

MONTANA SUPPLEMENT



Editor: Daniel E Koch Jr. REPGC
dkoch911@yahoo.com, 406-861-9946

All about the independence baby!

Did you know that on June 7, 1776, when the Continental Congress met at the Pennsylvania State House (later Independence Hall) in Philadelphia, the Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee introduced a motion calling for the colonies' independence? Amid heated debate, Congress postponed the vote on Lee's resolution, but appointed a five-man committee—including Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, John Adams of Massachusetts, Roger Sherman of Connecticut, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, and Robert R. Livingston of New York to draft a formal statement justifying the break with Great Britain.

Did you know that on July 2nd 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of Lee's resolution for independence in a near-unanimous vote (the New York delegation abstained, but later voted affirmatively). On that day, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail that "July 2nd will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival". On July 4th, the Continental Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence, which had been written largely by Jefferson. Though the vote for actual independence took place on July 2nd, from then on, the 4th became the day that was celebrated as the birth of American independence. However, John Adams believed that July 2nd was the correct date on which to celebrate the birth of American independence, and would reportedly turn down invitations to appear at July 4th events in protest.

Did you know that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died hours apart on July 4th, 1826, which was the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence?

Did you know the tradition of setting off fireworks on the 4th of July began in Philadelphia on July 4th, 1777? Also, during this first organized celebration of Independence Day, ship's cannon fired a 13-gun salute in honor of the 13 colonies.

More fun facts about our Independence Day.

1. Congress made Independence Day an official unpaid holiday for federal employees in 1870. In 1938, Congress changed Independence Day to a paid federal holiday.
2. Only John Hancock Charles Thompson signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. All the others signed later.
3. The average age of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence was 45. The youngest was Thomas Lynch, Jr (27) of South Carolina. The oldest delegate was Benjamin Franklin (70) of Pennsylvania. The lead author of The Declaration, Thomas Jefferson, was 33.
4. The stars on the original American flag were in a circle so all the Colonies would appear equal.
5. The White House held its first 4th July party in 1801.
6. In 1776, there were 2.5 million people living in the new nation, as of 2019, there are over 328 million.
7. Every 4th of July the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia is tapped (not actually rung) thirteen times in honor of the original thirteen colonies.
8. Wearing the flag violates the flag code. How many of you own a flag t-shirt, beach towel, shorts, headband, or any other item that is representative of the U.S. flag? Turns out that is in violation of the U.S. Flag Code but don't worry, that code is not enforced.
9. Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence on his "laptop" which was a writing desk that would sit on his lap.
10. Jefferson changed the wording in the Declaration of Independence from "the pursuit of property" to "the pursuit of happiness."

Respectfully submitted by: Daniel E Koch Jr. PM. REPGC

Sources from: <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/july-4th>
<https://www.macsadventure.com/us/blog/18-interesting-facts-about-american-independence-day/>
<https://acei-global.blog/2013/07/03/20-fun-facts-about-the-4th-of-julyindependence-day/>
<https://worldstrides.com/blog/2016/07/10-facts-about-independence-day/>