenchwoman **Raymonde de Laroche** became the first licensed female pilot on March 8th of 1910, and **Amelia Earhart** became a true American trailblazer for women in the aviation industry, after completing the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1932. The first woman to successfully circumnavigate the globe was **Geraldine Mock**. In 1964, Jerrie Mock completed her feat in twenty-nine days, eleven hours, and fifty-nine minutes. She flew a Cessna 180 named the "Spirit of Columbus."

In 1916, the French instated the first African American pilot, an American-born military man named **Eugene Jacques Bullard**. Almost 40 years after Bullard's flight, and in response to early signs of another World War, President Theodore Roosevelt announced that the U.S. Army Air Corps (AAC), now called the U.S. Air Force, would train Black pilots after much urging by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Soon after, the AAC instated the "**Tuskegee Experiment**," training around 1,000 pilots and "nearly 14,000 navigators, bombardiers, instructors, aircraft and engine mechanics, control tower operators and other maintenance and support staff" at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama.

This highly decorated group eventually called the **Tuskegee Airmen**, defied racist thoughts that people of color couldn't learn to pilot aircrafts. Collectively, the Airmen earned over 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, flew in over 15,000 deployments in two years in combat, and "destroyed or damaged 36 German planes in the air and 237 on the ground, as well as nearly 1,000 rail cars and transport vehicles and a German destroyer."

In summary, Aviation History Month honors achievements and progress made in flight. The celebration remains an important part of recognizing aviation's role in modern society. Fast, safe, and efficient air travel connects people worldwide. The celebration highlights these vital contributions.

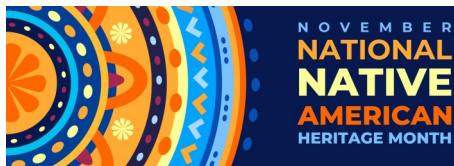
Here are some other notable events in the history of aviation:

- * **15th century**: Leonardo da Vinci created the first drafts for a rational aircraft in his paintings.
- * **1647**: Tito Livio Burattini developed a model aircraft with four pairs of glider wings.
- * **1903**: Orville Wright made the first sustained, powered flight in a plane he built with his brother Wilbur.
- * **1926**: Robert H. Goddard made the first free flight of a liquid-fueled rocket.
- * **1927**: Charles Lindbergh completed his solo transatlantic flight.
- * **1930**: Frank Whittle invented the jet engine.

Sources: [History of aviation](#); [Wright Brothers](#); [From Wright Brothers to Jet Age: Evolution of Aviation History](#).

BRIEFS & NOTES

National Native American Heritage Month, 2024



For almost one hundred years, Americans, both Indian and non-Indian, have urged that there be a permanently designated place on the calendar to honor the contributions, achievements, sacrifices, and cultural and historical legacy of the original inhabitants of what is now the United States and their descendants: the American Indian and Alaska Native people. The quest for a national honoring of Native Americans began in the early 20th Century as a private effort. As far back as the late 1970s, Congress has enacted legislation, and subsequent presidents have issued annual proclamations designating a day, a week, or a month to celebrate and commemorate the Nation's American Indian and Alaska Native heritage. In 2009, Congress passed, and the President signed legislation establishing the Friday following Thanksgiving Day of each year as "Native American Heritage Day."

The first time an American Indian Day was formally designated in the U.S. may have been in 1916 when the governor of New York fixed the second Saturday in May for his state's observance. Several states celebrated the fourth Friday in September as American Indian Day. In 1919, the Illinois state legislature enacted a bill doing so. In Massachusetts, the governor issued a proclamation, following a 1935 law, naming the day that would become American Indian Day in any given year. In 1968, California Governor Ronald Reagan signed a resolution designating the fourth Friday in September as American Indian Day and in 1998, the State Assembly enacted legislation creating Native American Day as an official state holiday. In 1989, the South Dakota state legislature passed a bill proclaiming 1990 as the "Year of Reconciliation" between American Indian and White citizens. According to that act, South Dakota Governor George Mickelson designated Columbus Day as American Indian Day, making it a state-sanctioned holiday.

1992 – The Year of the American Indian

The 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the western hemisphere in 1492 was the occasion for national and local celebrations. However, for Native people, it was an occasion they could neither fully embrace nor participate in. Congress acknowledged their concerns regarding the Columbus Quincentennial by enacting Senate Joint Resolution 217 (Pub. L. 102-188), which designated 1992 as the "Year of the American Indian." It was signed by President George H.W. Bush on December 4, 1991. According to that act, President Bush issued on March 2, 1992, Proclamation 6407 announcing 1992 as the "Year of the American Indian." The American Indian response to the anniversary was marked by public protests. Yet, it also was seen by many in that community as a unique, year-long opportunity to hold public education events, commemorations of ancestral sacrifices and contributions to America, and celebrations for the survival of Native peoples over five centuries. In 1976, the United States bicentennial year, Congress passed a resolution authorizing President Ford to proclaim a week in October as "Native American Awareness Week." On October 8, 1976, he issued his presidential proclamation doing so. Since then, Congress and the President have observed a day, a week, or a month in honor of the American Indian and Alaska Native people. While the proclamations do not set a national theme for the observance, they allow each federal department and agency to develop ways of celebrating and honoring the Nation's Native American heritage. [Click here to view President Biden's Proclamation on national Native American Heritage Month, 2024.](#)

Source: [U.S. Department of Interior](#)

November is "Movember," "No Shave November," "International Men's Day," & "National Play Day with Dad"



You may have heard of the terms "[Movember](#)" or "No Shave November" when the month of November comes around, and many believe it simply revolves around the amusing challenge of men not shaving/growing out their facial hair in its entirety until the end of the month. But the true origin of this "challenge" has much more significance and is in conjunction with other meaningful annual awareness campaigns that also take place in November highlighting the importance of men prioritizing their physical and mental health, and the crucial role that men play today in promoting gender equality and fostering a positive impact as role models for future generations. Movember – a combination of the words 'Moustache' and 'November' – originated in 2003 in Australia when two male friends, while speaking about bringing back the dying trend of the mustache and inspired by the efforts of a friend's mother in fundraising for breast cancer, decided to take the initiative in inviting other male friends to grow out their mustache as a challenge and, at the same time, spread awareness about men's health issues such as prostate cancer. Eventually, the campaign became so successful that it became a global foundation in more than 21 countries focusing on key issues such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, poor mental health, and poor physical inactivity.

Similarly, [No Shave November](#) began in 2009, when the Hill family launched No Shave November to honor their father, Matthew Hill, who lost his battle with colon cancer in 2007. The 8 children of the Chicago native father decided to do something in his memory by asking family members and friends to stop shaving/spending money on hair products for 1-month and instead [donate the money saved to support cancer research and patients](#). This later developed into a non-profit organization launched in 2009 and has since then grown into a worldwide movement that advocates for both men and women not to shave nor cut their hair to raise awareness of the importance of cancer prevention and early detection and promote fundraising efforts to collect donations for patient care. Another and less talked about event takes place in November as well – November 19th as "[International Men's Day](#) (IMD)." Though not officially a United Nations-recognized international day, the day has come to symbolize the celebration of male role models who have made a positive impact in our daily lives (fathers, uncles, brothers, etc.) and bring into focus the stigma that men face in openly addressing their physical and mental well-being. Consequently, the themes revolving around this year's IMD are 'Men's Health Champions' and 'Positive Male Role Models. November 25th also observes "[National Play Day with Dad](#)" every year since 2008, with the idea of encouraging fathers to be more actively involved in the lives of their children, through play.

BRIEFS & NOTES

Homelessness Awareness Month



November is National Homelessness Awareness Month and National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) works in partnership with federal, state, local partners, and national experts to provide training on housing, treatment and recovery models. The training is focused on adults, children, and families who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have serious mental illness and/or serious emotional disturbance, and substance use. These partnerships contribute to housing stability, recovery, and ending homelessness. SAMHSA also supports the field through technical assistance to states and localities, treatment systems and individual providers on these issues.

While the numbers vary widely depending on the definitions being used to count, over [1.2 million school-aged children](#) were identified as experiencing homelessness during the 2021-2022 school year. Hundreds of thousands more very young children also experience homelessness every year. These numbers are not improving; recent news headlines from around the U.S., in big cities, small towns, and everywhere in between, are reporting record numbers of children and families experiencing homelessness.

According to the [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD), a record number of people are currently unhoused in the U.S. Several factors are driving this increase, such as rising housing costs, surging immigration, and the end of many COVID-19 relief programs. HUD's 2023 [Annual Homelessness Assessment Report](#) (AHAR) found that more than 650,000 people in America lack permanent shelters. That represents the most documented homeless individuals since the inaugural report produced in 2007 and reflects a 12 percent increase over 2022.

Key Findings:

- * 653,104 people experienced homelessness in the U.S. in 2023. That number represents a record-high tally and a 12 percent increase over 2022.
- * 111,620 children were without homes in America last year.
- * Homelessness increased in 41 states between 2022 and 2023, with New Hampshire, New Mexico, and New York having the highest percentage increases.
- * New York, Vermont, and Oregon had the highest per-capita rates of homelessness in 2023.
- * More than one-half of America's homeless individuals reside in the nation's 50 largest cities. New York City and Los Angeles alone contain one-quarter of the country's unhoused people.
- * Every ethnic group endured an increase in homelessness last year. The Asian community experienced the most significant percentage increase (64 percent), while Hispanics/Latinos saw the most significant surge in raw numbers (an additional 39,106 people).

While language around homelessness is shifting, with terms like unhoused or houseless becoming more commonly used, for kids and families, 75% or more are housed yet still homeless, living "doubled up" with others or staying in motels. As the advocacy organization [SchoolHouse Connection](#) explains, "Phrases like 'houseless' and 'unhoused' contribute to the misconception that if people have roofs over their heads, they are not experiencing homelessness." Because they are not easily visible or not perceived as "homeless," families experiencing homelessness are often underserved. And because their housing is temporary and tenuous, they face challenges to access library services, including getting a library card, dealing with lost materials, or having the time and resources to visit the library.

Kids who are experiencing homelessness and their caregivers can benefit greatly from the services libraries offer, including computer and printing access, programs and classes, books and other materials, as well as a place to spend time when their housing situation may not be safe or comfortable. The experience of homelessness is traumatic and has long-term impacts on [student learning and school success](#). Targeted programs and services around literacy, homework help, and enrichment can make a world of difference.

BRIEFS & NOTES

Why is Election Day a Tuesday in November?

Americans first began the custom of weekday voting in 1845, when Congress passed a federal law designating the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November as Election Day. Before then, states were allowed to hold elections any time they pleased within a 34-day period before the first Wednesday in December, but this system had a few crucial flaws.

Knowing the early voting results could affect turnout and sway opinion in states that held late elections, and those same last-minute voters could potentially decide the outcome of the entire election. Faced with these issues, Congress created the current Election Day in the hope of streamlining the voting process.

But why a Tuesday in November? The answer stems from the agrarian makeup of 19th-century America. In the 1800s, most citizens worked as farmers and lived far from their polling place. Since people often traveled at least a day to vote, lawmakers needed to allow a two-day window for Election Day. Weekends were impractical, since most people spent Sundays in church, and Wednesday was market day for farmers.

Tuesday was selected as the first and most convenient day of the week to hold elections. Farm culture also explains why Election Day always falls in November. Spring and early summer elections were thought to interfere with the planting season, and late summer and early fall elections overlapped with the harvest. That left the late fall month of November—after the harvest was complete, but before the arrival of harsh winter weather—as the best choice.

The reason that election day was specified as the Tuesday “after the first Monday” was to prevent it from falling on the first of November. That day was considered unfavorable because some Christians observed it as All Saints’ Day and because merchants typically took the first day of the month to settle their books for the previous month. Although Tuesday was chosen as a matter of convenience, voting on that day is now more commonly seen as a hindrance. Less than 2 percent of Americans today are employed in agriculture, and many people work on Tuesdays throughout the year. As voter turnout rates declined over time, some people proposed that elections be moved to the weekend.

Others suggested keeping election day on Tuesday but making it a federal holiday. While those efforts have not been successful, increased opportunities to vote early and by mail have had the effect of making election day less central to the voting experience than it once was.

Highest Global Voter Turnout Rates

According to the [U.S. News & World Report](#), the following countries have the highest turnout by percentage of voting age population: [Turkey](#), [Sweden](#), and [Australia](#) appear at the top of the list, with roughly 89%, 82%, and 81% voting age population (VAP) turnout, respectively, in elections they held in 2018 and 2019. Turkey and Australia have compulsory voting – so does [Greece](#), which ranked 13th.

Election Day in the United States is a civic holiday in several states including Delaware, Hawaii, New York, New Jersey and the territory of Puerto Rico. Many have called for Election Day to become a federal holiday, so people can take time to vote without missing work. Other proposals to boost voter turnout include having elections take place over several days or allowing voting to take place by mail or computers.

The table below indicates the voter turnout rates in the U.S. Presidential elections from 1980 to 2020.

Year	Voter Turnout	Voting Age Population (VAP)	Voting Eligible Population (VEP)	Registered Voters	Turnout (VAP) %	Turnout (VEP) %
1980	86,496,851	163,945,000	159,635,102	105,135,000	52.80%	54.20%
1984	92,654,861	173,995,000	167,701,904	116,106,000	53.30%	55.20%
1988	91,586,725	181,956,000	173,579,281	118,598,000	50.30%	52.80%
1992	104,600,366	189,493,000	179,655,523	126,578,000	55.20%	58.20%
1996	96,389,818	196,789,000	186,347,044	127,661,000	49.00%	51.70%
2000	105,594,024	209,130,000	194,331,436	129,549,000	50.50%	54.30%
2004	122,349,480	219,508,000	203,483,455	142,070,000	55.70%	60.10%
2008	131,406,895	229,989,000	213,313,508	146,311,000	57.10%	61.60%
2012	129,139,997	240,177,000	222,474,111	153,157,000	53.80%	58.00%
2016	136,787,187	249,422,000	230,931,921	157,596,000	54.80%	59.20%
2020	158,481,688	252,274,000	240,628,443	168,308,000	62.80%	65.90%

Sources: [American Presidential Project](#); [Britannica](#).

INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAYS (NOVEMBER)

November 1, 1981 – Antigua and Barbuda: National Day marks the day the islands gained independence from Great Britain.

November 3, 1978 – Dominica: Gained independence from Great Britain to become an independent republic in the Commonwealth.

November 9, 1953 – Cambodia: Declared independence from France.

November 11, 1974 – Angola: Portugal granted Angola independence on November 11, 1974.

November 11, 1918 – Poland: National Independence Day commemorates the anniversary of the restoration of Poland's sovereignty as the Second Polish Republic in 1918 and independence from the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian Empires.

November 15, 1983 – North Cyprus: In a unilateral declaration, the Turkish Cypriot parliament declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus independent from the Republic of Cyprus.

November 18, 1918 – Latvia: Achieved full independence from the U.S.S.R. on August 21, 1991, but the main Independence Day holiday in Latvia celebrates independence from German and Russian occupations on November 18, 1918.

November 18, 1955 – Morocco: Gained independence from France on March 2, 1956, and from Spain on April 7, 1956. Until King Hassan II was crowned in 1961, Morocco celebrated Independence Day on March 2nd. At the King's request, Moroccan Independence is now celebrated on November 18th, to commemorate the day King Mohammed V gave his iconic independence speech in 1955.

November 18, 1650 – Oman: National Day celebrates independence from Portuguese control in 1650.

November 19, 2021 – Monaco: The Sovereign Prince's Day, Monaco's National Day, is currently celebrated on November 19. Traditionally, the reigning Prince determines the date, and previous Princes often chose the day of the saint they were named after. When he ascended the throne in 2005, Prince Albert chose to celebrate the day of Saint Rainier, the same day his father had celebrated and the day he officially ascended the throne in 2005.

November 22, 1943 – Lebanon: Liberation Day from the French Mandate.

November 25, 1975 – Suriname: Formerly known as Dutch Guiana, Suriname gained independence from the Netherlands.

November 28, 1912 – Albania: Declared independence from the Ottoman Empire.

November 28, 1960 – Mauritania: On this day in 1960, Mauritania gained independence from France.

November 28, 1821 – Panama: November is Panama's Patriotic Month, as it celebrates three independence days. November 3rd is celebrated as Independence from Colombia (1903). This day is also known as Colon Day. It is followed on November 10th, when Panamanians commemorate the "uprising in Villa Los Santos" against the Spaniards, and finally, November 28th, National Day, celebrates independence from Spain.

November 30, 1966 – Barbados: Fifty-five years to the day of gaining independence from the UK, Barbados became a republic on November 30, 2021.

November 30, 1967 – Yemen: The declaration of Independence of South Yemen from the United Kingdom. The Yemeni National Day is observed each year on May 22, Unification Day.

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