



Notable Quotable

“Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.”

~ Dalai Lama, spiritual leader



November Horoscopes and Birthdays

In astrology, those born from November 1–21 are Scorpions of Scorpio. Scorpions are passionate, dedicated, and resourceful. Scorpions may seem intimidating, but they are just no-nonsense people who value honesty and loyalty above all else. Those born from November 22–30 are Archers of Sagittarius. The Archers are the travelers of the zodiac, curious and energetic, with open minds that crave new challenges.

Will Rogers – Nov. 4, 1879
 Vivien Leigh – Nov. 5, 1913
 Bonnie Raitt – Nov. 8, 1949
 Carl Sagan – Nov. 9, 1934
 Prince Charles – Nov. 14, 1948
 Goldie Hawn – Nov. 21, 1945
 Robin Roberts – Nov. 23, 1960
 Charles Schulz – Nov. 26, 1922
Whispering Oak Place Birthdays
 Deloris W – Nov 7
 Darlene HV – Nov 16
 Paul G – Nov 18
 LaVonna R – Nov 29

Deliberate Acts of Kindness *(cont. from pg. 1)*

research suggests that our vagus nerve in particular may have evolved to support and encourage altruistic behaviors. Perhaps stimulation of the vagus nerve is what prompted writer Anne Herbert to write “Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty” on a placemat in a California restaurant in 1982.

Herbert’s notion that we should practice random acts of kindness

is not new. Jews have practiced *mitzvahs*, or good deeds for others, for millennia. In the cafés of Naples, Italy, hardworking people who unexpectedly come into money pay for two coffees, a tradition called *caffè sospeso*, taking one for themselves and leaving the other for someone less fortunate. As the Greek fabulist Aesop once said, “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

Super Tuesdays

Election Day in the United States always falls on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November. In 1792, federal law allowed states to vote at any time within a 34-day period before the first Wednesday in December. Most states chose an early date in November because the fall harvest season had ended and the harsh winter weather had not yet begun. Also, the counting of election results would coincide with the new calendar year. In an agrarian society, a Tuesday election also allowed voters to

attend church on Sundays, spend Monday traveling to the polls, and then make it back to their farmer’s markets on Wednesday to sell produce. It wasn’t until 1845 that Congress mandated the entire country vote on a uniform day so that the elections of one state could not influence those of another. While the Tuesday date has stood for decades, some people argue that holding elections on a workday precludes certain workers from voting. Perhaps the answer is to make Election Day a holiday?

Whispering Oak Place

November 2021

Celebrating November

Native American Heritage Month

Adopt a Turkey Month

Dia de Los Muertos
 November 1

Diwali
 November 4

World Chili Day
 November 6

Veterans Day
 November 11

International Men’s Day
 November 19

Game & Puzzle Week
 November 21–27

Thanksgiving Day
 November 25

Hanukkah
 November 28–December 6

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Deliberate Acts of Kindness

The phrase “survival of the fittest” is often used to describe the tough tactics people use to get ahead in modern society, but scientists have determined that a far more effective coping strategy might be “survival of the kindest.” The second week of November is World Kindness Week, a perfect opportunity to make kindness a part of our everyday routines.

Humans have evolved into one of Earth’s most social species. While many people tend to think of humans as inherently competitive with each other, fighting for resources, mates, or even promotions at work, scientist and psychologist Dacher Keltner takes another point of view. He

believes that humans are built to be kind. Our generosity, self-sacrifice, play, modesty, compassion, awe, gratitude, and even embarrassment all present powerful evidence of our innate drives for kindness and caring. Research shows that when people act kindly toward others, they take more pleasure in society and are more likely to feel satisfied and happy. New

(cont. on pg. 4)

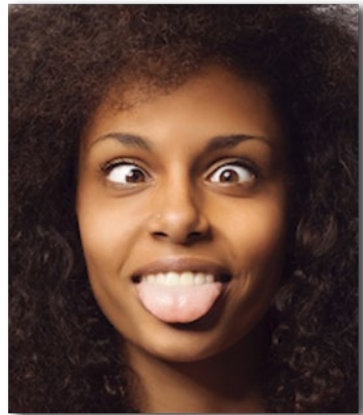


Better Off Red

November 5 is Love Your Red Hair Day, and love it while you still can because rumors persist that the recessive redhead gene is causing redheads to go extinct! Luckily, this rumor is not true. Red hair is caused by a mutation of the MC1R gene, which carries instructions for making a protein called the melanocortin 1 receptor. Due to the mutation, this protein creates a type of melanin, or

pigment, called pheomelanin, that causes red hair, freckles, and light skin that can burn easily. Because the MC1R gene is recessive, both parents have to carry the gene for the possibility of it being expressed in their offspring. Those without red hair can still carry the gene, making it likely that red hair will appear many years or many generations later.

Tongue Twisters



Research shows that it is the brain, not the tongue, that gets “twisted” when reading a tongue twister.

Serious speakers celebrate the second Sunday of November with especially circumlocutory spiels. Say that five times fast because November 14 is Tongue Twister Day!

Many of the first tongue twisters were not intended to entertain. J.W. Shoemaker included several in his 1878 textbook *Practical Elocution* as a means to improve pupils’ speech and diction. He included such doozies as “Some shun sun-shine; do you shun sun-shine?” and “A shot silk sash shop.” Elocution was a regular part of the school-day routine, with emphasis on proper pronunciation and diction.

The most famous tongue twister of all, regarding Peter Piper and his peck of pickled peppers, first appeared in print in 1813 in, you may have guessed it, a textbook titled *Peter Piper’s*

Practical Principles of Plain and Perfect Pronunciation. Peter Piper himself may have been based on the 18th-century French horticulturalist and botanist Pierre Poivre, who introduced spices like nutmeg and clove to the French islands of Mauritius, Réunion, and Seychelles. The word *poivre* means “pepper” in French, leading many followers to draw a connection between the man and the tongue twister.

If you think the aforementioned tongue twisters were difficult, then you might not want to try these next ones. In 2013, the Acoustical Society of America gathered to investigate speech patterns. Researchers determined that the most difficult tongue twister of all is “Pad kid poured curd pulled cod,” usurping “The sixth sick sheik’s sixth sheep was sick” as the world’s toughest twister.

All Spruced Up



Despite its nickname, the Spruce Goose was mostly made of laminated birch.

Howard Hughes rose to fame in the 1920s as a film director but later gained infamy as a recluse and eccentric. In 1932, Hughes used the fortune he had built in film to found his own aircraft company. When the United States entered World War II in 1941, the U.S. government commissioned Hughes to design a massive flying boat that could carry men and supplies over long distances. Steel was hard to come by thanks to wartime rationing, so Hughes’ team

used wood, laminated birch, and spruce to construct what was then the world’s largest aircraft. The so-called *Spruce Goose* had a wingspan longer than a football field, boasted eight propeller engines, and could carry 700 soldiers. By the time the massive plane was completed in 1946, the war was over, and the government no longer needed it. But Hughes swore it would fly and it did, just once, on November 2, 1947.

Voice from Outer Space



Ashtar supposedly circles Earth in a mothership and communicates with Earthlings via mental telepathy.

On November 26, 1977, viewers of a news program in the south of England were shocked by an unexpected interruption. The picture wobbled and a deep, otherworldly voice announced, “This is the voice of Vrillon, a representative of the Ashtar Galactic Command.” In 1952, George Van Tassel, an avid believer in UFOs, claimed that

he had communicated telepathically with an alien of the same name. More than 20 years later, Ashtar was back, this time in the form of Vrillon. The voice spoke for six minutes, urging Earthlings to give up their “weapons of evil.” While authorities are certain the transmission was a hoax, the person claiming to be Vrillon was never found.

Olympic Revival



Pierre de Coubertin did not form the International Olympic Committee until 1894, several decades after the first Zappas Olympics.

In 1832, after years of fighting for independence against the Ottoman Empire, the Kingdom of Greece finally became a sovereign state. Evangelos Zappas had joined the fight, rising to the rank of major in the revolutionary army. After the war, he moved to Romania and became one of the wealthiest men in Eastern Europe. These two factors—Zappas’ passionate patriotism and his vast personal resources—led him to singlehandedly finance the revival of the Olympic Games in Greece on November 15, 1859.

Zappas found inspiration for reviving the Olympics from the writings of the poet Panagiotis Soutsos. Greece’s long subjugation by the Ottoman Empire, especially when contrasted with the glories of ancient Greece, was a source of national embarrassment. In 1833, after the country obtained independence, Soutsos penned a poem entitled *Dialogue of the Dead* in which he imagines that

the ghost of the philosopher Plato returns to Greece only to lament its fall from glory. Plato asks, “Where are all your theatres and marble statues? Where are your Olympic Games?” Soutsos would eventually petition the Greek government to declare a national holiday commemorating Greek independence, with the chief festivities of the day being a revival of the Olympics. Interest in resurrecting the Olympic Games grew for 20 years, finally culminating in Zappas’ offer to fully fund the revival.

In 1856, Zappas made a personal plea to King Otto of Greece, offering not only to fund the games but to provide cash awards to the victors. Greek government officials were not enthusiastic, but King Otto was won over by the prospect of Zappas’ full sponsorship. Finally, on November 15, 1859, the first modern Olympic Games was held in Athens.