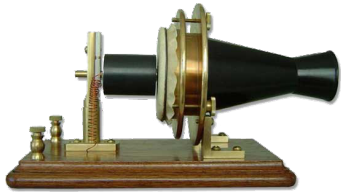


Clash of Inventors



Alexander Graham Bell is hailed as the inventor of the telephone. It was Bell who discovered that sound travels over electrical wires and that

these wires can be connected in a way that allows two people to speak to each other over long distances. On March 10, 1876, the telephone was born when Bell spoke to his assistant, Thomas A. Watson, saying, “Mr. Watson. Come here. I want to see you.”

Was Bell the sole inventor of the telephone? Another renowned inventor, Elisha Gray, was working on a similar device. On February 14, 1876, Bell submitted an application to the patent office for his telephone. Just hours later, Gray submitted his own application for a patent. Gray wrote:

“To all whom it may concern: Be it known that I, Elisha Gray, of Chicago, in the County of Cook, and State of Illinois, have invented a new art of transmitting vocal sounds telegraphically, of which the following is a specification: It is the object of my invention to transmit the tones of the human voice through a telegraphic circuit, and reproduce them at the receiving end of the line, so that actual conversations can be carried on by persons at long distances apart.”

When Gray discovered that Bell was awarded the patent, he took Bell to court. Not only did Gray believe that he submitted his paperwork first, he believed that Bell learned of one of his designs and stole it. How did Bell steal Gray’s design? One of the patent examiners at the patent office swore in an affidavit that he had shared Gray’s paperwork and designs with Bell. The legal battle lasted over two years.

The courts eventually ruled that while Gray had invented an important, even vital, component of the telephone, Bell had succeeded in creating the whole telephone. The rest, as they say, is history.

March Birthdays

Those born from March 1–20 are Pisces, the Fish. Like fish, Pisces like to go with the flow in an easygoing manner, but on the inside, they are intuitive, intensely spiritual, and deeply emotional. If you were born between March 21–31, you are Aries, the Ram. These independent adventurers like to strike out on their own and are natural leaders. Their enthusiasm and confidence mean they have big and outgoing personalities.

Dr. Seuss (author) – March 2, 1904
Jackie Joyner-Kersey (athlete) – March 3, 1962
Lou Costello (comedian) – March 6, 1906
Sam Donaldson (journalist) – March 11, 1934
Glenn Close (actress) – March 19, 1947
Chaka Khan (singer) – March 23, 1953
Danica Patrick (driver) – March 25, 1982
Walt Frazier (ball player) – March 29, 1945
Gordie Howe (hockey player) – March 31, 1928

Verses and Voices



World Poetry Day, initiated by UNESCO in 1999, arrives on March 21 to honor globally the artistry and diversity of poetry. It pays

homage to poets who craft words into emotion, images, and storytelling, transcending boundaries and enriching human experiences.

You can mark the occasion by sharing favorite poems with friends or family, attending poetry readings or events, or even trying your hand at writing a short poem. Dive into different poetic styles, from traditional sonnets to modern spoken word, exploring the richness of expression they offer. You might also support local poets or poetry organizations, sharing their work on social media or attending their performances. Whether you choose to write, read, or listen to poetry performed, World Poetry Day invites us to immerse ourselves in the beauty and power of words.

March 2024

The Commons

MEMORY CARE

Celebrating March

Umbrella Month

Optimism Month

Irish American Heritage Month

Iditarod Race

March 2

Namesake Day

March 3

Women in Construction Week

March 3–9

Welllderly Week

March 18–23

Napping Day

March 11

Quilting Day

March 16

Tea for Two Tuesday

March 19

Memory Day

March 21

Pencil Day

March 30

A Mathematical Celebration

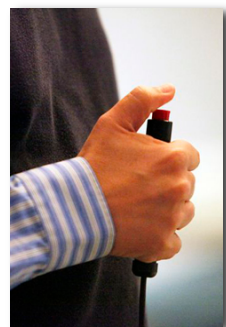
March 14 marks a unique celebration—Pi Day! It honors the mathematical constant pi (π) because the first three digits, 3.14, match the date. It is also recognized as the International Day of Mathematics, a celebration of the universal language of numbers. In addition, this busy day also pays homage to the genius behind the theory of relativity, Albert Einstein, who was born on March 14, 1879. Ironically, the fact that Einstein’s birthday is widely celebrated might not have pleased the esteemed scientist, who once said, “It is a known fact that I was born, and that is all that is necessary.”

Pi, that infinite number we encounter in circles, has an inseparable bond with Einstein’s groundbreaking work. The beauty of pi lies not just in its numerical significance but in its appearance across mathematical landscapes, including the formulas that are the basis of Einstein’s theories. The theory of relativity, famously distilled into $E=mc^2$, unveils the intricate dance between energy, mass, and the speed of light—a mathematical waltz through the cosmos.

This trio of celebrations is a chance to marvel at how math permeates our world. From the spirals of galaxies to the curves of flower petals, mathematical principles govern the very fabric of nature. March 14 is a day to appreciate the sheer delight of numbers, which transcend cultural and language barriers. It’s a reminder that math isn’t just about calculus or algebra, endless equations to mind-bending theories; it’s about the joy of patterns, puzzles, and the universal language that connects us all. It is the basis of the wonders of the universe—the rhythm of the stars, the shapes of nature, and the logic that powers innovation.

As you munch on a piece of banana cream or homemade blueberry pie to celebrate Pi Day, raise a glass and toast to Einstein’s legacy. Take a moment to reflect on how equations, formulas, and theories intertwine to unlock the secrets of the universe.

Jeopardy's Journey



Television quiz shows came under fire in the 1950s when it was discovered that contestants were given help and sometimes even answers by quiz show producers. The incredibly popular shows *Quiz Show*, *Twenty-One*, *Dotto*, and *The \$64,000 Question* were all revealed to have been rigged,

with contestants playing along to increase the dramatic tension and make the show more enjoyable for viewers. In 1960, Congress finally passed a law banning all fixing of quiz shows.

It's not surprising that many television networks were hesitant to produce any new quiz shows. But audiences craved them. In 1964, television producer Merv Griffin wanted to come up with a new game show. His wife, Julann, pitched him this idea: a show where the contestants were given the answer and challenged to come up with the question. For example, if the answer is 5,280, the question is, "What is, 'How many feet are in a mile?'" From that simple idea, the hit show *Jeopardy!* was born.

On March 30, 1964, *Jeopardy!* debuted, hosted by actor Art Fleming. It was a successful show, but after 11 years it folded. It was revived in 1984, this time hosted by Alex Trebek. For over three decades, Trebek reigned as the quintessential host of *Jeopardy!* With his poised demeanor and unmistakable voice, Trebek guided contestants through the challenging questions with wit and charm. He personified knowledge, embodying the essence of the beloved quiz show.

After Trebek's death in 2020, the show embraced a rotating roster of hosts, including notable figures like former contestant Ken Jennings and actress Mayim Bialik. Each host brought their unique flair while honoring Trebek's legacy. Beginning with Season 40, Jennings took the reins as full-time host. As the winner of 74 games of the show, there is no doubt that he's qualified for the job!

Fueling Change

Rudolf Diesel, inventor of the eponymous diesel engine, was born on March 18, 1858. Biodiesel Day celebrates a type of fuel that Diesel himself valued. As he stated in 1912, "The use of vegetable oils for engine fuels may seem insignificant today, but such oils may become, in the course of time, as important as petroleum and the coal-tar products of the present time."

It appears that Diesel was not only a great inventor but also a visionary. In 2012, 100 years after that statement, the U.S. produced over one billion gallons of biodiesel fuel. This fuel is biodegradable and nontoxic, produces less carbon dioxide than fossil fuels, and can be produced from vegetable oils, animal fats, algae, and even recycled restaurant grease.

The Perfect Pair



Feeling hungry? March 23 is Chip and Dip Day. This ultimate snack and party pairing has come a long way since chips and salsa. Often, the dip is the exciting element of the duo: creamy ranch made with sour cream, dill, garlic, and dried onions. Or guacamole with fresh avocados, garlic, onion,

tomatoes, a dash of cayenne, and a squirt of lime. For a change of pace, try hummus, spinach with artichokes, or a white bean spread.

Although it may be taken for granted, the chip is more than just a vehicle for the dip. Corn, potato, and baked pita chips provide a satisfying crunch. Sometimes you don't need a chip at all. Toasted slices of Italian bread are the perfect base for bruschetta. If you really want to impress a crowd, wow them with cheese fondue. The cheese is spectacular, but equally delicious are the sausage, bread, apples, and veggies for dipping.

In Praise of Weeds



Gardeners get giddy in March as the ground begins to thaw and green buds burst forth showing signs of spring. However, not all of those buds are welcome, and gardeners will begin their assault on unwanted weeds. But wait! Before you break your back pulling out garden

invaders, take some time to understand these pests. March 28 is Weed Appreciation Day.

Many weeds are native species of flowers that provide important pollen and nectar for bees and butterflies as well as seeds for a variety of birds. They may not be always be pretty, but they are important. For example, the humble clover may be undesirable, but it has tremendous benefits. It grows easily and in abundance, is a tasty and nutritious crop for grazing animals, fixes its own nitrogen (which means less need for fertilizer), and grows in a wide variety of climates and soils. It is also one of the honeybee's main sources of nectar.

Many other weeds are edible and healthy. The roots of the burdock plant are regularly eaten in Japan and Korea. They taste similar to artichokes and are high in fiber and potassium. Dandelion and burdock are combined to make a tasty drink that is popular in England and tastes similar to root beer.

The leaves of lamb's quarters, also known as goosefoot or pigweed, are a good substitute for spinach. The seeds, known as quinoa, are a popular alternative to rice and other grains and are high in protein and vitamin A.

Purslane is eaten all over the world in salads, stir-fry dishes, and soups. It contains more of the all-important omega-3 fatty acids than any other leafy green. So this March, before you yank, consider whether that weed may actually be a boon for you and your woodland friends.

A Winter Farewell

The first day of spring is a common reason for celebration for people all over the world, but the students at Lake Superior State University in Michigan may have taken it too far. Every March 20 since 1971, the students have bid farewell to winter by burning a snowman. This isn't just some wacky college prank; the bizarre tradition began in Germany as the Rose Sunday Festival, where a parade bearing a snowman (made of straw) passes through town to the village center. There, the mayor asks all the local children if they have been good, diligent in their studies, and mindful of their parents. When all the children publicly shout "Yes!" the snowman is burned.

The 10-foot snowman is made of leftover paper and scrap wood and is sometimes dressed in a rival college's colors. As it burns, students, professors, local children, and anyone else who cares to join in recite poetry they have written about the snowman. Only one year has been skipped since the tradition began. A snowman was not burned in 1992, due to environmental concerns by a student environmental awareness group. Locals were furious. Disappointed reporters arrived to find poetry but no snowman, and the tradition was resumed the following year.

Paws and Purrs



It doesn't get any cuter than March 23, when it is both Cuddly Kitten Day and National Puppy Day. The debate between cat people

and dog people rages on. At the Westminster Dog Show, dog authorities argue that they are outgoing while cat people are more aloof. Cat owners over at the Black Diamond Cat Show say they are more intelligent and independent than their dog-owning counterparts. According to researchers, dog people are more extroverted, agreeable, and conscientious. Cat lovers are a bit less traditional and more artistic. Both parties, however, love to cuddle.