
AUTISM NEWS NETWORK

By: Kristina Blake

The month of January

New Year's Day, January 1, has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1870. Schools and most businesses are not open. It is normally a day to clean up after the night's festivities, so roads may still be closed.

New Year's Day Traditions

New Year's Day is normally a day spent recovering from New Year's Eve celebrations, which last until the early hours of the morning. Families and friends may have meals together. Certain foods are eaten for good luck: pork, as pigs are said to represent plenty and moving forward; black eyed-peas, included in dishes such as Hoppin' John, a southern dish, because the roundness of the peas stands for a complete year and money; cabbage, which also means prosperity.

Resolutions

A very popular custom is to make resolutions - promises to improve oneself during the new year. Common resolutions are losing weight, giving up smoking or other bad habits, and doing more exercise. However, most people fail to follow through within the first few days of the year.

Games and Parades Many post-season college football games take place around the country, and these are often accompanied by parades and other activities. One of the most famous parades is the Rose Bowl Parade, followed by the Rose Bowl college football game, in Pasadena, California. The Mummers Parade in Philadelphia is thought to be the oldest folk parade in America.



Polar Bear Plunges

All around America, for charity, crowds of people take a swim, despite very cold water temperatures. The oldest plunge is the Coney Island Polar Bear Plunge, since 1904.

Baby New Year

A typical symbol for the new year is Baby New Year - a baby boy wearing a diaper, a top hat and a sash with the new year written on it. He represents "in with the new, out with the old." Baby New Year grows old, into Father Time, in one year. He hands over his duties to the next Baby New Year.



Martin Luther King Day

Martin Luther King Day, or Martin Luther King Jr. Day, is observed on the third Monday of January. It is also known as Martin Luther King's Birthday. It is a federal holiday and a day off - most schools and businesses are closed. Martin Luther King Day is held in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., the famous civil rights leader. Martin Luther King's birthday is January 15. However, under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1968, certain holidays, such as this one, are celebrated on a Monday to enable more families to spend time together. Born in 1929, and gaining a doctorate in theology in 1955, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister and an important social activist in the American civil rights movement.



In 1963, supported by various civil rights and religious groups, King organized his famous March on for Jobs and Freedom to highlight the daily struggles that African Americans faced. Around 250,000 people participated. The march ended at the Lincoln Memorial, where the crowds gathered to hear King's

renowned “I Have a Dream” speech, calling for peace and equality. It contributed to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing discrimination based on color, religion, sex, or national origin. For his work, King was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and was the youngest person to receive one.

National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

Across the country on January 9th each year, citizens take the lead to show support on National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. Law Enforcement Officers of every rank and file have chosen a profession that puts their life on the line every day for their communities. They’ve answered a call to public service that is demanding and often unappreciated. From local, state, and federal, their duties command dedication. The jobs are often thankless and take them away from their families for long hours. Rarely do they know what their days have in store for them. Often law enforcement are the only paid emergency resource a community has. More often they work in coordination with other local, state, and federal organizations to make communities safer. Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (L.E.A.D) was founded in 2015 by several law enforcement related organizations, such as the Fraternal Order of Police, the Officer Down Memorial Page, the Law Enforcement United, amongst others. Their aim was to have a day dedicated to

thanking police officers across the country for their work and sacrifices. Since its creation, the day has been a success with local Police departments and other law enforcement organizations, and every year more of them join in on the celebrations.

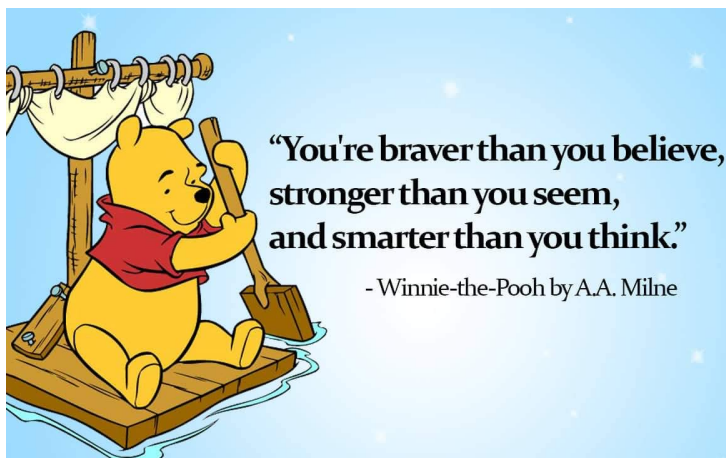


The police has been a very important part of American life, although many times they are not appreciated for all the good things they do. It is important to remember that many police officers choose this career because they want to do something good in the world, and help keep their communities a safe place for everyone, regardless of race and gender. Those officers not only risk their lives daily, they also sacrifice time with their family and friends to help others. Law enforcement officers also work together with other organizations such as paramedics and

fire departments. There are many ways to show your support for your local Police Department on this day. Here are some suggestions: You can send a card and a nice food hamper to your local law enforcement officers to say thank you. Organize an event in your community to show your support for the police. Wear blue clothes for the day to demonstrate your appreciation, and tell other people about Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

National Winnie the Pooh Day

National Winnie the Pooh Day on January 18th commemorates author A.A. Milne's birthday in 1882. He brought the adorable, honey-loving bear to life in his stories, which also featured his son, Christopher Robin. Their adventures took them and millions of children through the Hundred Acre Woods. Each character played a unique role in the books. Whether the wisdom of Owl or Rabbit lead the group awry or a celebration ensued, the story's characters became beloved around the world.



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