

THE FAIRFAX COUNTY HISTORY COMMISSION  
CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH MARCH, 2024

*Enjoy Women's History Month, with these daily vignettes and references to  
notable women and events both past and present!*

*Notable Women  
Through History*

**Notable Events and Women of History**

<b>Day 1</b>	<p>The history of <b>National Black Women in Jazz and the Arts Day</b> can be traced back to the 19th century when Black women began to make significant contributions to the fields of music, theater, local dances, and other art forms. Despite facing significant barriers to entry and recognition, Black women in the arts persisted, breaking down barriers and paving the way for future generations of artists. The idea for National Black Women in Jazz and the Arts Day was first proposed in 2010 by the National Museum of Women in the Arts as a way to recognize and celebrate the contributions of Black women in the arts. The day was officially recognized by Congress in 2012, with a resolution that acknowledged the historic and ongoing contributions of Black women in jazz and the arts. The day was established by the National Museum of Women in the Arts and is celebrated annually on the first day of National Women's History Month - March 1st.</p> <p><a href="https://edifier-online.com/us/en/blog/celebrating-national-black-women-in-jazz-and-the-arts-day">https://edifier-online.com/us/en/blog/celebrating-national-black-women-in-jazz-and-the-arts-day</a></p>
<b>Day 2</b>	<p><b>National Women's History Month</b> is an honorary observance in the month of March in the United States, as designated in 1987 by the U.S. Congress. It represents the recognition of the many accomplishments of women throughout history. Similar monthlong observances occur in other countries. The origins of Women's History Month date back to 1978 in Santa Rosa, California, when the Education Task Force of Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women planned a "Women's History Week" celebration during the week of March 8 to correspond with International Women's Day.</p> <p><a href="https://www.womenshistorymonth.gov/">https://www.womenshistorymonth.gov/</a></p>
<b>Day 3</b>	<p><b>Molly Murphy MacGregor, Mary Ruthsdotter, Maria Cuevas, Paula Hammett, and Bette Morgan</b> founded the National Women's History Alliance in 1980 and are largely credited for being the founders of Women's History Month. It is their coalition that ultimately led to the proclamation of Women's History Week, then Month.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_History_Month#:~:text=The%20commemoration%20began%20in%201978,States%2C%20spreading%20internationally%20after%20that.">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_History_Month#:~:text=The%20commemoration%20began%20in%201978,States%2C%20spreading%20internationally%20after%20that.</a></p>
<b>Day 4</b>	<p><b>Dr. Gerda Lerner</b>, (4/30/1920 – 1/2/2013) was a key figure in the fight for the national observance of Women's History Month, said: "<a href="#">Women's history is women's right</a>. Since 1995, each president has issued an annual proclamation designating the month of March as "Women's History Month." The National Women's History Alliance selects and publishes the yearly". Dr. Lerner is also well known for her book, "The <u>Grimké</u> Sisters from South Carolina" - the biographies of early feminists and abolitionists, <b>Sarah and Angelina Grimké</b> (Sarah: 11/26/1792 – 12/23/1873 &amp; Angelina: 2/20/1805 – 10/26/1879); Dr. Lerner also wrote poetry, fiction, theatre pieces, screenplays, and an autobiography. She served as president of the Organization of American Historians from 1980 to 1981.</p> <p><a href="http://www.Womenshistory.org">www.Womenshistory.org</a>; <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerda_Lerner">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerda_Lerner</a></p>

<p><b>Day 5</b></p>	<p>The American Women's Suffrage movement began with a gathering of over 100 individuals at The Seneca Falls Convention is regarded by many as the birthplace of American feminism. Heralded as the first women's rights convention in the United States, it was held at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19 and 20, 1848. 68 women and 32 men were in attendance – with most notably Frederick Douglass. <b>Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott &amp; Mary M'Clintock</b> spear-headed the event. To learn more about the Seneca Falls convention and the beautiful city of Seneca Falls, New York, see:  <a href="https://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm">https://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Day 6</b></p>	<p><b>Susan B. Anthony</b> (2/15/1820 – 3/13/1906) was an American social reformer and women's rights activist who played a pivotal role in the women's suffrage movement. Born into a Quaker family committed to social equality, she collected anti-slavery petitions at the age of 17 and traveled throughout the United States lecturing on the Importance for women to have equal rights. She was close friends with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott &amp; Mary M'Clintock.  <a href="https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/susan-b-anthony">https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/susan-b-anthony</a></p>
<p><b>Day 7</b></p>	<p><b>National Girl Scouts Day</b>  The Girl Scouts, founded by <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juliette_Gordon_Low">Juliette Gordon Low</a>, (affectionately known as Daisy), (10/31/1860 – 1/17/1927) was the American founder of Girl Scouts of the USA. Inspired by the work of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of Scout Movement, she joined the Girl Guide movement in England, forming her own group of Girl Guides there in 1911. In 1912 she returned to the States, and the same year established the first U.S. Girl Guide troop in Savannah, Georgia. In 1915, the United States' Girl Guides became known as the Girl Scouts, and Juliette Gordon Low was the first ever leader. She remained active until the time of her death. Her birthday, October 31, is celebrated each year by the Girl Scouts as "<a href="#">Founder's Day</a>".  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juliette_Gordon_Low">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juliette_Gordon_Low</a>  <a href="https://www.girlscouts.org/en/discover/about-us/history/juliette-gordon-low.html">https://www.girlscouts.org/en/discover/about-us/history/juliette-gordon-low.html</a></p>
<p><b>Day 8</b></p>	<p><b>Ella Jane Fitzgerald</b> (April 25, 1917 – June 15, 1996) was an American jazz singer, sometimes referred to as the "First Lady of Song", "Queen of Jazz", and "Lady Ella". She was noted for her purity of tone, impeccable diction, phrasing, timing, intonation, and a "horn-like" improvisational ability, particularly in her scat singing. Ms. Fitzgerald was a frequent summertime guest concert songstress at the Lorton Reformatory in Lorton, Virginia.  <a href="http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ella_Fitzgerald">www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ella_Fitzgerald</a></p>

<p><b>Day 9</b></p>	<p><b>Susan (Susie) King Taylor</b> (8/6/1848 – 10/6/1912) was born a slave in Liberty County, Georgia. Laws made it illegal to teach a slave to read and write, however, Taylor attended two secret schools operated by Black women. At 14 years of age, she became free when she and her family and 1000's of other freed slaves found their own home land on the South Carolina Sea Islands that the Union controlled. The First African American Regiment of the Union Army was the First South Carolina Volunteers, founded in 1862. There Taylor's relatives and future husband landed and joined the Army. At first Taylor worked as a cook and laundress and then later her duties included serving as a nurse and teacher for the regiment. She became, at only 14 years old, the first black teacher to openly educate African Americans in Georgia.</p> <p>[<i>Almost Forgotten Women: Yesterday's Headliners</i>, Mary Buckingham Lipsey, pp. 36-37]</p> <p><a href="https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/susie-taylor">https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/susie-taylor</a></p>
<p><b>Day 10</b></p>	<p><b>Harriet Tubman</b> (born Araminta Ross, (3/1822 – 3/10/1913) was an American abolitionist and social activist. After escaping slavery, Tubman made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including her family and friends, using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known collectively as the Underground Railroad. She was known for bringing people to freedom and lived for many years in her home in Auburn, New York – often taking in and caring for the elderly. In 2023 her likeness was placed on the American currency quarter.</p> <p><a href="https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/harriet-tubman">https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/harriet-tubman</a></p> <p><a href="https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#:~:text=Harriet%20Tubman%20(born%20Araminta%20Ross,into%20slavery%20but%20she%20escaped">https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman#:~:text=Harriet%20Tubman%20(born%20Araminta%20Ross,into%20slavery%20but%20she%20escaped</a></p>
<p><b>Day 11</b></p>	<p><b>Nancy Diane Kovach</b> was born on this day in 1935. She is best known for being an actress and dancer. A native of Flint, Michigan, Nancy Kovack was a student at the University of Michigan at 15, a radio deejay at 16, a college graduate at 19 and the holder of eight beauty titles by 20. Her professional acting career began on television in New York, first as one of <a href="#">Jackie Gleason's</a> "Glea Girls" and then, more prominently, on <a href="#">The Dave Garroway Show (1953)</a>, <a href="#">Today (1952)</a> and <a href="#">Beat the Clock (1950)</a>. A stage role opened Hollywood doors for Kovack, who signed with Columbia. She later racked up an impressive list of episodic television credits, and was Emmy-nominated for a 1969 guest shot on <a href="#">Mannix (1967)</a>. The wife of world-renowned maestro <a href="#">Zubin Mehta</a> of New York Philharmonic fame, Kovack publicly alleges that she was recently bamboozled (to the tune of \$150,000) by <a href="#">Susan McDougal</a>, a central figure in the Whitewater scandal.</p> <p><a href="https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0468222/bio/?ref =nm_ov_bio_sm">https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0468222/bio/?ref =nm_ov_bio_sm</a></p>

<b>Day 12</b>	<p><b>Liza May Minnelli</b> (3/12/1946) is an American actress, singer, dancer, and choreographer. Known for her commanding stage presence and powerful alto singing voice, Minnelli is one of the very few performers awarded a non-competitive Emmy, Grammy (Grammy Legend Award), Oscar, and Tony (EGOT). Minnelli is a Knight of the French Legion of Honour. Daughter of actress and singer Judy Garland and director Vincente Minnelli, Minnelli was born in Los Angeles, spent part of her childhood in Scarsdale, New York, and moved to New York City in 1961 where she began her career as a musical theatre actress, nightclub performer, and traditional pop music artist. She is an iconic singer and symbol for the LGBTQ Community.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liza_Minnelli">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liza_Minnelli</a></p>
<b>Day 13</b>	<p><b>Phillis Wheatley</b> – (3/1753 – 12/5/1784) Was an enslaved child, kidnapped from West Africa and brought to Boston, Massachusetts in 1761. Enslaved by Boston Commercialist John Wheatley &amp; his wife, Susanna Wheatley, Phillis became one of the best-known poets in pre-19th century America. Phillis became educated, learned and lionized in New England and England, with presses in both places publishing her poems. She was paraded before the new republic's political leadership and the old empire's aristocracy. First published in England, Wheatley was the abolitionists' illustrative testimony that blacks could be both artistic and intellectual. Her name was a household word among literate colonists and her achievements were a catalyst for the fledgling antislavery movement. She eventually married John Peters with whom she had three children, although none of the children survived beyond childhood. She died destitute at age 31.</p> <p><a href="https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/phillis-wheatley">https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/phillis-wheatley</a></p>
<b>Day 14</b>	<p><b>Amanda Gorman</b> - (3/7/1998) is the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history, as well as an award-winning writer and <i>cum laude</i> graduate of Harvard University, where she studied Sociology. She has written for the <i>New York Times</i> and has three books forthcoming with Penguin Random House. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she began writing at only a few years of age. Now her words have won her invitations to the Obama White House and to perform for Lin-Manuel Miranda, Al Gore, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Malala Yousafzai, and others. Amanda has performed multiple commissioned poems for CBS This Morning and she has spoken at events and venues across the country, including the Library of Congress and Lincoln Center.</p> <p><a href="https://www.theamandagorman.com/">https://www.theamandagorman.com/</a></p>

<p><b>Day 15</b></p>	<p><b>Marian Anderson</b> (2/27/1897 – 4/8/1993) In 1939, opera singer Marian Anderson was denied the opportunity to perform in DAR Constitution Hall because of her race. She subsequently performed an historic concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to a crowd of 75,000 people. However, on April 9, 1939, American contralto Marian Anderson stood as a beacon of hope for a country being torn apart by racial strife. Anderson's legendary performance at the Lincoln Memorial on that Easter Sunday exists in the annals of American history as a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights movement. Having grown up in poverty with her family in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania she began singing in her home Baptist church at age six. She could sing any choral part from soprano to bass and performed her first solo at the age of eleven. After 1939 she went on to enjoy a stellar musical career, singing at both the inaugurations of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marian_Anderson">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marian_Anderson</a></p>
<p><b>Day 16</b></p>	<p><b>Maria Francesca Cabrini</b> (also called Mother Cabrini), (7/15/1850 – 12/22/1917) was an Italian-American Catholic religious sister and saint. She founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a religious institute that was a major support to her fellow Italian immigrants to the United States. She was the first U.S. citizen to be canonized a saint by the Catholic Church, on July 7, 1946. Born two months early, she was small and weak as a child and remained in delicate health throughout her life. Her parents died in 1870 and she then applied for admission to the Daughters of the Sacred Heart at Arluno, Italy. In March of 1889, she came to New York City and went on to found orphanages, schools and eventually hospitals. Her focus was on the Italian-American immigrants of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, who she served in New York; Chicago and Des Plaines, Illinois; Seattle; New Orleans; Denver and Golden, Colorado; Los Angeles; Philadelphia; and in countries throughout Latin America and Europe.</p> <p><a href="#">Frances Xavier Cabrini - Wikipedia</a></p>

**Day 17** **Shanon Sterringer** (5/22/1972) is a Catholic female leader in the Roman Catholic church and a citizen of Fairport, Ohio. Rev. Shanon was ordained on August 3, 2019 in Linz, Austria on the bank of Danube River. The Community of St. Hildegard opened in September 2019. She is a devote follower of Hildegard of Bingen (of the 12<sup>th</sup> century). Prior to Shanon's ordination, she was engaged in full-time pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Cleveland for twenty-two years before leaving to follow her call to be a pastor. During those years, she served as a Director of Religious Education and worked in the ministries of bereavement, sacramental preparation, liturgy, missionary activities and parish administrator. She was certified through the Diocese as a Lay Ecclesial Minister in 2012 following years of formation and preparation. She has written a book, "Forbidden Grace" which chronicles her journey to serve as a Priest in the Roman Catholic Church.

<https://www.healthyhildegard.com/shanon-sterringer-hildegarden/>

<https://hildegardhaus.com/meet-our-pastor>

**Day 17** **Belva Lockwood** (10/24/1830 – 5/19/1917) was a lawyer whose interest in law and politics brought her from upstate New York to Washington, D.C., in 1866. Later that year, she opened her own seminary school for women and became part of a community of progressive women activists who participated in the temperance and suffrage movements. In 1871, 15 women, including Lockwood, enrolled at the National University Law School (now part of George Washington University) in Washington, D.C. The following year, Lockwood and another woman completed the program, after which law school administrators told them they would not receive diplomas. Lockwood appealed to President Ulysses S. Grant, who was chancellor *ex officio* of the National University, and she received her diploma one week later. She was the first woman to argue before the Supreme Court. Her quote "I can not vote, but can be voted for." Is a testimony to the irony of the United States' court system during her life.

<https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/exhibitions/LadyLawyers/Section2.aspx>

<p><b>Day 18</b></p>	<p><b>Jeanette Pickering Rankin</b> (6/11/1880 – 5/18/1973) was an American politician and women's rights advocate who became the first woman to hold federal office in the United States. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Republican from Montana in 1916 for one term, then was elected again in 1940. She was the only woman to vote for the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment allowing women the right to vote. She voted against the United States involvement in both World War I and World War II. She was instrumental in the creation of the Committee on Woman Suffrage and became one of its founding members. In January 1918, the committee delivered its report to Congress, and Rankin opened congressional debate on a Constitutional amendment granting universal suffrage to women.</p> <p><a href="https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/jeannette-rankin-one-woman-one-vote.htm">https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/jeannette-rankin-one-woman-one-vote.htm</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanette_Rankin">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanette_Rankin</a></p>
<p>Day 19</p>	<p><b>Alice Paul</b> – (1/11/1885 – 7/9/1977) was an American Quaker, suffragist, feminist, and women's rights activist. She was one of the foremost leaders and strategists of the campaign for the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits sex discrimination in the right to vote. Paul visioned, initiated and orchestrated alongside Lucy Burns and others, events such as the Woman Suffrage Procession and the Silent Sentinels, which were part of the successful campaign that resulted in the amendment's passage in August 1920. Paul often suffered police brutality and other physical abuse for her activism, always responding with nonviolence and courage. She was jailed under terrible conditions in 1917 for participating in a Silent Sentinels protest in front of the White House, as she had been several times during earlier efforts to secure the vote for women in England. A statue of Alice Paul welcomes visitors to the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial in Occoquan Regional Park, Lorton, Virginia – a beautiful 19 station Memorial devoted to honoring the multitude of people who fought for women's right to vote in the United States.</p> <p><a href="https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/alice-paul">https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/alice-paul</a></p> <p><a href="https://suffragistmemorial.org/">https://suffragistmemorial.org/</a></p>



<p><b>Day 20</b></p>	<p><b>Lucy Burns</b> – (7/28/1879 – 12/22/1966) worked alongside Alice Paul to fight for a women’s right to vote in the United States. The two ladies met in a police Station in London, England in 1912, as they were working with the British Suffragettes fighting for the right to vote in their land. The British ladies participated in acts of vandalism in order to bring attention to their cause and with that in mind, when Lucy &amp; Alice Paul returned to the United States, they were determined that the American ladies similarly fighting for the right to vote in their homeland, call themselves Suffragists, harking to an expectation that all ladies involved in the movement behave as Ladies in public as they went about their work to secure the vote. Lucy was one of the some 93 Suffragists who was incarcerated at the Occoquan Workhouse in 1917 for picketing in front of the White House. She was force fed because of her leadership and stand on women’s Suffrage. She and Alice Paul were eventually successful in getting the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed on August 26,1920.</p> <p><a href="https://www.nps.gov/people/lucy-burns.htm">https://www.nps.gov/people/lucy-burns.htm</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Burns">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Burns</a></p>
<p>Day 21</p>	<p><b>Rosie the Riveter</b> – “<b>National Rosie The Riveter Day</b>” is celebrated on <b>March 21</b> to recognize the part American women played in America’s victory in World War II. Although an allegorical cultural icon, the symbolism of Rosie the Riveter stands for the millions of women who left their homes for factories to keep the country’s manufacturing processes going. After decades of sustained activism, the U.S. Congress heeded the calls and dedicated March 21 to this cultural icon in 2017.</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1361889087701121">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1361889087701121</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosie_the_Riveter">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosie_the_Riveter</a></p>

**Day 22** **Edith Rogers** – (3/16/1887 – 1978) was the first woman elected to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 1935. With women enjoying the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920, many career doors opened up for them and so it was for Edith Rogers. Her firsts include having been seated through a judicial appointment, beating three male candidates in a Fairfax County, August 1935 primary and then defeating a male Republican candidate in the 1935 general election. She was the sixth of twelve children born to a farming couple, James and Mary Atlee Rogers, on March 16, 1887. Edith was lucky to have parents who instilled in their children the importance of a quality education – which allowed the Rogers children to attain a higher level of education and provide quality civil service to better serve their respective communities. During WWI, she served as “a teacher” and supported the Red Cross during the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic. She hosted social gatherings, sat in officer positions for social clubs and held land as a dairy farmer. Edith never married or had any children.

<https://patch.com/virginia/herndon/edith-rogers-breaking-glass-ceiling-0>

**Day 23** **Carrie Nation** - (11/25/1846 – 6/9/1911) was a radical and very emotional member of the temperance movement, which opposed alcohol, before the advent of Prohibition. Nation was arrested 32 times for viciously attacking or “hatchet-ing” alcohol-serving establishments (most often taverns) with a hatchet. Nation was also known as “Mother Nation” for the charity and religious work she did. Because Nation believed drunkenness was a cause of many problems in society, she attempted to help those in prison. In 1890, Nation founded a sewing circle in Medicine Lodge, Kansas to make clothing for the poor as well as prepare meals for them on holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. In 1901, Nation established a shelter for wives and children of alcoholics in Kansas City, Missouri. This shelter would later be described as an “early model for today's battered women's shelter”. In her autobiography *The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation* (1908) she also strongly opposed Freemasonry. Nation was also concerned about tight clothing for women; she refused to wear a corset and urged women not to wear them because of their harmful effects on vital organs. She described herself as “a bulldog running along at the feet of Jesus, barking at what He doesn't like” and she claimed a divine ordination to promote temperance by destroying bars. She was an avid supporter of the Suffragist movement with her followers often marching in parades wearing all white. One of her famous quotes was, “I was once married to a man who was murdered by drink.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrie\\_Nation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrie_Nation)

[*Almost Forgotten Women: Yesterday's Headliners*, Mary Buckingham Lipsey, pp. 90-92]

<p><b>Day 24</b></p>	<p><b>Hildegard of Bingen</b> – (c. 1098 – 17 September 1179) was also known as <b>Saint Hildegard</b> and the <b>Sibyl of the Rhine</b>. She was a German Benedictine abbess and polymath, active as a writer, composer, philosopher, mystic, visionary, and as a medical writer and practitioner during the High Middle Ages. Great leaders of nearby cities often sought her for advice, guidance and counsel. She is one of the best-known composers of sacred monophony, as well as the most recorded in modern history. She has been considered by a number of scholars to be the founder of scientific natural history in Germany. She was an accomplished gardener and pharmacist. She believed the color green was a sign of Divinity.</p> <p>Hildegard's convent at Disibodenberg elected her as <i>magistra</i> (Mother Superior) in 1136. She founded the monasteries of Rupertsberg in 1150 and Eibingen in 1165. Hildegard wrote theological, botanical, and medicinal works, as well as letters, hymns, and antiphons for the liturgy. She wrote poems, and supervised miniature illuminations in the Rupertsberg manuscript of her first work, <i>Scivias</i>. There are more surviving chants by Hildegard than by any other composer from the entire Middle Ages, and she is one of the few known composers to have written both the music and the words. One of her works, the <i>Ordo Virtutum</i>, is an early example of liturgical drama and arguably the oldest surviving morality play. She is noted for the invention of a constructed language known as <i>Lingua Ignota</i>.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hildegard_of_Bingen">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hildegard_of_Bingen</a></p>
<p><b>Day 25</b></p>	<p><b>Mary McLeod Bethune</b> – (7/10/1875 – 5/18/1955) was an American educator, philanthropist, humanitarian, womanist, and civil rights activist. She founded the National Council of Negro Women in 1935, established the organization's flagship journal <i>African American Women's Journal</i>, and presided as president or leader for a myriad of African American women's organizations including the National Association for Colored Women and the National Youth Administration's Negro Division.</p> <p>She is well-known for starting a private school for African-American students in Daytona Beach, Florida. Which later became Bethune-Cookman University. She maintained high standards and promoted the school with tourists and donors to demonstrate what educated African Americans could do. She was one of few college presidents in the world at that time, serving from 1923 - 1942 and 1946 -1947.</p> <p>She was the sole African American woman serving on the US delegation that created the United Nations charter. For her lifetime of activism, she was deemed "acknowledged First Lady of Negro America" by <i>Ebony</i> magazine in April 1949 and was known by the Black Press as the "Female Booker T. Washington" and as "The First Lady of The Struggle" due to her commitment to promote better lives for African Americans. Bethune was also a national leader in women's clubs, which were strong civic organizations supporting welfare and other needs. She wrote prolifically, publishing in <i>National Notes</i>, the <i>Pittsburgh Courier</i> and <i>Chicago Defender</i>, among others. She worked on Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential campaign in 1932, then invited to be a member of his "Black Cabinet". She advised him on concerns of African Americans and helped share his message and achievements with blacks, who had historically been Republican voters since the Civil War. She spoke to black voters across the North. Upon her death, columnist Louis E. Martin said, "She gave out faith and hope as if they were pills and she some sort of doctor."</p> <p><a href="https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/mary-mcleod-bethune">https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/mary-mcleod-bethune</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_McLeod_Bethune">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_McLeod_Bethune</a></p>

**Day 26**

**Wear A Hat Day** falls on March 26. It is a fun and fabulous way to raise awareness for brain-tumor research, and raise funds while we're "hat" it! The holiday was created as a way to get our heads (and hats) together to advance research in finding a cure for brain tumors. It gives one and all a chance to have real "Hatitude"!

Brain tumors occur in some 250,000 people globally each year. We still have a long way to go in the study of brain tumors. But, thankfully, due to scientific advances in the fields of chemotherapy and radiation, the survival rate is higher than ever before. Once, brain tumors meant the end for the unfortunate individuals who developed them. In 1879 when Scottish surgeon William McEwen was the first to successfully remove a brain tumor. His patient, a young woman, recovered fully, and the tide was turned in the fight against the illness. The discovery of X-rays meant that it became possible to locate tumors of the brain accurately through scanning. This has continued to be the best way to identify brain tumors. During the 1970s, the development of computed tomography (CT) scanning (1970's) allowed physicians to see a clear image of the brain for the first time. Despite these significant advances in the last 150 years, there is still no fail-safe cure for brain tumors.

<https://nationaltoday.com/wear-a-hat-day/#:~:text=We%20celebrate%20Wear%20A%20Hat,a%20cure%20for%20brain%20tumors>

**Day 27**

**Dr. Dorothy I. Height** (3/24/1912-4/20/2010) was known for her intelligence, leadership, courage ... and hats, rarely seen in public without a hat, and a 2019 exhibition in Dayton, Ohio explored her extraordinary life by bringing together 42 of her favorite hats, on loan from the Dorothy I. Height Education Foundation, Washington, D.C. Sr. Height was an African-American civil rights and women's rights activist who focused on the issues of African-American women, including unemployment, illiteracy, and voter awareness. She served as the president of the National Council of Negro Women for 40 years. Height's role in the "Big Six" civil rights movement was frequently ignored by the press due to sexism. Height's mother was active in the Pennsylvania Federation of Colored Women's Clubs and regularly took Dorothy along to meetings where she established her "place in the sisterhood".

Height's long association with the YWCA began in a Girl Reserve Club in Rankin, Pennsylvania organized under the auspices of the Pittsburgh YWCA. An enthusiastic participant, who was soon elected president of the club, Height was appalled to learn her race barred her from swimming in the pool at the central YWCA branch. Though her arguments could not bring about a change in policy in 1920s Pittsburgh, Height later dedicated much of her professional energy to bringing profound change to the YWCA. While in high school, Height became socially and politically active in the anti-lynching movement. A talented orator, she won first place and a \$1,000 scholarship at a national oratory contest held by the Elks and was accepted to Barnard College of Columbia University in 1929, but was denied entrance because the school had an unwritten policy of admitting only two black students per year, so she enrolled at New York University, earning an undergraduate degree in 1932 and a master's degree in educational psychology in 1933. Throughout her life, she was an active member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, where she developed leadership and ecumenical education programs. She was initiated at the Rho Chapter at Columbia University, and served as national president of the sorority from 1947 to 1956. She spent the fall of 1952 in India as a visiting professor at the Delhi School of Social Work, then returned to her training work in New York City.

A musical stage play *If This Hat Could Talk*, was based on her memoirs *Open Wide The Freedom Gates*, debuted in 2005. It showcases her unique perspective on the civil rights movement and details many of the behind-the-scenes figures and mentors who shaped her life,

including Mary McLeod Bethune and Eleanor Roosevelt. President Barack Obama called Height "the godmother of the civil rights movement and a hero to so many Americans". Height was the chairperson of the executive committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights until her death in 2010. She was an honored stage guest at the inauguration of President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009.

President Barack Obama delivered the eulogy for her funeral service at the Washington National Cathedral on April 29, 2010. Shortly after Height's death, congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and Mayor Vincent Gray encouraged the U.S. Postal Service to name D.C.'s former main post office the Dorothy I. Height Post Office. This honor made Height the only African-American woman to have a federal facility in Washington, D.C., named after her. The Central National Bank, also known as the Dorothy I. Height Building, or Apex Building, is now the national headquarters of the National Council of Negro Women. It is located at 633 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C., in the Penn Quarter neighborhood.

<https://www.daytonlocal.com/exhibits/dorothy-heights-hats-dayton-art-institute.asp>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy\\_Height](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Height)

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/dorothy-height>

**Day 28**

**Patsy Mink** – (12/6/1927 – 9/28/2002) was the U.S. Representative for the 1st and 2nd Districts of Hawaii. Mink was the first woman of color in the U.S. Congress. Mink was born in Paia on the island of Maui in Hawaii. She was the daughter of Japanese American parents. She was a *Sansei*, which means that she was the granddaughter of people born in Japan who immigrated to the US. She graduated from the University of Hawaii and she earned a law degree from the University of Chicago.

Mink was the first woman of color to be elected to Congress. She spent her time in Congress speaking out and writing laws related to gender equality in education. She was also the first woman to be an approved lawyer in the state of Hawaii. Mink founded the Oahu Young Democrats in 1954. In 1962, she finally won a seat in the Hawaii Senate. Mink helped write the Women's Educational Equity Act which provides 30 million dollars per year to promote gender equality in schools. It also increases educational and job opportunities for women. Along with that, she was the co-writer of the Title IX law which requires public schools to provide equal and fair treatment to all genders in education. Mink was the first Asian American to run for president. During her second time in congress, Mink co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Council. She also protested against the promotion of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court after claims of sexual harassment. In 1977 she served under President Jimmy Carter as assistant secretary of state for oceans and international, environmental and scientific affairs. Mink was a member of Congress until her death in 2002.

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patsy\\_Mink](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patsy_Mink)

<p><b>Day 29</b></p>	<p><b>The Honorable Abrar Omeish</b> – (1995 – Present) is a lifelong resident of Fairfax County and a proud product of our wonderful Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) system. She is a second-generation graduate of FCPS who has spent the past decade serving families and building relationships countywide.</p> <p>Elected to the school board in 2019 at 24 years old, Omeish was one of the first Muslim women and the youngest person at the time to win elected office in Virginia. Since the beginning of her term as one of Fairfax County's At-Large School Board Members in 2019, she has fought to keep children safe and has worked to build a more just school system and society for them to thrive in. This work has been made possible by the generosity, hard work, and solidarity from our community. Abrar believes, "Together we can create a better education system for our children and for the future generations of Fairfax County." Sharing supportive comments from current and former students, she says her proudest accomplishments while on the board include advocating for free virtual tutoring and mental health services for students, the addition of more religious holidays to the school calendar, and support for expanded language translation services.</p> <p><a href="https://www.ffxnow.com/2023/04/06/exclusive-abrar-omeish-bows-out-of-school-board-race-to-work-with-youth-focused-legal-nonprofit/">https://www.ffxnow.com/2023/04/06/exclusive-abrar-omeish-bows-out-of-school-board-race-to-work-with-youth-focused-legal-nonprofit/</a></p>
<p><b>Day 30</b></p>	<p><b>Elizabeth Blackwell</b> – (2/3/1821 – 5/31/1910) was the first female doctor in the United States. Born near Bristol, England Blackwell was the third of nine children of Hannah Lane and Samuel Blackwell, a sugar refiner, Quaker, and anti-slavery activist. Blackwell's famous relatives included brother Henry, a well-known abolitionist and women's suffrage supporter who married women's rights activist Lucy Stone; Emily Blackwell, who followed her sister into medicine; and sister-in-law Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the first ordained female minister in a mainstream Protestant denomination. In 1832, the Blackwell family moved to America, settling in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1838, Samuel Blackwell died, leaving the family penniless during a national financial crisis. Elizabeth, her mother, and two older sisters worked in the predominantly female profession of teaching.</p> <p>Blackwell was inspired to pursue medicine by a dying friend who said her ordeal would have been better had she had a female physician. Most male physicians trained as apprentices to experienced doctors; there were few medical colleges and none that accepted women. While teaching, Blackwell boarded with families of two southern physicians who mentored her. In 1847, she returned to Philadelphia, hoping Quaker friends could assist her entrance into medical school. Rejected everywhere she applied, she was ultimately admitted to Geneva College in rural New York, however, her acceptance letter was intended as a practical joke.</p> <p>Blackwell faced discrimination and obstacles in college: professors forced her to sit separately at lectures and often excluded her from labs; local townspeople shunned her as a "bad" woman for defying her gender role. Blackwell eventually earned the respect of professors and classmates, graduating first in her class in 1849. She continued her training at London and Paris hospitals, though doctors there relegated her to midwifery or nursing. She began to emphasize preventative care and personal hygiene, recognizing that male doctors often caused epidemics by failing to wash their hands between patients. In 1851, Dr. Blackwell returned to New</p>

	<p>York City, where discrimination against female physicians meant few patients and difficulty practicing in hospitals and clinics. With help from Quaker friends, Blackwell opened a small clinic to treat poor women; in 1857, she opened the New York Infirmary for Women and Children with her sister Dr. Emily Blackwell and colleague Dr. Marie Zakrzewska. During the Civil War, the Blackwell sisters trained nurses for Union hospitals.</p> <p>In 1868, Blackwell opened a medical college in New York City. A year later, she placed her sister in charge and returned permanently to London, where in 1875, she became a professor of gynecology at the new London School of Medicine for Women. She also helped found the National Health Society and published several books, including an autobiography, <i>Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Women</i> (1895).</p> <p><a href="https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/elizabeth-blackwell">https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/elizabeth-blackwell</a></p>
Day 31	<p><b>Cora Elm</b> – (2/18/1891 – 6/9/1949) was a Native American Nurse and Suffragist. Cora was born on the Oneida Reservation in Wisconsin, one of eleven children born to Nicholas Elm and Jane Hill Elm. Her home language was Oneida. Her father was a farmer, born in Canada, and her grandmother was a midwife. Her grandfather Jacob Hill was a hereditary chief in the Oneida nation. As a member of the Oneida Nation, she attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School from 1906 to 1913. She served as a Red Cross nurse in France during World War I, having trained as a nurse at the Episcopal Hospital School of Nursing in Philadelphia, graduating in 1916.</p> <p>Elm worked as supervisor of the wards at the Episcopal Hospital after she graduated. Elm participated in demonstrations for women's suffrage at the White House in 1917. Although Cora supported the Suffrage cause, many Native Americans were not granted full Suffrage until 1964. In December 1917 Elm volunteered for overseas service and sailed to France, where she worked as a Red Cross nurse at the base hospital in Nantes. Elm wrote about her wartime experiences for the <i>Carlisle Arrow</i> magazine. "My life overseas was not very easy. Although I was in a base hospital, I saw a lot of the horrors of war. I nursed many a soldier with a leg cut off, or an arm", she later wrote. In 1920 she was sent by the Red Cross to do relief work in Russia, Latvia, and Lithuania. She was one of the two Native American nurses known to serve in Europe during the war (the other being Charlotte Edith Anderson Monture), though others served in stateside military hospitals.</p> <p>After marriage and motherhood, she was a ward supervisor at Fort Bayard in New Mexico, and at Wood Veterans Hospital in Milwaukee. Elm married James E. Sinnard in 1921 and they had a son, James Jr., born in 1926. Her son served in World War II. She died in 1949, aged 58 years, at a veterans' hospital in North Carolina. She was buried with military honors, and her gravesite at Holy Apostles Church Cemetery in Oneida includes a military headstone.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cora_Elm">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cora_Elm</a></p>

**Calendar compiled by the Ethnic and Oral History Committee  
of the Fairfax County History Commission**

**Commissioner Esther McCullough, Chair, Ethnic and Oral History Committee**

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