

## Unusual July Events

The month of July was named in honor of Julius Caesar, who was responsible for the year having 365 days—the “Julian calendar.” It has also a girl’s name and by 1900 was one of the most popular, with variants such as Julia, Jackquel, Jacquil, Jaell, Jahel, Jahli, Jalee, Jalil, Jayel and Jayla, but by 1950 its popularity had dropped considerably.

Back in 1984, Ronald Reagan deemed July as “National Ice Cream Flavor Month” and the third Sunday of this month is “National Ice Cream Day,” so I headed to Drug Emporium and bought a gallon of French Vanilla, figuring that we could invent our own flavors for the month. So far, a bit of chocolate sauce and a few peanuts has been our flavor of the month.

There are also serious days this month, for example July 2<sup>nd</sup> was “World UFO Day,” so if you looked into the sky and saw some unidentified object, you should have immediately consulted the World UFO Day website. However, be careful: what one observer thought was the landing craft of intelligent beings from outer space turned out to be the lid of a garbage can, lofted high by Texas winds. The sighting was classified for several years.

You will not be surprised to know that July 4<sup>th</sup>, in addition to Independence Day, is “Sidewalk Egg Frying Day.” When we were studying linguistics at the University of Oklahoma one summer, we actually saw college students frying their eggs on the sidewalk. I think they were “over easy” and not scrambled—unless someone happened to step on them. We never saw anyone eat what was left of the eggs.

Although July 6 is “International Kissing Day,” in Texas, according to high government sources, masks are not mandatory and “social distancing” will be reduced from six to two feet. This day is also cited as a direct cause for “National Mono Day.”

The children are probably going to have to forgo “Teddy Bear Picnic Day,” which is on July 10. The “day” was proclaimed a national holiday by a collectible items dealer named Royal Selangor, building on a song written by John Walter Bratton called “The Teddy Bears’ Picnic.” The holiday is popular in Europe and there is a ground swell among Baylor students for it to be recognized with signs near the bear pit.

Children who miss out on their Teddy bear picnics can look forward to July 13<sup>th</sup>, which is “National French Fries Day,” although French Fries should actually be eaten on July 22, which is “National Junk Food Day.”

Several July events will not take place this year: July 26, the “National Talk in an Elevator Day” is replaced by “Guess Who Has Dimples under Masks Day”. There is still debate about honoring “Yellow Pig Day,” which normally takes place on July 17, the name arising from “an intense

study of the mathematical properties of the number 17.” Piggeries around the world may hold rallies and object to the use of the word “pig.”

You have probably heard of “spoonerisms,” the accidental switching of consonants or vowels and named after the Reverend William Archibald Spooner. To honor him, July 22<sup>nd</sup> is “Doonerism Spay.”

But enough trivia, let’s get serious. The Catholics have over 15 Saints who are celebrated on July 1<sup>st</sup> alone, with another 11 on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, and similar additions for the remaining days of the month. For example, St. Phocas the Gardener, who died in 303, has his Feast day on July 3 and, for a more modern example, St. Maria Goretti, who died on July 6, 1902 and was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

Protestants are featured in July as well: think of theologian John Calvin, who was born as Jehan Cauvin in Noyon, a town in Picardy, a province of the Kingdom of France on July 10, 1509. Calvin was a pastor and reformer in Geneva during the Reformation. He developed a system of theology called Calvinism, which includes aspects of predestination, the sovereignty of God and eternal damnation. He was originally a lawyer and left the Roman Catholic Church around 1530. During the English Civil War, Calvinistic Puritans produced the Westminster Confession, which later became the confessional standard for Presbyterians.

But this isn’t a religious contest, so let’s turn to some other famous people who were born in July: Diana, the Princess of Wales, on July 1, 1961, Koko the gorilla on July 4, 1971, Tom Hanks on July 9, 1956, Henry David Thoreau on July 12, 1817, Nelson Mandela on July 18, 1918, Ernest Hemingway on July 21, 1899. Amelia Earhart on July 24, 1897, and Beatrix Potter on July 28, 1866.

In other words, if your birthday is in July, you are showcased with many prominent people. However, if it is in December, don’t worry because Santa Claus is coming to town and will remember you. Hopefully, he will not be wearing a mask, and kids can sit on his lap.

Spurious July reflections  
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