

Chisholm Trail

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Five Fat Turkey

**Five fat turkeys sitting
on a fence.
The first one said, I'm so
immense"
The second one said, I
can gobble at you
The third one said, I can
gobble too
The fourth one said I
can spread my tail
The fifth one said don't
catch it on a nail
A farmer came along
and stopped to say
Turkeys look best on
THANKSGIVING DAY**

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 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. In 2006, the Free Hugs Campaign was launched on YouTube, encouraging people to share the simple act of a hug with others in need of comfort. For some, kindness is easy. For others, sharing public acts of kindness may take practice. Start by doing one small, kind thing for someone. As the Greek fabulist Aesop once said, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

Tongue Twisters

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 not only on proper pronunciation and diction but on modulation of pitch, proper conveyance of emotion, and integration of physical movement.

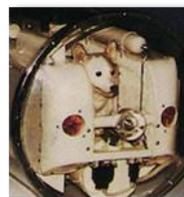
The most famous tongue twister of all, regarding Peter Piper and his peck of pickled peppers, first appeared in print in 1813 in, you may have guessed it, a textbook titled *Peter Piper's Practical Principles of Plain and Perfect Pronunciation*. Historians believe that the rhyme was probably in common use long before that. 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 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for their 166th meeting. In an experiment to investigate speech patterns, researchers asked participants to recite different tongue twisters. The most difficult one of all was "Pad kid poured curd pulled cod," usurping "The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep was sick" as the world's toughest tongue twister. Try saying each five times fast to determine for yourself which one is more challenging.

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 (like blue eyes), two parents both have to carry the gene for the possibility of it being expressed in their offspring. With only about 1–2% of the world's population possessing the recessive genes for red hair, some folks worry that the number of redheads will shrink until there are none left. Luckily, even those who do not have red hair may still carry the gene. All it takes is a lucky roll of the genetic dice for red hair to be expressed in an individual. This is why red hair sometimes skips generations and appears years down a family line.

First in Space



On November 3, 1957, a stray dog from the streets of Moscow named Laika made history by becoming the first organism to orbit Earth in outer space, a journey that paved the way for human space flight. In 1957, humanity knew little about the effects of space conditions on organisms. Many scientists believed that living things would not survive the launch off the planet's surface, much less the conditions of outer space. While Laika's trip was always considered to be one way, this did not stop the scientists from growing to love her. Before the launch, one scientist brought her home to play with his children. When Laika was placed inside the rocket capsule, the technician kissed her on the nose. Over the decades since Laika's trip into space, she has become a prominent figure in both Russia's history and popular culture around the world.

Olympic Revival

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. They worried that the Olympics, as an ancient tradition, would hinder Greece's push to modernize the country, but King Otto was won over by the prospect of Zappas' full sponsorship. On November 15, 1859, the first modern Olympic Games was held in Athens. Upon Zappas' death in 1865, he left a fortune dedicated to funding future Olympiads, which would be held in 1870, 1875, and 1888.

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, it is not without controversy. Some people argue that holding elections on a workday precludes certain workers from voting. Some states have responded by making Election Day a holiday, while others continue to lobby for Election Day to be moved to a Saturday.

Voice from Outer Space



On November 26, 1977, viewers of a news program in the south of England were shocked by a strange and unexpected interruption.

The picture wobbled and a deep, otherworldly voice announced, "This is the voice of Vrillon, a representative of the Ashtar Galactic Command." The name Ashtar might have been familiar to some listeners. 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.

THANKSGIVING

I'm glad that I was good
today

As good as I was able
I'm glad to be inside this
house and sitting at this
table

I'm glad that its
Thanksgiving Day
And all the world is merry
And I'm glad I have a fork
And that this pie is Cherry

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



November Birthdays

Jerry Fanning 3rd
Peggy Pace 18th



Welcome to Chisholm Trail

John & Dotti Woodall # 111
Shirley Stebbins # 118
Peter & Phyllis Durichek # 102

