



Notable Quotable

“From our ancestors come our names, but from our virtues our honors.”

~ old Latin proverb



March Horoscopes and Birthdays

In astrology, those born between March 1–20 are the Fish of Pisces. Fish feel things deeply, as in under-the-sea deep. These intuitive and creative people love to help others. Those born between March 21–31 are the Rams of Aries. As the first sign of the zodiac, Aries are bold, courageous, passionate, and somewhat impulsive, Rams dive headfirst into even the most challenging situations.

- Ron Howard – March 1, 1954
- Theodor Geisel – March 2, 1904
- Lou Costello – March 6, 1906
- Mickey Dolenz – March 8, 1945
- Liza Minnelli – March 12, 1946
- Simone Biles – March 14, 1997
- Moms Mabley – March 19, 1894
- Fred Rogers – March 20, 1928
- Chaka Khan – March 23, 1953
- Harry Houdini – March 24, 1874
- Flannery O’Connor – March 25, 1925
- Mariah Carey – March 27, 1970
- Liz Claiborne – March 31, 1929

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“implicit-egoism” effect, or the fact that we are drawn to things that resemble us. Other psychologists offer a different explanation.

Names send powerful signals about where we come from: our native country, ethnicity, religion, and economic background. When we hear a name, we hear so much more. Of course, not everyone loves their given name, and many choose to change it. According to Legal Zoom, people

often change their name if it’s very common. They list Britney and Ashley as two examples. Another reason people change their name is because it’s difficult to spell or pronounce.

Celebrate Your Name Week is a chance to be proud of not just our names but of who we are. When you introduce yourself, say your name loud and proud, for the way you treat your name shows the way that you want to be treated.

Istanbul Not Constantinople

On March 28, 1930, the city of Constantinople, Turkey, changed its name to Istanbul, a change famously celebrated by the Four Lads in their 1953 novelty song “Istanbul (Not Constantinople).” Why did Turkey change the name of its most important city? In AD 330, the city, then called Byzantium, was the world’s hub of culture and trade. Emperor Constantine declared the city the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and changed its name to Constantinople. When the Ottoman Empire collapsed in

1923, the newfound Republic of Turkey changed the name from Constantinople to Istanbul, a name many had used to describe the city. *Istanbul* was a Turkish translation of an old Greek phrase meaning “in the city.” Despite the official change, travelers, businesses, and even foreign governments still referred to the city as Constantinople. This all changed in 1930 when the Turkish government decreed that all mail addressed to Constantinople, paychecks included, would not be delivered.

POPLIN WAY

March 2020



442 MAIN ST.
FREMONT, NH 03044
1-(603)-244-1546

Celebrating March

Women’s History Month

International Black Women in Jazz and the Arts Month

World Compliment Day
March 1

International Women’s Day
March 8

Welderly Week
March 16–22

St. Patrick’s Day
March 17

Tuskegee Airmen Day
March 22

Make Up Your Own Holiday Day
March 26

The Power of Names

The power of bestowing names is so great that in the Old Testament of the Bible it is God who grants this amazing gift to Adam and Eve. Modern psychologists agree that names are significant. As children develop the ability to speak, they name things to make sense of the world around them. The first full week of March is Celebrate Your Name Week, a time to appreciate our names.

In 1948, professors at Harvard University studied the success of recent Harvard graduates. As it turned out, those with common names like Mike had found more success than those with unusual

names such as Berrien. The professors concluded that rare or unusual names had negative psychological effects. More studies followed, and they bore out similar results. Names seemingly influence where we go to school, where we choose to live, who we marry, and even the kind of financial investments we make. Psychologists have attempted to explain this phenomenon as a result of the

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Won’t You Be My Neighbor?

Each year, March 20 is celebrated as Won’t You Be My Neighbor Day, honoring the birthday of Fred Rogers, everybody’s favorite television neighbor. Rogers had a shy and lonely childhood. He overcame his shyness to become a Presbyterian minister but left the seminary to go into television. He hated TV and wanted to transform it into a means of

nurturing those who would watch and listen. Rogers was a natural when it came to children’s broadcasting, using his talents to develop puppets, music, and characters that appealed to kids. By the time the show *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* aired in 1968, he had mastered his use of imaginative elements and the kind, quiet manner that became his beloved trademark.

The Great Escape

On March 24, 1944, the British bomber pilot Leslie “Johnny” Bull poked his head out of the ground, freeing himself from the Nazi-controlled Stalag Luft III camp. The so-called “Great Escape” had begun, one of the most daring mass breakouts ever attempted during wartime.



The Great Escape was not the first attempt to escape from Stalag Luft III by tunnel.

In 1944, the camp housed over 10,000 Allied service members. The location of the camp was chosen in part due to its sandy soil, which made any attempts to tunnel out extremely difficult. This did not deter Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Roger Bushell from devising a grand tunneling scheme. His plan consisted of “three bloody deep, bloody long tunnels” code-named Tom, Dick, and Harry. Previous escapes had been attempted, but none on the scale Bushell proposed. Not only did he oversee the excavation of three tunnels,

Sock Monkey Day



Rockford, Illinois, is known as the official “home of the sock monkey.”

The fabulous folk-art-toy-turned-kitschy-gift known as the sock monkey enjoys its own holiday on March 7. (Some sources say March 1.) The sock monkey can trace its origins back to England’s Victorian era and the exploration of the continent of Africa. Tales of exotic new animals were recounted in news reports and fictional tales such as Rudyard Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*. It became fashionable to decorate children’s rooms with all manner of stuffed animals such as lions

but he also procured civilian clothes for escapees, forged travel documents, and equipment for the 600 digging inmates. As the plan’s mastermind, Bushell was given the code name “Big X.”

His plan proved ingenious. Powdered milk cans were fashioned into shovels, picks, and lanterns. The tunnels were 30-feet deep and just 2-feet square, the walls shored up with pieces of wood scavenged from all over the camp, most notably the prisoners’ bunk beds. Many of the guards, who were openly anti-Nazi, assisted in the procuring of forged documents and materials. By the moonless night of March 24, 1944, the tunnel “Harry” was complete, and 76 men tunneled to freedom. Of the 76 escapees, 73 were captured, but the “Great Escape” became legendary and a Hollywood blockbuster.

and, of course, monkeys. These stuffed monkeys transformed into sock monkeys in America. Swedish immigrant to America John Nelson patented a sock-knitting machine in Rockford, Illinois, in 1868. His red-heeled socks became so popular that they became known as “Rockford Red-Heels.” During the Great Depression in America, economical families created their own stuffed animals, notably monkeys, using these trademark red-heeled socks.

The Old New Year



The old New Year’s Day was also known as “Lady Day” after the Virgin Mary.

During the Colonial era in America, New Year’s Day was celebrated not on January 1, but on March 25, a date that can be traced to the colonies’ roots in England. As leader of a Protestant nation, Queen Elizabeth I refused to adopt the Gregorian calendar proposed by the Catholic Pope Gregory XIII. As such, March 25 officially remained

the date of the start of the new year. This date was chosen to coincide with the Feast of the Annunciation, the date when the archangel Gabriel visited the Virgin Mary to announce that she would be the mother of Jesus. The new year continued to fall on March 25 from 1155 until September 2, 1752, when the Gregorian calendar was finally adopted.

Women of the World Unite



Some countries where International Women’s Day is an official holiday are Russia, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and Uganda.

Women around the world will take to the streets promoting women’s rights to celebrate International Women’s Day on March 8. The first National Women’s Day occurred on February 28, 1909, in New York. Theresa Malkiel, a factory-worker-turned-civil-rights-leader proposed the first celebration. Malkiel believed that socialism was the path toward the equality of women. When the men of the party showed no interest in equal rights for women members, Malkiel took it upon herself to organize her fellow women. The first Women’s Day celebration was a show of strength for the women she organized.

The struggle for women’s rights was not unique to America. Across Europe, women were organizing for workers’ rights and the right to vote. In 1910, at the International Socialist Women’s Conference in Denmark, European activists established an international holiday modeled on Malkiel’s.

On March 11, 1911, International Women’s Day was celebrated by over a million people in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland. Women marched for the right to vote, to hold public office, and to enjoy equal opportunities for employment. Six years later, on March 8, 1917, International Women’s Day marchers across Russia marched for “Bread and Peace,” demanding an end to World War I, tsarism, and government-imposed food shortages. This marked the beginning of Russia’s February Revolution (according to their old calendar). Seven days later, Tsar Nicholas II abdicated the throne, and women were granted the right to vote.

Over the decades, the holiday has transformed from a socialist holiday to a mainstream celebration of women. The day is an official holiday in many countries, but the fact that it is not observed in many places speaks to the need to continue the fight for women’s rights.