

*I say to you today, my friends,  
that in spite of the difficulties  
and frustration of the moment,  
I still have a dream. It is a  
dream deeply rooted in the  
American dream. I have a dream  
that one day this nation will  
rise up and live out the true  
meaning of its creed: we hold  
these truths to be self-evident:  
that all men are created equal....*

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**  
"I HAVE A DREAM"  
CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER  
1929-1968

*We have it in our power to begin  
the world over again.*

**THOMAS PAINE, AUTHOR**  
1737-1809

*If you can't stand the heat,  
get out of the kitchen.*

**HARRY S. TRUMAN,**  
33RD US PRESIDENT, 1884-1972

*Nothing happens unless first  
we dream.*

**CARL SANDBURG, POET, 1877-1957**

*For every complex problem  
there is an answer that is clear,  
simple, and wrong.*

**H. L. MENCKEN, JOURNALIST**  
1880-1956

*Remember the ladies...If  
particular care...is not paid...  
we are determined to foment  
a Rebellion, and will not hold  
ourselves bound by any Laws  
in which we have no voice, or  
Representation.* **ABIGAIL ADAMS**  
IN 1776 LETTER TO JOHN ADAMS,  
2ND FIRST LADY, 1744-1818

In 1777, Baltimore postmaster,  
printer and newspaper publisher,  
Mary Katherine Goddard,  
issued the first printed copy of  
the Declaration with all of the  
signers' names.

#### 1775 Demographics

**Total population: 2.5 million**

**Slave population:**

**20% of all Americans**

**50% of all Virginians**

**67% of all South Carolinians**

# Freedom's Feast INDEPENDENCE DAY

On-line ceremonies to get the most out of your AMERICAN holiday celebrations.

*Together we sing:*

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

(3RD STANZA)\*

*O beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife.  
Who more than self  
their country loved  
And mercy more than life!  
America! America!  
May God thy gold refine  
Till all success  
Be nobleness  
And every gain divine!*

**Leader:** The Declaration

of Independence is the

document that Thomas Jefferson wrote and our Founding Fathers adopted on July 4, 1776, to declare a new nation that embraced freedom and justice for all.



**What truths do you think are self-evident?**



JEFFERSON STATUE, UNIV. OF VIRGINIA. PHOTO BY DAN ADDISON

**Reader:** The ideas in the Declaration were new and bold in the way they were stated.

**Reader:** They were also hard to live up to. That's what makes the Declaration of Independence such a powerful and inspiring document.

\* Katherine Lee Bates, a professor of English literature at Wellesley College, wrote the words to "America the Beautiful" in the summer of 1893, upon her return from her first trip to the summit of Pike's Peak. First printed in a weekly newspaper, *The Congregationalist*, on July 4th, 1895, her words were soon set to music. They have been sung to numerous tunes, but "Materna" by Samuel A. Ward is the best known. Like Bates, inspired by America's beauty, Ward wrote the tune spontaneously after a day at the seashore.

**ALL: When in the Course of human events,**

*Reader: it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another,*

*Reader: and to assume among the powers of the earth,*

*Reader: the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them,*

*Reader: a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

**ALL: We hold these truths to be self-evident,**

*Reader: that all men are created equal,*

*Reader: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,*

*Reader: that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

*Reader: That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,*

*Reader: That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends,*

*Reader: it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government...*

*Reader: And for the support of this Declaration,*

*Reader: with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,*

**ALL: we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.**

*A full copy of the Declaration of Independence can be found at [www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html).*

*Enjoy Table Talk: Conversation starters—and explore what Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness mean to your family and friends at [www.freedomsfeast.us/independence-day](http://www.freedomsfeast.us/independence-day)*

*Make your own American Dream Quilt keepsake at [www.freedomsfeast.us/](http://www.freedomsfeast.us/)*



LABOR DAY



THANKSGIVING



MLK DAY



PRESIDENTS' DAY



MEMORIAL DAY

Most nations cannot claim a specific birth date. America can. Abraham Lincoln, in his famous Gettysburg Address of 1863, stated it simply, "Four score and seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

During that hot summer in Philadelphia in 1776, a group of men gathered in the Continental Congress to decide the fate of a nation. The 56 signers of the Declaration included farmers, businessmen, lawyers, doctors, and a clergyman. They all knew that their decision to declare the 13 colonies independent of Great Britain was an act of treason punishable by hanging. Still, they went ahead.

*Liberty is that spirit which is not too sure that it is right.*

**JUDGE LEARNED HAND, US CIRCUIT COURT AND APPEALS JUDGE, 1872–1961**

Adams and Jefferson were appointed to the committee to write the Declaration of Independence. Years later, Adams recalled the discussion they had at the time. Adams insisted that Jefferson be the principal author while Jefferson proposed that Adams write the draft.

A: *I will not.*

J: *Why?*

A: *Reason enough.*

J: *What can be your reasons?*

A: *Reason first—You are a Virginian and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second—I am obnoxious, suspected and unpopular. You are very much otherwise. Reason third—you can write ten times better than I can.*

J: *Well, if you are decided I will do as well as I can.*

**JOHN ADAMS, 2ND PRESIDENT 1735-1826**