

# The Community Page

## U.S. CITIES CONTINUE LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF CELEBRATING SUNDAY INDEPENDENCE DAY ON JULY 3

WHENEVER THE FOURTH OF JULY FALLS ON A SUNDAY, it has been the long-time tradition for many major U.S. cities to celebrate Independence Day on either the preceding Saturday (July 3) or the following Monday (July 5).

### The independence of our nation did not take place on one single day.

Independence was gained through a sequence of events that took place over a period of many years:

- Dec 16, 1773** The Boston Tea Party.
- April 18, 1775** Paul Revere's historic ride.
- April 19, 1775** The shot heard 'round the world.
- May, 1776** After nearly a year of trying to work out their differences with England, the colonies sent delegates to the Second Continental Congress.
- June, 1776** A committee was formed to compose the formal Declaration of Independence. Headed by Thomas Jefferson, the committee also included John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Philip Livingston and Roger Sherman.
- June 28, 1776** Thomas Jefferson presented the first draft of the Declaration of Independence to Congress.
- July 2, 1776** The Continental Congress voted to declare independence from Great Britain.
- July 4, 1776** The Continental Congress approved the official wording of the Declaration of Independence.
- July 8, 1776** The very first celebration of our Independence took place after the reading of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. The day was celebrated with gun fire, bonfires, and fireworks.
- August 2, 1776** The first 50 members of Congress signed the Declaration of Independence. Later that year, five more signed separately and, finally, Thomas McKean was the last to sign in January, 1777. (Note: The 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence did not sign at the same time, nor did they sign on July 4, 1776.)
- July 4, 1777** Philadelphia celebrated the first anniversary. Thirteen gunshots were fired, once at morning and again as evening fell. Bristol, Rhode Island also celebrated with 13-gun salutes, speeches, prayers, music, parades, troop reviews and fireworks. Ships were decked with red, white and blue bunting.
- July 4, 1778** General George Washington celebrated the fourth with a double ration of rum for his soldiers and an artillery salute. Ambassadors John Adams and Benjamin Franklin held a dinner for their fellow Americans in Paris, France.
- July 4, 1779** The Fourth fell for the first time on a Sunday and celebrations took place on the following day, Monday, July 5, initiating a long-time national tradition. In Boston, continental ships fired a "grand salute" from their cannons; and in Philadelphia, the celebration began with an elegant dinner at the City Tavern and was concluded by a display of fireworks.
- 1791** The first recorded use of the name "Independence Day" occurred.
- 1870** The U.S. Congress made Independence Day an official holiday for federal employees (but without pay).
- 1941** Congress declared July 4 a legal Federal holiday.

### Major cities that will celebrate Independence Day this year (2010) on Saturday, July 3:

- |                             |                         |                              |                           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Anchorage, AK</b>        | Beech Grove, IN         | Butte, MT                    | Provo, UT                 |
| <b>Mesa, AZ</b>             | Bloomington, IN         | Kearney, NE                  | <b>Salt Lake City, UT</b> |
| Parker, AZ                  | Franklin, IN            | Red Bank, NJ                 | St. George, UT            |
| Fort Bragg, CA              | <b>Kansas City, KS</b>  | Beacon, NY                   | Bealeton, VA              |
| Hayfork, CA                 | <b>Lexington, KY</b>    | <b>Long Island, NY</b>       | Chesapeake, VA            |
| La Puente, CA               | <b>Louisville, KY</b>   | Dayton, OH                   | Fairfax, VA               |
| Orange, CA                  | Monroe, LA              | <b>Oklahoma City, OK</b>     | Moneta, VA                |
| <b>Santa Clara, CA</b>      | Salisbury, MA           | North Bend, OR               | <b>Montpelier, VT</b>     |
| <b>Colorado Springs, CO</b> | Chesapeake Beach, MD    | Depot Bay, OR                | West Dover, VT            |
| <b>Denver, CO</b>           | Rockhall, MD            | Pacific City, OR             | Wilmington, VT            |
| Manchester, CT              | Camden, ME              | Lahaska, PA                  | Auburn, WA                |
| Waterbury, CT               | Rangeley, ME            | New Freedom, PA              | Cave Creek, WA            |
| <b>Gainesville, FL</b>      | Thomaston, ME           | Hope, RI                     | Chelan, WA                |
| Duluth, GA                  | Birmingham, MI          | <b>Dallas/Fort Worth, TX</b> | <b>Milwaukee, WI</b>      |
| Hampton, GA                 | <b>Grand Rapids, MI</b> | Greenville, TX               | Pinegrove, WV             |
| Davenport, IA               | Independence, MO        | <b>Lubbock, TX</b>           |                           |
| Arlington Heights, IL       | <b>St. Louis, MO</b>    | Logan, UT                    |                           |

### Major cities that will celebrate Independence Day this year (2010) on July 2 or July 3:

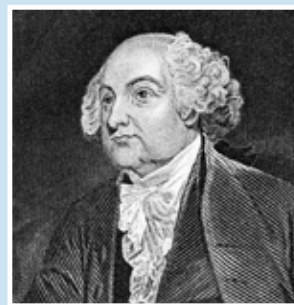
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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Danbury, CT (July 2)              | Camden, NJ (July 5)         |
| <b>Atlantic City, NJ</b> (July 2) | <b>Houston, TX</b> (July 5) |
| <b>Columbus, OH</b> (July 2)      |                             |
| <b>Richmond, VA</b> (July 2)      |                             |

### It is noteworthy that throughout most of our nation's early history, whenever July Fourth fell on a Sunday, Independence Day was celebrated in most cities on Monday, July 5.

Over time, a few towns began to celebrate Independence Day on Saturday, July 3, but that was not as common. In 1830, for example, Columbia, South Carolina, celebrated the Fourth on July 3 and in 1852, Marblehead, Massachusetts, also celebrated on July 3.

It was ex-Senator Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts who finally suggested that July 3 be officially substituted for July 5, when the Fourth fell on Sunday. In a letter he wrote that was read on July 4, 1858 at a celebration in Boston, he stated his rationale: "You are aware that Washington, having arrived at Cambridge on the second, assumed command of the American Army for the first time on the

third of July, 1775. Would it not be a most agreeable and worthy coincidence, if, when the intervention of a Sunday shall cut off the customary routine of these celebrations, we could combine the commemoration of those two great events: Washington taking command of the Army in 1775, and Congress declaring our Independence in 1776." (New York Times, 9 July 1858) Whenever the Fourth of July falls on a Sunday, it continues to be the tradition for many cities across the United States to celebrate Independence Day on either the preceding Saturday the third or following Monday, the fifth. ([www1.american.edu](http://www1.american.edu))



### John Adams Advocated July 2

John Adams felt that the most important event to celebrate was July 2, the date that the Continental Congress voted to declare independence from Great Britain.

He wrote to his wife Abigail: "The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

### Years that July 4 has Fallen on Sunday

- 1779, 1784, 1790, 1802, 1813, 1819, 1824, 1830, 1841, 1847, 1852, 1858, 1869, 1875, 1880, 1886, 1897, 1909, 1915, 1920, 1926, 1937, 1943, 1948, 1954, 1965, 1971, 1976, 1982, 1993, 1999, 2010

The Next Year July 4 will Fall on a Sunday is 2021

