
NEWSLETTER

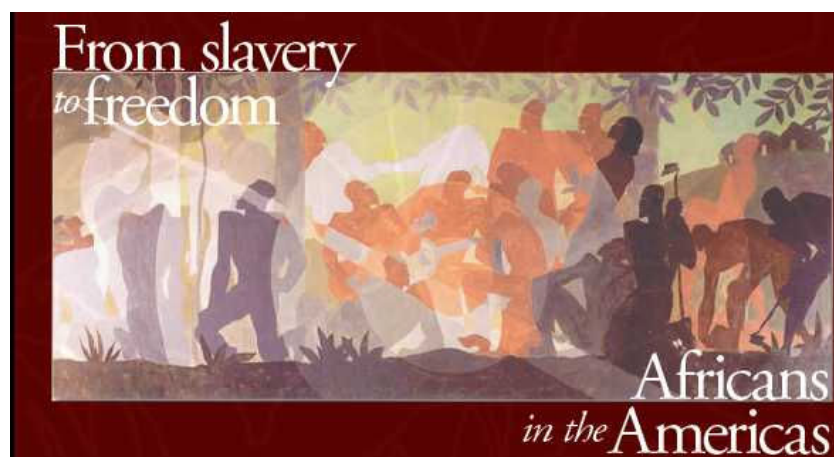
February 2007

February is African American History Month

Originally established as Negro History Week in 1926 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a noted African-American author and scholar, this event evolved into the establishment of February as "Black History Month" in 1976. This commemoration has also been referred to as "African-American History Month." Both names are currently in use.

When Carter G. Woodson established Negro History week, he realized the importance of providing a theme to focus the attention of the public. The intention has never been to dictate or limit the exploration of the Black experience, but to bring to the public's attention important developments that merit emphasis.

Since 1926, [The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History \(ASALH\)](#) has established the national theme for the month-long celebration. The National Theme for the celebration in the year 2007 is "From Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in the Americas."



Presidential Proclamation for African American History Month

Bush reaffirms his commitment to strive for equality for all citizens

January 26, 2007

NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH, 2007 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A PROCLAMATION

African Americans have been an integral part of America for generations, and our Nation is stronger because of their contributions. During National African American History Month, we honor the achievements of African Americans and recognize our continued responsibility to strive for equality for all our citizens.

With grace and determination, African-American men and women have shaped our Nation and influenced American life. Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Rosa Parks, and Martin Luther King, Jr., advanced the cause of civil rights for all Americans and helped change the course of American history. Educators Booker T. Washington and Carter G. Woodson helped break down racial barriers in education to provide opportunity for all people. Americans have benefited from the achievements of scientists like George Washington Carver. Artists such as Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, and Louis Armstrong inspired Americans and created some of the most celebrated music this Nation has ever produced.

The theme of this year's National African American History Month, "From Slavery to Freedom: Africans in the Americas," recalls African Americans' long journey to justice and commemorates the courage and persistence of the heroes who called on our Nation to live up to its founding promise. A century after African-American soldiers fought for their freedom on the battlefields of the Civil War, African Americans struggled peacefully for their rights in the streets of Birmingham, Alabama, and on the Mall in Washington, D.C. Courageous civil rights leaders answered hate and discrimination with love and dignity, toppled segregation laws, and worked to make America a more just and hopeful Nation.

All Americans can be proud of the progress we have made, yet the work for a more perfect union is not done. As we celebrate National African American History Month, we reaffirm our commitment to build a society where every individual has the opportunity to achieve the promise of this great land.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2007 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities that honor the significant contributions African Americans have made to our Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Presidents' Day

(Third Monday in February)

Until 1971, both February 12 and February 22 were observed as federal holidays to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12) and George Washington (Feb. 22).

In 1971 President Richard Nixon proclaimed one single federal holiday, the **Presidents' Day**, to be observed on the third Monday of February, honoring all past presidents of the United States of America.

George Washington



First President
1789-1797

Born: February 22, 1732 in Westmoreland County, Virginia

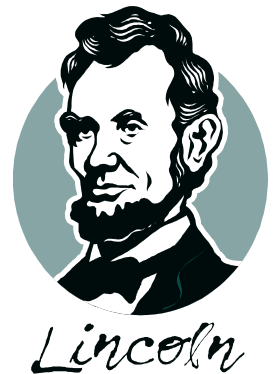
Died: December 14, 1799 in Mount Vernon, Virginia

Abraham Lincoln

Sixteenth President
1861-1865

Born: February 12, 1809, in Hodgenville, Hardin County, Kentucky

Died: April 15, 1865. Lincoln died the morning after being shot at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. by John Wilkes Booth, an actor.



Some interesting WEB sites

Founders of Black History Month

<http://www.asalh.org/>



The mission of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) is to promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community.

White House Official Website

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/presidentsday/>



On this site you can read these presidential biographies put together by fifth-graders at Abingdon Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia as well as other interesting information.

AMERICAN CORNER BITOLA MONTHLY PROGRAM –FEBRUARY 2007

February 5th – 19th Paper show and book display in honor of African American History Month
“Portraits of a New Generation: African-American Leaders Living the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.”

Tuesday February 6th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *Please sign in to attend*

Wednesday February 7th at 14:00 o'clock
Video Showing “America: Beyond the Color Line” “South: The Black Belt”

Tuesday February 13th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *Please sign in to attend*

Wednesday February 14th at 14:00 o'clock
Video Showing “America: Beyond the Color Line” “Chicago: Streets of Heaven”

Thursday February 15th at 18:00 o'clock
“When Desegregation Came to Kansas: Brown v. Board of Education”
By Prof. Steven Foulke, Fulbright Professor

Friday February 16th at 14:00 o'clock
Presidents Day Quiz Day – Invite a class

Saturday February 17th at 14:00 o'clock
Children Story Telling Hour *Please sign in*

Book Display – Presidents Day Feb. 16th – 21st

Tuesday February 20th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *Please sign in to attend*

Wednesday February 21st at 14:00 o'clock
Video Showing “America: Beyond the Color Line” “East Coast: Ebony Towers”

Tuesday February 27th at 18:00 o'clock
“Oprah Winfrey and Others: Modern Black People Who Have Made Significant Contributions.”
Presented by Myra Brown, Information Resource Officer from Rome, Italy

Wednesday February 28th at 14:00 o'clock
Video Showing “America: Beyond the Color Line” “Los Angeles: Black Hollywood”

HIGHLIGHTS FROM JANUARY 2007 PROGRAMS



HUMAN RIGHTS PRESENTATION IN MACEDONIAN AMERICAN CORNER TRIGGERS LIVELY DISCUSSION

On January 25, 2007, Ninoslav Mladenovic, Ron Brown Alumnus presented “Human Rights Based Approach in Poverty Reduction vis-à-vis the UN Millennium Development Goals: National and International Legal Framework in Macedonia.” Twenty people attended this informative Power Point presentation that provided an overview of the legal framework for Human Rights in

Macedonia. The presenter defined human rights, and discussed the various classifications of human rights and the goals set to achieve these rights. The audience was very interactive and there were many dialogues throughout the presentation which allowed them to share their opinions on certain issues. Local NGOs had the opportunity to network with Mr. Mladenovic and each other to identify how to attain human rights objectives.





On January 27th the AC has once again begun the monthly storytelling hour for the youngest AC members. Peace Corps volunteer Andrea Foy was the story teller and read for the children three classics. She was brilliant at having the children be interactive and free to ask questions if they did not recognize some words. It proved to be very beneficial as all the children then checked out books to borrow and stated they would be thrilled to attend again. We anticipate this to be a regular event with a growing number of participants. Younger children who are just beginning their exposure to the English language have the opportunity to hear stories from a native English speaker in a relaxed atmosphere.

St. Valentine's Day

(February 14)



St. Valentine's Day has roots in several different legends that have found their way to us through the ages. One of the earliest popular symbols of the day is Cupid, the Roman god of love, who is represented by the image of a young boy with bow and arrow. Three hundred years after the death of Jesus Christ, the Roman emperors still demanded that everyone believe in the Roman gods. Valentine, a Christian priest, had been thrown in prison for his teachings.

On February 14, Valentine was beheaded, not only because he was a Christian, but also because he had performed a miracle. He supposedly cured the jailer's daughter of her blindness. The night before he was

executed; he wrote the jailer's daughter a farewell letter, signing it "From Your Valentine." another legend tells us that this same Valentine, well-loved by all, received notes to his jail cell from children and friends who missed him.

Another Valentine was an Italian bishop who lived at about the same time, AD 200. He was imprisoned because he secretly married couples, contrary to the laws of the Roman emperor. Some legends say he was burned at the stake. February 14 was also a Roman holiday, held in honor of a goddess. Young men randomly chose the name of a young girl to escort to the festivities. The custom of choosing a sweetheart on this date spread through Europe in the Middle Ages, and then to the early American colonies. Throughout the ages, people also believed that birds picked their mates on February 14!

In AD 496 Saint Pope Gelasius I named February 14 as "Valentine's Day". Although it's not an official holiday, most Americans observe this day. Whatever the odd mixture of origins, St. Valentine's Day is now a day for sweethearts. It is the day that you show your friend or loved one that you care. You can send candy to someone you think is special. Or you can send roses, the flower of love. Most people send "valentines," a greeting card named after the notes that St. Valentine received in jail. Valentines can be sentimental, romantic and heartfelt. They can be funny and friendly. If the sender is shy, valentines can be anonymous. Americans of all ages love to send and receive valentines. Handmade valentines created by cutting hearts out of colored paper, show that a lot of thought was put into making them personal. Valentines can be heart-shaped, or have hearts, the symbol of love, on them. In elementary schools children make valentines for their classmates and put them in a large decorated box, similar to a mailbox. On February 14, the teacher opens the box and distributes the valentines to each student. After the students read their valentines they have a small party with refreshments.

For teenagers and adults, major newspapers throughout the country have a Valentine's Day offer. Anyone can send in a message, for a small fee of course, destined for a would-be sweetheart, a good friend, an acquaintance or even a spouse of fifty years. The message is printed in a special section of the newspaper on February 14.



New Books at the Corner

1. *One More Time; A Memoir* by Carol Burnett
2. *Kate Remembered; A personal biography of Katharine Hepburn* by A. Scott Berg
3. *Desert heat* by J.A. Jance
4. *Tombstone Courage* by J.A. Jance
5. *Two Dollar Bill* by Stuart Woods
6. *I Know This Much Is True* by Wally Lamb
7. *Don't tell Anyone* by Frederick Busch
8. *Foreign Affairs: A Novel* by Alison Lurie
9. *Lost Lake stories* by Mark Slouka
10. *The Watergate Crisis* by Michael A Genovese
11. *Events That Changed America in the twentieth Century* by John E. Findling
12. *The Citizen Action Encyclopedia* by Richard S. Halsey
13. *What's Up America? A Foreigner's Guide to Understanding Americans* by Diane Asitimbay
14. *Art on the Cutting Edge: A Guide to Contemporary Movements* by Lea Vergine
15. *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett
16. *ALPHABETICS* by Suse MacDonald
17. *ALPHABET CITY* by Stephen T. Johnson

Please note the American Corner will be closed on
Monday February 19th in honor of Presidents Day

