



San Jose Stamp Club Newsletter



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visit our website at:
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Northern California Trivia

- Q. What street is called "Wall Street of the west?"
A. Montgomery Street, San Francisco.
- Q. Where is Atascadero Beach?
A. Morro Bay.

From *Northern California Trivia*
by Ernie & Jill Couch

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Happy 4th of July

Independence Day

Commonly known as the Fourth of July, Independence Day is a federal holiday which commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, picnics, and above all, baseball games; various other public and private events all celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States, but is often also viewed as simply a summer festival, apart from its many patriotic overtones.

Observance

In 1777, thirteen guns were fired, once in the morning and again as evening fell, on July 4th in Bristol, Rhode Island. Philadelphia celebrated the first anniversary in a manner any modern American would find quite familiar: an official dinner for the Continental Congress, toasts, 13-gun salutes, speeches, prayers, music, parades, troop reviews, and fireworks. Ships were decked with red, white, and blue bunting.

In 1778, General George Washington marked the Fourth of July with double rations of rum for his soldiers and an artillery salute. Across the Atlantic Ocean, ambassadors John Adams and Benjamin Franklin held a dinner for their fellow Americans in Paris, France.

In 1779, July 4 fell on a Sunday, so the holiday was celebrated on Monday, July 5.

In 1781, Massachusetts was the first legislature to recognize the Fourth of July.

In 1783, Moravians in Salem, North Carolina, held the first celebration of the Fourth of July in the country with a challenging music program assembled

was titled "The Psalm of Joy".

In 1791 was the first recorded use of the name "Independence Day".

In 1870, the U.S. Congress made Independence Day an unpaid holiday for federal employees.

Congress changed Independence Day to a paid federal holiday in 1941.

Residents of Vicksburg, Mississippi, celebrated the Fourth of July for the first time since July 4, 1863, when the Siege of Vicksburg ended with a Union victory during the American Civil War.

Customs

Independence Day, the only holiday that celebrates the United States, is a national holiday marked by patriotic displays. Like many summer-themed events, Fourth of July celebrations often take place outdoors. Because the 4th of July is a federal holiday, all non-essential federal institutions (like the postal service and federal courts) are closed on that day. A great many politicians make it a point on this day to appear at a public event to praise the nation's heritage, laws, history, society, and people.

Families often celebrate the Fourth of July with a picnic or barbecue, and take advantage of the day off and in some years a long weekend to gather with relatives. Decorations (e.g., streamers, balloons, and clothing) are generally colored red, white, and blue, the colors of the American flag. Parades often are in the morning, while fireworks displays occur in the evening at such places as parks, fairgrounds, or town squares.

Independence Day fireworks are often accompanied by patriotic songs such as the national anthem (*The Star Spangled Banner*), *God Bless America*, *America the Beautiful*, *My Country 'Tis of Thee*, *This Land Is Your Land*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, and, regionally, *Yankee Doodle* in northeastern states and *Dixie* in the

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