

September 2020

The Reminisce News

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Celebrating September

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The Autumn Harvest

For centuries, cultures in the northern hemisphere have timed their harvests to coincide with the autumnal equinox on September 22. The word *equinox* comes from the Latin *aequus*, meaning “equal,” and *nox*, meaning “night,” for this was the day of the year when the lengths of night and day were roughly equal. The druids celebrated the harvest festival of Mabon and visitors still flock to Stonehenge to watch the sun rise above the 5,000-year-old monoliths. The ancient Greeks believed that this equinox marked the return of Persephone to the Underworld. Persephone was the daughter of Demeter, goddess of the harvest. The Greeks feared that Demeter would soon become so despondent with the departure of her daughter that the earth would become barren during the cold winter months.

In North America, Native American tribes have ascribed various names to September’s full moon to denote the importance of the harvest. September’s full moon was called the Full Corn Moon or the Barley Moon because it corresponded with the harvest of these grains. The Lakota Sioux even called it the “Moon When the Plums Are Scarlet,” denoting the full ripening of this fruit. The full moon closest to the equinox is still commonly known as the Harvest Moon, which this year happens to fall in early October. In modern society, farmers do not often rely on myths or moons to tell them when crops are ready, but they are just as eager to harvest their crops before the cold weather sets in.

Many crops are ready for harvesting in September, as denoted by the month’s various harvest-themed holidays. September is Organic Harvest Month, Apple Month, Potato Month, and Whole Grain Month, while September 3–7 is both Golden Onion Week and Sweet Corn Week. Many fruits and vegetables are not only ready for harvest at this time of year but many more cool-season vegetables are ready to plant, such as varieties of beets, broccoli, carrots, swiss chard, radishes, and turnips. For industrious types who want to get the most out of their gardens, September is a busy time!

On the Ball

Ballroom dancing was once a privilege afforded only to the upper classes and well-to-do. Today, however, ballroom dancing is a pastime that everybody can enjoy, and you don't need an extravagant ballroom in which to do it. Grab a partner and take to the dance floor for a foxtrot, waltz, tango, pasodoble, rumba, or any other style of dance during the week of September 18–27, Ballroom Dancing Week.



The term *ballroom* comes from the Latin word *ballare*, which means “to dance.” The earliest ballroom dances were invitation-only events where aristocrats were invited to the royal court for formal balls.

Many historians believe that ballroom dancing originated in 16th-century France. The book *Orchésographie*, written by the French cleric Thoinot Arbeau in 1589, explains in great detail the role of dance in aristocratic circles during the French Renaissance. Soon after, in 1650, the French composer and dancer Jean-Baptiste Lully introduced the dance known as the minuet to Paris. These lively and fast-paced dances became all the rage and remained a ballroom staple for a hundred years.

Many formal ballroom dances evolved from folk dances. The minuet was originally a peasant dance from the French province of Poitou. The waltz, too, had its origins as a German peasant dance. During the 18th century, nobles grew bored with the minuet and would steal away to the dances of their servants, where they learned the waltz. The waltz was considered scandalous, with its clasped hands and bodies pressed closely together. It took years before it was accepted into the ballrooms of the aristocracy. So, too, over the years did dances like Argentina's tango and Cuba's rumba gain acceptance to the ballroom. And in the 20th century, as audiences watched Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dance across the silver screen, ballroom dancing suddenly seemed accessible to the masses. Today, ballrooms offer dance nights for dancers of all abilities. Whether you are a novice or an old pro, Ballroom Dancing Week is a chance to put on your dancing shoes.

Long-Lived Locomotive

In 1831, Philadelphia and New York were the two largest cities in America. The state of New Jersey, situated between the two cities, became a prime location for a railroad company that could transport people and goods up and down the coast. Robert Stevens founded the Camden & Amboy Railroad (C&A) and enlisted Robert Stephenson and Company of Newcastle, England, to build a steam engine, which was called the *John Bull*. Starting service on September 15, 1831, *John Bull* became the oldest operable steam engine in the country.

The engine was shipped to America in pieces. Steamboat mechanic Isaac Dripps was tasked with putting it together. Despite his inexperience and the lack of assembly instructions, he succeeded. His innovative pilot wheel at the front of the locomotive became standard on almost all steam locomotives at the time. *John Bull* ran for 35 years before being retired. In 1883, it was given to the Smithsonian Institution for exhibition. Then, on September 15, 1981, 150 years after its first operation, *John Bull* ran in Washington, D.C., making it the oldest self-propelled vehicle in the world.

Kitchen Creativity



September 13, or 9/13, brings 9x13 Day, a day for cooks of all abilities to fill their 9x13 pans with something delicious.

These versatile pans can be used for everything from appetizers to dessert. They can hold baked dips, beans, potatoes, casseroles, baked pasta, savory breads, meats, cakes, bars, cakes, and cobblers. The 9x13 pan is truly a workhorse of the kitchen. If you're looking for another excuse to whip up something special in the kitchen, September is Bake and Decorate Month. With apples and pumpkins begging to be picked, why not make one of these the star of your next cake or pie? And don't forget to decorate your dish with a decorative crust or a delightful icing.

Leaf-Peepers Delight



By the last weekend of September, Fall Foliage Week, you have likely noticed that the weather has begun to cool and leaves have started changing from green to shades of yellow, orange, and red. This dramatic transformation is the result of a careful and complex chemistry occurring within the leaves.

Throughout the summer months, tree leaves are hard at work, photosynthesizing thanks to chlorophyll. Not only does chlorophyll absorb sunlight and convert light energy to the chemical energy plants need to survive but they also give leaves their green color. But leaves also contain carotenoids, plant pigments that create hues of yellow and orange. Dominant chlorophyll normally covers up the carotenoids, but as the weather cools and days grow shorter, chlorophyll degrades and fades. Suddenly, the yellows and oranges of the carotenoids become dominant. But what of the brilliant red hues? The color red is the result of a pigment produced in autumn called *anthocyanin*. Cool nights stimulate the production of sugars within trees, and this stimulates the leaves to produce anthocyanin. Weather conditions in late summer, such as drought, heavy rain, or too many clouds, can affect the production of sugars and the resulting anthocyanin, either resulting in eye-popping (more sugar) or dull reds (less sugar). Dedicated leaf peepers enjoy nature's show regardless.

New England enjoys fame as a prime leaf-peeping destination, thanks to its leafy forests and chilly September nights, a combination that produces excellent fall foliage displays. Yet plenty of other places around the world offer excellent fall foliage. Japan is a prime spot for leaf-peeping, especially the northernmost island of Hokkaido, where leaves begin to turn as early as mid-September. Romania's Carpathian Mountains offer another excellent destination, especially the alluring Lake Sfânta Ana. No matter where you go, if there are leaves and chilly nights, then you are bound to find some spectacular fall foliage.

The First Miss America

In 2018, the Miss America competition abandoned its swimsuit competition, explaining that it would "no longer judge our candidates on their outward physical appearance." My, how times have changed. Almost a century ago, in September of 1921, Atlantic City held a pageant for "The Most Beautiful Bathing Girl in America." In this very first Miss America pageant, women were judged solely on how they looked in a bathing suit, and 16-year-old Margaret Gorman was handed the Golden Mermaid Trophy while still wearing hers. Some historians trace the beauty pageant back to 1854 when none other than P.T. Barnum attempted to add an exhibition to his New York museum where visitors judged women by their appearance. Barnum's project was nixed after public protests, but local newspapers used the idea as a way to attract readers and began to run photo-based popularity contests of local women. In fact, Margaret Gorman, that first Miss America pageant winner, had won her local newspaper's popularity contest, which led to her being crowned Miss District of Columbia, making her eligible for Miss America.

Shetland's Golden Fleece



The last Saturday in September brings Shetland Wool Week, a week that places Scotland's generations-old textile industry in the spotlight. Shetland wool is a luxuriously soft, warm, and airy wool that is sheared from Shetland sheep, a breed that originally hailed from the Shetland Islands, found in the northernmost isles of Scotland. *Fair Isle* knitwear, sweaters that are world famous for their colorful patterns, warmth, comfort, and durability, come from the Shetland island named Fair Isle, where knitters have been turning Shetland wool into garments since the 1600s. Family-based knitters produce up to 40 garments a year by hand. With hundreds of pending requests, buyers may have to wait years before they get a genuine Fair Isle Shetland wool sweater.



Happy Birthday!

Resident's

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Barbara McRill | September 2 nd |
| Milly Tener | September 24 th |
| Judith Conklin | September 27 th |

Staff

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Stephanie Burleson | September 18 th |
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What's more fun than a Fall Fishing and Football Party?!?

September 25th at 2pm

- Party to include....
- Fishing tank with live fish
- Football games
- Finger Foods
- Face painting and much more

