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March Birthdays

In astrology, those born March 1–20 are the slippery Fish of Pisces. Selfless Pisces are very wise and empathetic, making them always willing to help others. Those born March 21–31 are Rams of Aries. Like rams, Aries charge forward with courage, confidence, and enthusiasm. They embrace action, take risks, and fight for their goals.

Ron Howard (actor/director) – March 1, 1954
Dr. Seuss (author) – March 2, 1904
Jean Harlow (actress) – March 3, 1911
Elizabeth Barrett Browning (poet) – March 6, 1806
Bobby Fischer (chess champ) – March 9, 1943
Liza Minnelli (entertainer) – March 12, 1946
Albert Einstein (scientist) – March 14, 1879
Moms Mabley (comedian) – March 19, 1894
Alan Arkin (actor) – March 26, 1934
Sam Walton (businessman) – March 29, 1918
Liz Claiborne (designer) – March 31, 1929

Religious Roots cont. from pg. 1

and so became celebrated symbols of St. Patrick's Day. America's version of St. Patrick's Day is so strong that many American traditions have even returned to Ireland.

Mardi Gras, like St. Paddy's Day, originated as a solemn religious holiday. As the day before the start of the ritual fasting of Lent, it was an opportunity to indulge in sweet, fatty foods, giving rise to the name "Fat Tuesday." Over the centuries, these small indulgences led to greater hedonism, practices that were heavily discouraged by the Church. The elaborate Mardi Gras celebrations held in New Orleans emerged in 1857 when a group of men created a secret society called the Mistick Krewe of Comus. They held a lavish ball and parade, setting the secular foundations for many wild Mardi Gras to come.



**Irish-American
Heritage Month**

**Optimism
Month**

**Celebrate Your
Name Week**
March 3–9

Mardi Gras
March 5

**International
Women's Day**
March 8

Pi Day
March 14

**St. Patrick's
Day**
March 17

**Make Up Your
Own Holiday
Day**
March 26

SunnyBrook of Carroll

March 2019

1214 East 18th Street Carroll, Iowa 51401 712-792-8995

Religious Roots to Raucous Parties

As March arrives, many look forward to the holidays of St. Patrick's Day and Mardi Gras. Yet both of these holidays are more modern American inventions than age-old religious traditions.

St. Patrick's Day, as a religious celebration, has a lengthy history. It dates back to the mid-17th century and was initiated to honor Saint Patrick and his work to bring Christianity to Ireland. The Feast of St. Patrick was held

each year on the date of his supposed death, on March 17, 461 AD. The observance of the date was a solemn occasion, mostly involving quiet prayer. As recently as the 1970s, pubs were closed in Ireland on St. Patrick's Day. The rollicking revelry typically associated with the day was decidedly un-Irish and an American invention. During the Irish Famine of 1845–1850, many Irish immigrated to America, where they were not welcome. As the Irish community in

America grew and prospered, they began to celebrate both their Irishness and their newfound American-ness. Corned beef, shamrocks, and leprechauns were never part of true Irish St. Paddy's Day celebrations, but they were integrated into Irish-American identity

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Night Owls

The International Festival of Owls, a celebration of these mysterious nighttime creatures, will occur during the first three days of March. Is it the owl's nocturnal nature, their swift silence, their chilling calls of "who," or their bizarre rotating necks that make them so fascinating? These birds have figured prominently in our

imaginings for millennia. In ancient Greece, the owl was the symbol of Athena, goddess of wisdom. It was believed that an "inner light" gave the owl its superb night vision. Because an owl is a bird of darkness, it has often been associated with death. During the Middle Ages, owls were thought to be witches.

American Indians, too, held many beliefs about owls and death. To some, owls were spirits. To others, owls were guides of the recently deceased to the underworld. During the Festival of Owls, take the time to encounter one of these magnificent animals up close and you, too, may begin to think they are more than just birds.

A Shakespearean Mystery



For a week in March each year, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, celebrates the life of William Shakespeare. From March 18 to 24, fans of the bard are invited to visit the Shakespeare family home and view his many famous works. However, there are some who believe that William Shakespeare did not write the many plays and sonnets that he is credited for. These doubters assert the existence of an alternate writer.

Since the end of the 19th century, scholars have begun to doubt the identity of William Shakespeare. While evidence exists to prove that Shakespeare was a well-known actor and theater-owner, these

skeptics believe that there is not enough evidence to prove that this Shakespeare was the same man who wrote so many famous works. The true author, they argue, must have been a well-educated traveler or aristocrat such as philosopher Francis Bacon, poet Christopher Marlowe, or Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford.

Of course, Shakespeare has a wealth of defenders, too. They argue that Shakespeare's modest upbringing would have been adequate for his talents. Regardless of your belief in Shakespeare's identity, Shakespeare Week is an opportune time to enjoy the bard's good words rather than question his good name.

Grammar Rules

The Society for the Promotion of Good Grammar has declared March 4 as Grammar Day. English is often said to be the hardest language to learn. Why is it so difficult? The order of words, pronunciations, homophones, synonyms, idioms—all of these are confusing! As language evolves, more and more grammar rules are being ignored. It is considered okay to begin a sentence with *And* or *But*, just as

it is acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition. You can also split as many infinitives as you want! There are some rules, however, that are not as flexible. Double negatives are still a no-no. Also, *alot* is still not a word. You can write *a lot* when you mean "many," or *alot* when you're assigning a share or portion. With well over a million words in the English language, you are likely to find something to celebrate today.

The Birth of Rock and Roll

The very first rock 'n' roll concert was staged on March 21, 1952, in Cleveland, Ohio. It was called the Moondog Coronation Ball and featured guitarist Tiny Grimes and His Rocking Highlanders, saxophonist Paul Williams and His Hucklebuckers, Billy Ward and His Dominoes, singer Varetta Dillard, and Danny Cobb. The concert was the idea of local radio DJ Alan Freed, the same man who popularized the phrase *rock 'n' roll*. On the night of the show, 20,000 people showed up with tickets, but the venue held only half the number. Tickets had been counterfeited. Afraid of a riot, the fire department stopped the concert after only one performance.



Notable Quotable

"But Shakespeare's magic could not copied be; Within that circle none durst walk but he."
~ John Dryden, English poet

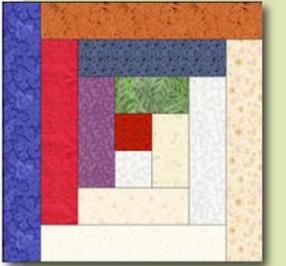
The Patterns of Life

The third Saturday in March has been designated Worldwide Quilting Day, a global celebration of quilters and their fabulous creations. Quilts began not as the intricately patterned blankets we often use today, but as padded clothing. The first evidence we have of humans wearing quilted clothing comes from ancient Egypt. The first evidence we find of quilted blankets comes from 15th-century England, but all this evidence is merely written about; few, if any, blankets from that era have survived.

English immigrants brought their sewing skills to America, where quilting grew into more than a practical skill—it became an art form. Patterns grew into symbols and stories. When President Lincoln signed the Homestead Act of 1862, which opened up the West for settlement, families prepared for their westward journeys by sewing quilts. These quilts have become records of history.

One of the earliest patterns, known as the Nine Patch, was simply nine squares in a three-

by-three pattern. This was the easiest quilt to learn, quickest to sew, and thriftiest use of leftover fabric. A more elaborate pattern known as the Log Cabin was symbolic of the home. It had a red center square to symbolize the hearth at the heart of the home. More elaborate patterns depicting pinwheels, stars, flowers, animals, crops, biblical stories, and even schoolhouses followed. In these early days of quilting, women sewed as they lived, establishing a beautiful quilting tradition that continues to this day.



Notable Quotable

"If men can quilt and take over the kitchen, then women can pick up a wrench and fix a leaky pipe."
~ Hanna Rosin, writer

Women of the World

Can you match the influential woman to her profession?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. Alfonsina Strada | A. Geneticist |
| 2. Nettie Stevens | B. Explorer |
| 3. Maria Montessori | C. Cyclist |
| 4. Ruth Harkness | D. Educator |

ANSWERS: 1.C; 2.A; 3.D; 4.B

The March of Women's History

The month of March is Women's History Month, in recognition of women and their impact on culture and society all around the world. The movement to establish recognition of women's history began in Sonoma, California, in the 1970s. A group

of women sought to include women's history in the local school curriculum. For too long, men had dominated the study while women's contributions had nary a mention. The movement in Sonoma was such a success that in 1987 the U.S. Congress declared

the entire month of March as Women's History Month. Politicians, writers, freedom fighters, scientists, soldiers, athletes—women have made valuable contributions in virtually every field. Honor them this March.

