

The Tattler

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Celebrating March

International Ideas Month

Women's History Month

Mad for Plaid Month

**Write a Letter of
Appreciation Week**

March 1-7

Iditarod Begins

March 4

International Bagpipe Day

March 10

Button Week

March 19-25

World Storytelling Day

March 20

As Young as You Feel Day

March 22

Mothering Sunday

March 26

History's Winning Women

The month of March is now celebrated throughout the world as Women's History Month, but it all began as a school celebration in Sonoma, California, in 1978 honoring International Women's Day on March 8. Students spent the week learning about women's contributions to culture and society and were asked to write an essay on what it meant to be a "Real Woman." The week culminated with a parade through downtown Santa Rosa. Two years later, President Jimmy Carter proclaimed the week of March 8 National Women's History Week. By 1986, fourteen states had declared March Women's History Month, and one year later, Congress made it a national designation.

The theme of Women's History Month this year is "Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business." It has been widely reported how women experience inequalities in working conditions, opportunity, and pay in the workplace, and 2017 highlights many women who have striven to make gains in these areas.

Take Kate Mullany, a labor organizer who founded one of the first women's unions, the Collar Laundry Union, in 1864. Laundresses worked long days for low pay in sweltering conditions, giving rise to the term *sweatshop*. Mullany led a six-day strike that helped improve pay and working conditions. A century later, in 1962, the New York Stock Exchange did not allow women on the trading floor. Norma Yaeger completed the stockbroker training program at Hornblower and Weeks, Inc., demanded the right to accompany male trainees on the floor, and went on to enjoy a successful Wall Street career. In 1979, Lilly Ledbetter was hired as a supervisor for a Goodyear Tire and Rubber plant. When she discovered that she was being paid thousands of dollars less than her male counterparts, she fought the company to receive equal pay for equal work. These women are but a few examples of activists who have made life better not just for women but for societies the world over.

Off the Menu

This March 17, your St. Patrick's Day celebration might not feel complete without shamrocks, beer, green dye, and a meal of corned beef and cabbage. Many Irish would be appalled to learn that March 17 is Corned Beef and Cabbage Day, in honor of this traditional St. Paddy's Day dish, for no self-respecting Irishman would eat such a dish.



In Ireland, beef was a food historically reserved for kings. Cattle were far too valuable as draft animals or producers of dairy. Pork, not beef, was the country's common meat. It wasn't until the beef-loving English conquered Ireland that beef cows populated Ireland's green pastures. Ireland eventually grew so influential in the cattle industry that England passed the Cattle Acts of 1663 and 1667, prohibiting the import of live cattle from Ireland. Ireland then began curing its beef for export, using massive salt crystals the size of corn kernels. This Irish "corned beef," as it came to be known, was so popular that it supplied both the British and French navies, and supplied the colonies of the New World across the Atlantic.

Despite the wealth of Ireland's corned beef trade, common Irish could still not afford the dish and relied on bacon as their staple meat. It wasn't until they emigrated to America and found good-paying jobs that they were able to afford corned beef. Even then, the corned beef eaten by the Irish in America was not Irish corned beef but Jewish corned beef, boiled with cabbage and potatoes, sold by kosher butchers. So it was Irish Americans who transformed St. Patrick's Day from a religious feast day to a celebration of Irish culture and in so doing adopted Jewish corned beef and cabbage as their celebratory dish.

The popularity of corned beef and cabbage never made it back to Ireland. Today, the Irish eat bacon or lamb on St. Patrick's Day. Furthermore, up until 1970, Irish pubs were ordered closed in observance of the religious holiday, meaning that beer wasn't on the menu either.

Stuck in the Middle of You

Middle names. Why bother? Are they a source of pride, embarrassment, or obligation? Bask in the glory of your middle name on March 10, Middle Name Pride Day. Middle names as we use them today first gained popularity among the elite classes during Renaissance Italy. Parents were torn between naming their children after a saint or a family member. The easy solution was a three-name structure: family name (like an aristocratic inheritance), baptismal middle name (for piety), and surname. It wasn't until immigrants arrived in America that the middle name shed its religious significance and evolved into a maternal maiden name or, by the Civil War, just about any name the parents pleased. Regardless of their intent, middle names almost always have meaning, so embrace your middle name by choosing to go by that name on March 10.

All Thumbs

Humans are unique from other animals in lots of ways, but our opposable thumbs and two-pincer grip led the way for some of our most important evolutionary advances. It's a wonder that more animals do not have thumbs. But what if they did? Consider the possibilities on March 3, If Pets Had Thumbs Day.



Many animals have opposable thumbs, such as apes, opossums, pandas, koalas, and tree frogs. What do these animals do with their thumbs? They use them mostly to climb and to eat. Chimps use their thumbs to the greatest advantage: using tools, foraging for food, building shelters, and fighting. If cats had thumbs, would they learn to use a can opener? Would dogs throw a ball for themselves? Would hamsters build their own tube tunnels? Would rabbits punch with their feet and fists? Of course, the burning question is whether any of our pets would use their thumbs to help us around the house. Probably not.

For the Record

On March 15, Everything You Think Is Wrong Day, we must take time to clear up some common misconceptions. It's a day for us to wake up and smell the coffee. Let's start there, by correcting the record on coffee. Many believe that *espresso* is pronounced "expresso," perhaps because it gives us a fast jolt of caffeine. In truth, a shot of espresso contains less caffeine than the average-sized cup of coffee. However, a single shot of espresso does have a higher concentration of caffeine than a similar-sized shot of regular coffee, but not many people drink such a tiny cup of coffee.



Vikings did not wear horns on their helmets. This depiction became popular thanks to the operas of German composer Richard Wagner, where his

villains wore such silly headpieces. Vikings, in fact, looked well manicured. Archaeologists have uncovered combs, tweezers, and nail cleaners from ancient Viking sites, and records show that Vikings took great pains to comb and wash their hair, beards, and mustaches.

Napolean was not short! He was five feet two inches tall in French feet, which equals five feet seven inches in English measurements, making him taller than the average Frenchman. His nickname of "The Little Corporal" was not a jab at his small size, but a term of affection held for him by his soldiers.

Albert Einstein did not fail math. When he saw a news story suggesting this falsehood, Einstein corrected the record by writing, "I never failed in mathematics.... Before I was fifteen I had mastered differential and integral calculus." He did, however, fail his first entrance exam into the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School, which he took two years early, despite excelling on the math and science sections. He then passed on his second attempt. Like Einstein, take this day to correct some common wrongs that many think are right.

A Spot of Tea

Keep your afternoon open on the third Tuesday in March for Tea for Two Tuesday. Afternoon tea was invented in England by the seventh Duchess of Bedford in 1840. She found she was always hungry for a snack around four in the afternoon. Her solution was an afternoon tea break, which evolved into more formal social gatherings that gained popularity amongst England's upper classes.

This "low" tea is a fancy affair typically served early, around four o'clock, long before dinner, complete with finger sandwiches and walks in the garden. High tea was most often for the middle and lower classes. It was served later in place of dinner, with tea and a much heavier meal. The terms *low* and *high* come from the height of the tables the tea is served on. Low tea is served in a parlor or drawing room on a low table. High tea was served on a high-legged dinner table. Low or high, Earl Grey or English breakfast, caffeinated or decaf, enjoy the pleasures of your afternoon spot of tea.

The Pilots of Tuskegee



On March 19, 1941, the U.S. War Department established the 99th Pursuit Squadron, which became famously known as the Tuskegee Army Airmen. America's first African American pilots made up the squadron. African Americans had hitherto been banned from high-ranking military positions, but several historically black colleges joined the Civilian Pilot Training Program, a program created by Congress in 1939 to train pilots. President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the enlistment of these black aviators, which led to an all-black fighter pilot unit, trained at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The pilots confronted racism at home and put their lives on the line abroad, but their success record was exemplary during World War II, paving the way to President Truman's desegregation of the military.

Dear Treemonters:

Spring arrives this month and with it comes Ash Wednesday, St. Patrick's Day, Daylight Savings Time and the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo begins.

On Wednesday, March 1st, **Ash Wednesday**, Rev. Portia Sweet will hold a Communion Service in the Green Room during which she will distribute ashes. **"GO TEXAN DAY"** is March 3rd. So wear your Western Duds proudly. Daylight Savings Time will begin – so don't forget to set your clocks forward on March 12th. Also, more of us will be spending time outside in the beautiful weather. If you're a pet owner, please remember to use the pet waste recepticals placed strategically around the campus. There are disposal bags in the recepticals and we ask that you use them.

Our beautiful Library in the Activity Room needs your help. If you've taken books from it, **PLEASE RETURN THEM** so others may enjoy them too. The books are stamped on the inside cover "Property of Treemont – McLeroy Collection". Please return them to the library.

March Aflutter

On March 14, Learn About Butterflies Day, no one expects you to learn about all 20,000 types of butterflies in the world. You might,



however, be amazed to learn that the Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterfly, found in Papua New Guinea's rain forest, has a wingspan of one foot. As a caterpillar, this species eats the poisonous pipevine plant that other animals won't dare eat for fear of being poisoned. The glasswinged butterfly of Central and South America has transparent wings. North America's question mark butterfly has a silver mark on the underside of its wing that looks just like—you guessed it—a question mark. Otherwise, it is cleverly disguised with a camouflage pattern that makes it look like a dead leaf. Love butterflies? Plant a butterfly garden with plants that attract these beautiful creatures.

March Birthdays

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|------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1st | Pilar Villacis | |
| 2nd | Arvil Bankston | |
| | Mary Ruth Cantzler | |
| 3rd | Thelma Quebodeaux | |
| | Julie Gent | |
| 4th | Paula Jageman | |
| 11th | Charlene Putnam | |
| 12th | David Walker | |
| 15th | Janice Whaley | |
| | Lillian Lee | |
| 16th | Mario Jimenez | |
| 17th | Robert Rice | 29th Jacqueline |
| 18th | Jane Turner | Rogers |
| 19th | Donna Tiller | Mary Aguilar |
| 21st | Page Reese | |
| | Barbara Shaeffer | |
| | James Johnston | |
| | Denie Buchanan | |
| 22nd | Joan Peres | |
| | Carlton Brooks | |
| 27th | Lillian Douglas | |
| | Joy Huckaby | |
| | Virginia Markantonis | |

Your Birthday Dinner will be on Thursday, March 30th at 5 pm in the Green Room!!!

March Birthdays

In astrology, those born between March 1–20 are Pisces. Fish are compassionate, gentle, intuitive, and artistic. Known for their wisdom, Pisces are not judgmental and are very forgiving. They never hesitate to put others' needs before their own. Those born between March 21–31 are Rams of Aries. As the first sign of the zodiac, Aries are energetic and assertive initiators. With bravery, zeal, and speed, they jump head first into life, confident that they can navigate any challenges.

- Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss) – March 2, 1904
Knut Rockne (coach) – March 4, 1888
Piet Mondrian (artist) – March 7, 1872
Sam Donaldson (journalist) – March 11, 1934
Billy Crystal (comedian) – March 14, 1948
Vanessa Williams (actress) – March 18, 1963
Spike Lee (director) – March 20, 1957
Joan Crawford (actress) – March 23, 1905
Aretha Franklin (singer) – March 25, 1942
Eric Idle (comedian) – March 29, 1943
Octavio Paz (poet) – March 31, 1914