American Holidays

Federal holidays

Date	Official Name	Remarks
January 1	New Year's Day	Celebrates beginning of the Gregorian calendar year. Festivities include counting down to midnight (12:00 AM) on the preceding night, New Year's Eve. Traditional end of holiday season.
Third Monday in January	Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Honors Martin Luther King, Jr., Civil Rights leader, who was actually born on January 15, 1929; combined with other holidays in several states.
January 20, the first January 20th following a Presidential election	Inauguration Day	Observed only by federal government employees in Washington D.C., and the border counties of Maryland and Virginia, in order to relieve congestion that occurs with this major event. Swearing-in of President of the United States and Vice President of the United States. Celebrated every fourth year. *Note*: Takes place on January 21 if the 20th is a Sunday (although the President is still privately inaugurated on the 20th). If Inauguration Day falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, the preceding Friday or following Monday is not a Federal Holiday
Third Monday in February	Washington's Birthday	Washington's Birthday was first declared a federal holiday by an 1879 act of Congress. The Uniform Holidays Act, 1968, shifted the date of the commemoration of Washington's Birthday from February 22 to the third Monday in February. Many people now refer to this holiday as "Presidents' Day" and consider it a day honoring all American presidents. However, neither the Uniform Holidays Act nor any subsequent law changed the name of the holiday from Washington's Birthday to Presidents' Day.

Last Monday in May	Memorial Day	Honors the nation's war dead from the Civil War onwards; marks the unofficial beginning the Uniform Holidays Act 1968)
July 4	Independence Day	Celebrates Declaration of Independence, also called the Fourth of July.
First Monday in September	Labor Day	Celebrates the achievements of workers and the labor movement; marks the unofficial end
Second Monday in October	Columbus Day	Honors Christopher Columbus, traditional discoverer of the Americas. In some areas it is a (traditionally October 12); celebrated as American Indian Heritage Day and Fraternal Day South Dakota. In Hawaii, it is celebrated as Discoverer's Day, though is not an official stat
November 11	Veterans Day	Honors all veterans of the United States armed forces. A traditional observation is a mome war. (Commemorates the 1918 armistice, which began at "the eleventh hour of the eleventh
Fourth Thursday in November	Thanksgiving Day	Traditionally celebrates the giving of thanks for the autumn harvest. Traditionally includes the holiday season. (Note: Thanksgiving is not celebrated on the same day in Canada).
December 25	Christmas Day	Celebrates the Nativity of Jesus. Some people consider aspects of this religious holiday, su secular rather than explicitly Christian.

Days

36 U.S.C. § 104 — Carl Garner Federal Lands Cleanup Day (First Saturday after Labor Day)
36 U.S.C. § 105 — Child Health Day (The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation designating the first Monday in October as Child Health Day)
36 U.S.C. § 106 — Constitution Day and Citizenship Day (September 17)
36 U.S.C. § 107 — Columbus Day (The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation designating the second Monday in October as Columbus Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 109 — Father's Day (Third Sunday in June)
36 U.S.C. § 110 — Flag Day (June 14)
36 U.S.C. § 111 — Gold Star Mother's Day (Last Sunday in September)
36 U.S.C. § 113 — Law Day, U.S.A. (May 1)
36 U.S.C. § 114 — Leif Erikson Day (The President may issue each year a proclamation designating October 9 as Leif Erikson Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 115 — Loyalty Day (May 1)
36 U.S.C. § 116 — Memorial Day
36 U.S.C. § 117 — Mother's Day (Second Sunday in May)
36 U.S.C. § 118 — National Aviation Day (August 19)
36 U.S.C. § 119 — National Day of Prayer (First Thursday in May)
36 U.S.C. § 120 — National Defense Transportation Day (The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation designating the third Friday in May as National Defense Transportation Day.)

36 U.S.C. § 124 — National Freedom Day (February 1)
36 U.S.C. § 125 — National Grandparents' Day (The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation designating the first Sunday in September after Labor Day as National Grandparents Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 127 — National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27 of each year until 2003)
36 U.S.C. § 128 — National Maritime Day (May 22)
36 U.S.C. § 129 — National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7)
36 U.S.C. § 134 — Pan American Aviation Day (The President may issue each year a proclamation designating December 17 as Pan American Aviation Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 135 — Parents' Day (Fourth Sunday in July)
36 U.S.C. § 136 — Peace Officers Memorial Day (The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of Federal, State, and local officers killed or disabled in the line of duty.)
36 U.S.C. § 140 — Stephen Foster Memorial Day (The President may issue each year a proclamation designating January 13 Stephen Foster Memorial Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 141 — Thomas Jefferson's birthday (April 13)
36 U.S.C. § 142 — White Cane Safety Day (The President may issue each year a proclamation designating October 15 as White Cane Safety Day.)
36 U.S.C. § 143 — Wright Brothers Day (December 17)
36 U.S.C. § 144 — Patriot Day (September 11)
36 U.S.C. § 145 — Halloween (October 31)

Weeks

- Constitution Week
- National Flag Week
- National Forest Products Week
- National Poison Prevention Week
- National Safe Boating Week
- National School Lunch Week
- National Transportation Week
- Police Week
- Save Your Vision Week
- National Friendship Week

Months

36 U.S.C. § 101 — American Heart Month (February)
Black History Month (February)
National Nutrition Month (March)
Confederate History Month (April)
36 U.S.C. § 103 — Cancer Control Month (April)
Child Abuse Prevention Month (April)
36 U.S.C. § 102 — Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)
36 U.S.C. § 139 — Steelmark Month (May) — honors the steel industry
Gay and Lesbian Pride Month (June)
36 U.S.C. § 126 — National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 through October 15)
Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)
36 U.S.C § 121. — National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)

State holidays

In addition to the federal holidays, individual states observe the following holidays:

Alabama: Confederate Memorial Day, fourth Monday in April
Alaska: Alaska Day, anniversary of transfer to U.S. control, October 18; Seward's Day, anniversary of purchase from Russia, [[March 27]
Arkansas: Daisy Gatson Bates Day, February 16, observed with Washington's Birthday
California: Abraham Lincoln's Birthday, February 12, César Chávez's birthday, March 31 (also may be optionally observed in Colorado and Texas); Columbus Day, second Monday in October
Colorado: Colorado Day August 1, 1876 Colorado became a state. This date is recognized/celebrated each year by state residents.
Connecticut: Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Good Friday, date varies
Delaware: Return Day, Thursday following Election Day; every two years, celebrates the returns of an election, having political opponents "bury the hatchet" in a bucket of sand
District of Columbia: Emancipation Day, April 16
Florida: Pascua Florida Day, April 2
Georgia: Robert E. Lee's Birthday and Confederate Memorial Day
Hawaii: Good Friday, date varies; May Day or Lei Day, date varies, usually May 1st;

Kamehameha Day, June 11; Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole Day, March 26; Admission Day or Statehood Day, third Friday in August

Idaho: Idaho Human Rights Day, January 19

Illinois: Abraham Lincoln's Birthday, February 12 (most state offices close, many schools choose to close on President's Day). Pulaski Day first Monday of every March.

Kansas: Kansas Day, January 29

Louisiana: Mardi Gras, date varies (3 February - 9 March); Good Friday, date varies, celebrated elsewhere

Massachusetts: Patriot's Day, 3rd Monday of April, traditionally April 19, anniversary of Battles of Lexington and Concord

Maine: Patriot's Day, April 19, anniversary of Battles of Lexington and Concord

Maryland: Maryland Day, March 25, commemoration of first European settlement of Maryland

Mississippi: Mardi Gras Day, date varies

Missouri: Truman Day, May 9

Nebraska: Arbor Day, last Friday of April, celebrated elsewhere

Nevada: Nevada Day, October 31, commemorates date of admission to the Union, observed on last Friday of October.

New Hampshire: Civil Rights Day, January 19

Oklahoma: Statehood Day, November 16
Rhode Island: V.J. Day or Victory Day, second Monday in August
South Dakota: Native American Day, second Monday in October
Tennessee
Legal holidays: Good Friday, date varies;

Days of special observance: Robert E. Lee Day, January 19; Abraham Lincoln Day, February 12; Andrew Jackson Day, March 15; Mother's Day, Second Sunday in May; Statehood Day, June 1, commemorates date of admission to the Union; Memorial or Confederate Decoration Day, June 3; Nathan Bedford Forrest Day, July 13

Texas: Confederate Veterans Day, January 19; Juneteenth, June 19
Utah: Pioneer Day, July 24
Vermont: Town Meeting Day, first Tuesday in March
Virginia: Lee-Jackson Day, Friday before the third Monday in January
West Virginia: West Virginia Day, June 20

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New Year's Day

New Year's Day	
Observed by	Almost all users of the Gregorian calendar and others
Type	International
Significance	The first day of the Gregorian year
Date	January 1
Observances	Making New Year's resolutions, parades, additional sporting events, fireworks
Related to	New Year's Eve, the previous day

Specific, high-profile or common celebrations

- On New Year's Day, people in certain countries gather on beaches and run into the water to celebrate the new year. Ireland, Britain, United States and Australia are the most popular countries for this. These events are sometimes known as polar bear plunges, and are sometimes organized by groups to raise money for charity. Polar Bear Clubs in many northern hemisphere cities near bodies of water, have a tradition of holding organized plunges on New Year's Day. The Coney Island Polar Bears Club in New York is the oldest cold-water swimming club in the United States. They have had groups of people enter the chilly surf since 1903.
- In England and Scotland an extra round of football fixtures is played (unless New Year's Day falls on a Thursday, Friday or Sunday).
- In Pasadena, California, United States, the Tournament of Roses is held, with revelers viewing the parade from the streets and watching on television, followed by the Rose Bowl college football game. The game is one of several postseason bowl games played in college football in the United States (though in 2004 and 2006, due to its involvement in the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), the Rose Bowl game was not held on New Year's Day).

Vienna New Year Concert, in Austria.
In Philadelphia, the Mummers Parade is held on Broad Street.
Hindu New Year, which falls at the time and date Sun enters Mesha.
Hindus celebrate the new year by paying respects to their parents and other elders and seek their blessings. They also exchange tokens of Good Wishes (Kai Vishesham).
The New Year's Day Parade is held in London. Performers include acts from each of the city's 32 boroughs, as well as entertainment from around the world.

- In the southern United States, people traditionally prepare a meal of collard greens and black-eyed peas for a year of good luck. A dime is often placed beneath the plate as a part of the tradition.
- Ski jumping in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Germany, a part of the Four Hills Tournament.
- In Pennsylvania and Ohio, it is common[*who?*] to celebrate New Year's Day with a meal of pork, sauerkraut, and mashed potatoes. The practice comes from a Pennsylvania Dutch tradition that dictates these foods will bring good luck in the new year.

This day is traditionally a religious feast, but since the 1900s has become an occasion for celebration the night of December 31, called New Year's Eve. There are often fireworks at midnight. Depending on the country, individuals may be legally allowed to burn fireworks, even if it's usually outlawed the rest of the year. It is also customary to make New Year's resolutions, which individuals hope to fulfill in the coming year. The most popular resolutions in the western world include to quit tobacco smoking, stop excessive drinking of alcohol, lose weight, and get physically fit.

London New Year's fireworks.

Archive Photos/Peter Morgan

Times Square on New Year's Eve
Each year huge crowds of people celebrate New Year's Eve in New York City's Times Square. At midnight, confetti is thrown from the tall buildings surrounding the square

Photo Researchers, Inc./Louis Goldman

Fireworks in New York City
Independence Day fireworks displays are one of the most popular celebrations of patriotism during the year in the United States. This display, on Fourth of July, 1984, celebrated Independence Day as well as the centennial anniversary of the completion of the Statue of Liberty.

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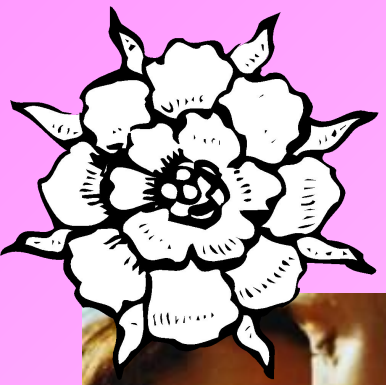
St. Valentine’s Day



love

Some facts

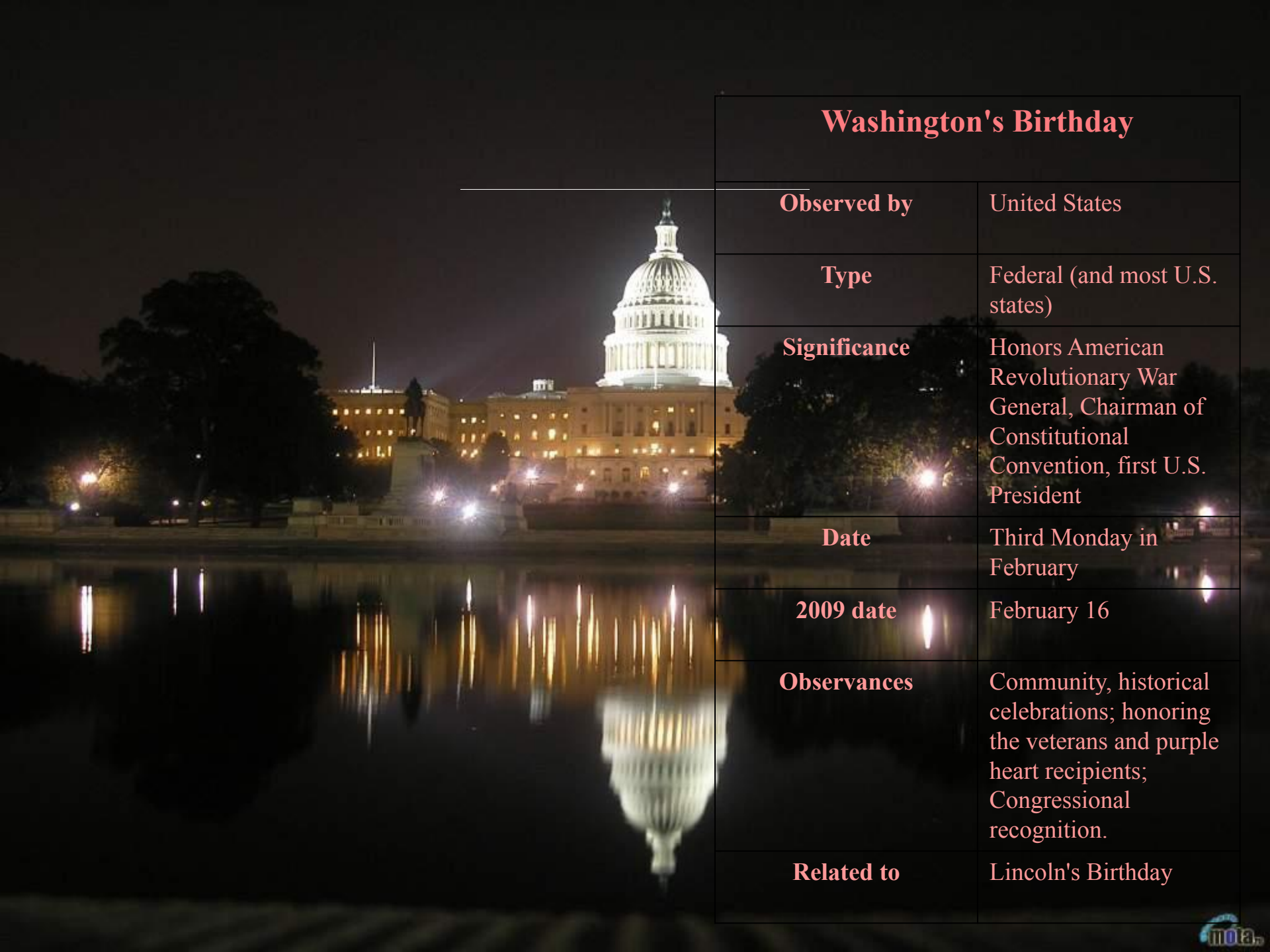
- Valentine's Day is a day to share loving feelings with friends and family. It is also known as a holiday honoring lovers. It is celebrated on the 14th of February. This is a happy day because it is specially dedicated to celebrate love, affection and friendship.
- There is a wide-spread custom of sending greeting cards or gifts to express affection. Every February 14, millions of people send Valentines to those whom they love. The cards, known as Valentines, are often designed with hearts to symbolize love.
- In England, Valentine greetings have been popular since the Middle Ages, when lovers used to send Valentine verses to their sweethearts.

SMILE
NICE BOY
FAX ME
PARTNERS FOREVER

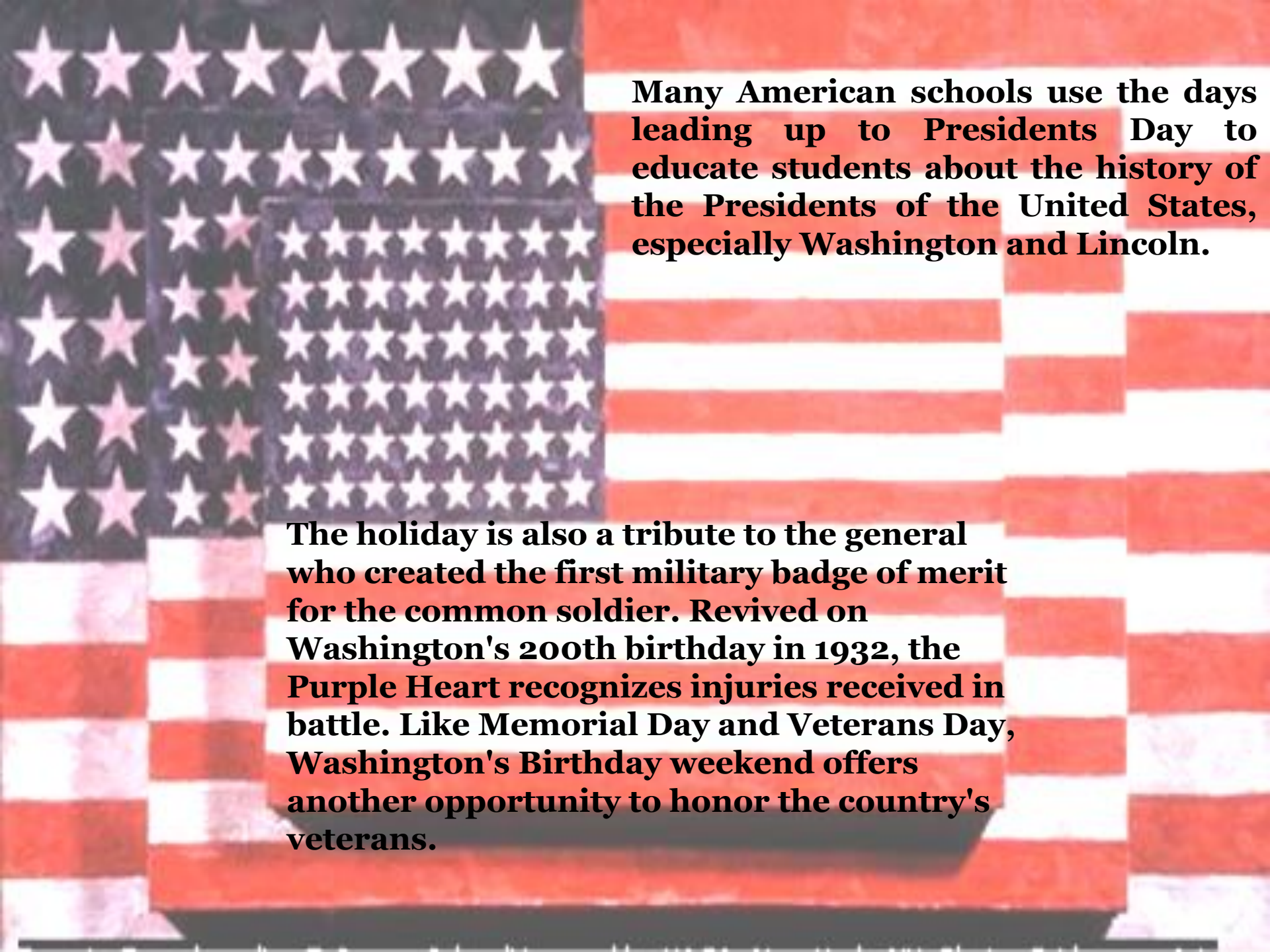
Attributes of St. Valentines day

- *A lace*
- *A ribbon*
- *Red roses*
- *Cupid*
- *The Endless-Love Knot*

Washington's Birthday



Washington's Birthday	
Observed by	United States
Type	Federal (and most U.S. states)
Significance	Honors American Revolutionary War General, Chairman of Constitutional Convention, first U.S. President
Date	Third Monday in February
2009 date	February 16
Observances	Community, historical celebrations; honoring the veterans and purple heart recipients; Congressional recognition.
Related to	Lincoln's Birthday



Many American schools use the days leading up to Presidents Day to educate students about the history of the Presidents of the United States, especially Washington and Lincoln.

The holiday is also a tribute to the general who created the first military badge of merit for the common soldier. Revived on Washington's 200th birthday in 1932, the Purple Heart recognizes injuries received in battle. Like Memorial Day and Veterans Day, Washington's Birthday weekend offers another opportunity to honor the country's veterans.

- In Alabama, the third Monday in February commemorates the birthdays of both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson (who was born in April).
- In Arkansas, the third Monday in February is "George Washington's Birthday and Daisy Gatson Bates Day," an official state holiday.
- In New Mexico, President's Day, at least as a state government paid holiday, is observed on the Friday following Thanksgiving. In 2007, the country celebrated both Washington's 275th birthday and the 75th anniversary of the rebirth of the Purple Heart medal.
- Since 1862, there has been a tradition in the United States Senate that George Washington's Farewell Address be read on his birthday. Citizens had asked that this be done in light of the approaching Civil War. The annual tradition continues with the reading of the address on or near Washington's Birthday.

Memorial day

Memorial Day	
The gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery are graced by U.S. flags on Memorial Day.	
Observed by	United States
Type	Federal (and most U.S. states)
Significance	Honors men and women who have died in military service
Date	Last Monday in May
2009 date	May 25, 2009
2010 date	May 31, 2010
Observances	visiting cemeteries

Traditional observance

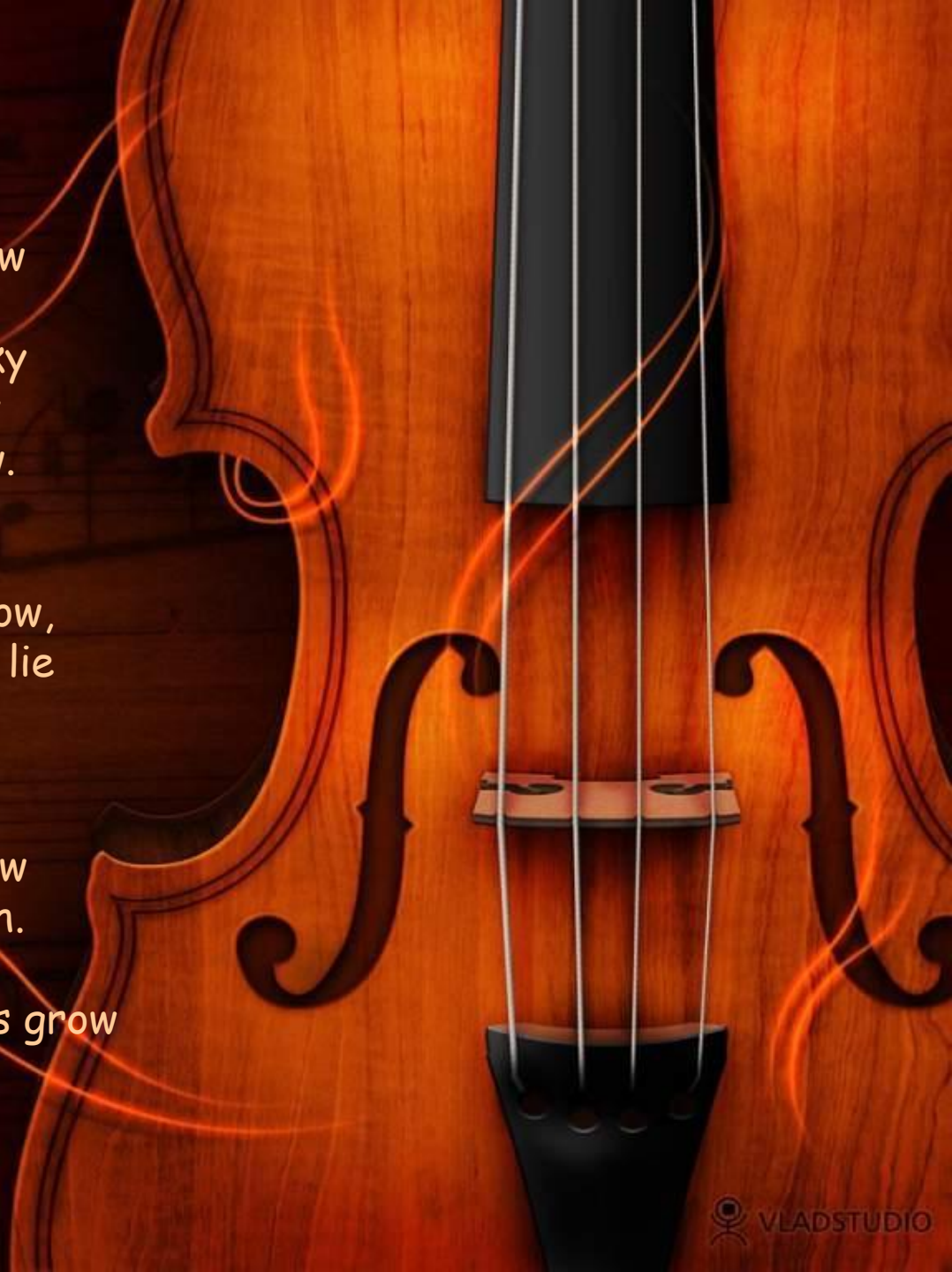
- Many people observe this holiday by visiting cemeteries and memorials. A national moment of remembrance takes place at 3 p.m. US Eastern time.
- Another tradition is to fly the U.S. flag at half-staff from dawn until noon local time. Volunteers usually place an American flag upon each grave site located in a National Cemetery.
- Many Americans also use Memorial Day to honor other family members who have died. In Rochester, NY members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars take donations[for "Buddy Poppies" in the days leading up to Memorial Day designed to act as a visual reminder of those who have sacrificed their lives for the United States. The poppy's significance to Memorial Day is a result of Canadian military physician LtCol John McCrae's poem "In Flanders Fields".

In Flanders Fields
by LtCol John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Living. Long days ago
We died, felt sunset, saw dawn glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



Independence Day	
Displays of fireworks, such as these over the Washington Monument, are an example of the celebrations that take place nationwide.	
Also called	The Fourth of July The Glorious Fourth The Fourth
Observed by	United States
Type	National
Significance	The day the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress
Date	July 4
Celebrations	Fireworks, Family reunions, Concerts, Barbecues, Picnics, Parades, Baseball games

Mother's Day

Precursors to the American Mother's Day

Precedents for the currently observed "Mother's Day" include:

"Mothering Sunday" in the UK and Ireland is on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It was originally a time when Catholics were supposed to travel to attend Mass in their "Mother Church" (the regional cathedral) rather than in their local parish. By the Reformation, it had changed into an occasion for children to visit parents. An 1854 source mentions a couplet: "On 'Mothering Sunday,' above all other/Every child should dine with its mother."

"Mother's Day Work Clubs" organized by Anna Jarvis's mother, Ann Maria Reeves Jarvis (1832-1905), to improve sanitation and health in the area. These clubs also assisted both Union and Confederate encampments controlling a typhoid outbreak, and conducted a "Mothers' Friendship Day" to reconcile families divided by the Civil War.

The **"Mother's Day"** anti-war observances founded by Julia Ward Howe in 1872

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Parents' Day in the United States

- In the United States, Parents' Day is held on the fourth Sunday of every July. This was established in 1994 when President Bill Clinton signed a Congressional Resolution into law (36 U.S.C. § 135) for "recognizing, uplifting, and supporting the role of parents in the rearing of children."
- Parents Day, proclaimed by a joint Congressional Resolution, is an opportunity to uplift parenthood and to highlight the important roles parents have in helping their children grow up to be all that they can be. It's an opportunity for parents to re-examine their priorities, and re-dedicate their commitment to not let life's problems and concerns take precedence over our responsibilities as parents to help nurture our children. Parents' Day is a time for communities to celebrate our dedicated parents who strive to raise their children with unconditional love, often putting self-gratification aside to nurture their children in a loving environment.

The end