

FATHER'S DAY – JUNE 19, 2011

Sonora Dodd, of Washington, first had the idea of a "father's day." She thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909.

Sonora wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart. Smart, who was a Civil War veteran, was widowed when his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child. Mr. Smart was left to raise the newborn and his other five children by himself on a rural farm in eastern Washington state.

After Sonora became an adult she realized the selflessness her father had shown in raising his children as a single parent. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910.

President Calvin Coolidge, in 1924, supported the idea of a national Father's Day. Then in 1966 President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day. President Richard Nixon signed the law which finally made it permanent in 1972.



FLAG DAY – JUNE 14, 2011

Though the origin of Flag Day dates back to the late 19th century, its inspiration takes us further back to 1777. On June 14th of that year, in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress passed a resolution specifying that the flag carry 13 stripes and 13 stars. The colors would represent hardiness and valor (red), purity and innocence (white), and vigilance, perseverance and justice (blue).

The concept of a specific day to annually recognize the American Flag came 108 years later. In 1885, a Fredonia, Wisconsin schoolteacher, B.J. Cigrand, arranged for the students in his school district to observe the resolution on June 14th as 'Flag Birthday'. In 1889, George Balch, a kindergarten teacher in New York City, planned similar festivities for his school's students. In 1893, Philadelphia became the first city to celebrate Flag Day, and in the following year, New York was the first state to observe June 14th. After decades of expanding community observances, President Woodrow Wilson established Flag Day on May 30, 1916.

Still many communities did not celebrate Flag Day. It wasn't until 1949, when President Harry Truman signed into an Act of Congress that National Flag Day be observed every June 14th. The United States Flag Code, as adopted by Congress, states "The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing." This is why we should give the flag our full respect.

