



## Celebrating September

**Sewing Month**

**World Alzheimer's Month**

**Classical Music Month**

**Labor Day: U.S.**  
*September 3*

**Grandparents Day**  
*September 9*

**Line Dance Week**  
*September 10–15*

**Online Learning Day**  
*September 15*

**Museum Day**  
*September 22*

**Johnny Appleseed Day**  
*September 26*

## Into the Great Beyond

On September 5, 1977, NASA launched the Voyager 1 satellite into space. After 40 years of space travel, Voyager 1 has logged over 13 billion miles and is the first human-made object to leave our solar system.



Voyager 1's initial mission was to explore some of the most distant planets of our galaxy, Jupiter and Saturn. The pictures it sent back of Jupiter and its moons revealed

startling new information. Not only did it find two new moons orbiting Jupiter but it also discovered volcanoes on the moon Io and possibilities of ice and oceans on the moon Europa. Its findings about Saturn were no less exciting, again finding two new moons plus a new ring around Saturn to boot. But Voyager 1's mission is not limited to sending information back to Earth; it also brings information from Earth into the cosmos.

NASA scientists knew that Voyager 1 would leave our solar system and perhaps journey to another distant realm, so they made two gold-plated copper records filled with greetings for aliens. One record contains sounds, including whale songs, music by Chuck Berry, and greetings in 55 different languages. Also included are instructions for how to play the records, as well as a "star map" directing aliens back to our solar system. Voyager 1 could be Earth's messenger to other intelligent life forms in the universe.

For now, Voyager 1 is zipping through interstellar space at over 38,000 mph. Its next big mission won't happen for 40,000 years when it will pass a nearby star. Voyager 1 will run out of power by 2025, though, so it won't be able to send us any data. For now, NASA scientists are content to study Voyager 1's latest information about what life is like in outer space beyond our solar system. And who knows? Maybe it will find another satellite sent from a distant galaxy carrying a record or two for us to listen to back on Earth.

## On the Road Again



September 13 is Roald Dahl Day in honor of the British writer's birthday. Dahl is best-known for his children's books, including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *James and the Giant Peach*. But aside from his writing, Dahl

was a born explorer. During the 1930s, he joined oil exploration expeditions to Newfoundland, Canada, and Tanzania, Africa. In 1939, he joined the Royal Air Force and became a World War II fighter pilot. It was during this time that he crash-landed in the Egyptian desert. The injuries he sustained kept him from flying, so the British government sent him to Washington, D.C., as a diplomat. The truth, however, was that he was a spy and his task was to rally America to join in the war effort. Dahl proved both as charming and shrewd as fictional spy James Bond and even spent a weekend in 1943 with then-president Franklin D. Roosevelt. Perhaps it is fitting that Dahl, in 1967, adapted Ian Fleming's James Bond story *You Only Live Twice* into a movie.

## Oktoberfest in September

The annual German celebration of Oktoberfest begins on September 22, which is confusing to many. Why would a festival named for the month of October actually begin a month early? It wasn't always the case.



Oktoberfest began as a fabulous wedding celebration on October 12, 1810, when the Bavarian Crown Prince Louis married Princess Therese von Saschen-Hildburghausen. The Bavarian royal family invited all the citizens of Munich to celebrate the occasion on the fields in front of the palace gates. The fields were named *Thereseinwiese*, "Therese's meadows," in honor of the bride. For five days, the people

of Munich ate, drank, danced, and otherwise partied to their hearts' content. Finally, on the last day, a dramatic horse race ended the reveling. The townspeople had to wait only a year before the celebration was held again, and then every year afterward as an annual festival. Over the years, it became bigger and better.

Oktoberfest became an agricultural fair, showcasing the bounty of Bavaria's farms. Carnival games like bowling and tree climbing were added, and prizes were awarded. So much was packed into Oktoberfest that organizers had no choice but to extend the celebration to 16 and sometimes 18 days. Finally, it was decided that October was far too cold for such an event. The shorter days meant chilly nights, so the start of Oktoberfest was moved to September, and no one ever bothered to change the name—not that anyone even cared, for Oktoberfest has always been a point of pride for Bavarians. It is still celebrated today as the world's largest *Volksfest*, or beer festival and fun fair. Indeed, the Bavarian beer halls and their Oktoberfest beer are famous. Since 1887, participating breweries have enjoyed their own parade to kick off the festivities. And since 1950, the celebration has officially begun with a 12-gun salute and the tapping of the first keg of beer by the Lord Mayor of Munich. As they say in Bavaria, "Prost!"

## A Hummer of a Bird



September 7–9 brings the Hummingbird Migration and Nature Celebration as these tiny winged marvels make their way back to warmer southern climates. Hummingbirds, sometimes called hummerbirds, get their name from the sound their wings make. These birds flap their wings so fast—about 80 times per second—that they make a humming sound. Hummingbirds exist only in the western hemisphere; they range from southern Alaska to northern Chile and stop everywhere in between. Although they weigh less than a nickel, these tiny birds can fly up to 500 miles without stopping. So why not help them on their journey by putting out specially designed hummingbird feeders? These brightly colored feeders provide the sugary, high-energy nectar hummingbirds need to maintain their metabolism.

## Messages of Love

How does one write the perfect love note? Let me count the ways on September 26, Love Note Day. Whether you pen a love note to make an ordinary day extraordinary or jot some loving words down in a greeting card, penning a heartfelt love note takes some practice.



The sonnet was the preferable form for a love note for hundreds of years. It was invented by the Italian Giacomo de Lentini in the 13th century. The word *sonnet* means “little song,” and it is a 14-line poem with a variable rhyming scheme that always

ends with a turn of thought or sentiment. As you can see, a sonnet is a highly technical piece of writing, perhaps better left to poets like Dante or William Shakespeare. However, if you truly wish to woo your love, then a sonnet is the traditional choice.

Modern times, however, may require modern methods. A greeting card, a poem, or a note on a napkin must all be sincere. It is important to speak from your heart. And don't just write “I love you” or “You're beautiful.” These generic phrases, while true, are uninteresting. It is of utmost importance to be particular. Mention details and things you love: the smell of hair, the way she likes her coffee, his obsession with crossword puzzles. Show that you've noticed things that no one else but a true love could have possibly noticed. That is love.

Why is it important to a relationship to write love notes? Writing down your thoughts and feelings makes them permanent. Also, it is often easier to describe your heart in writing when you are alone and thoughtful than to express your truest thoughts and feelings on the spot in front of another person. Perhaps you'd like to start by writing a letter and not sharing it? The simple act of writing about your love for your beloved is a way to rejuvenate your feelings for them. So let your love flow from your pen. And if you're feeling really ambitious, try to make it rhyme!

## In the Zone



Without the ozone layer to protect Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation, we would all be toast, which is why September 16 is the International Day for the

Preservation of the Ozone Layer. In 1985, scientists discovered that the use of harmful chemicals was creating a hole in our ozone layer over Antarctica. Two years later, countries all over the world signed the Montreal Protocol, promising to end using such harmful chemicals. So the good news is that this holiday has been a success! The harmful chemicals that destroyed the ozone layer were banned, stopping further depletion of the ozone layer. Scientists now expect that the hole in the ozone layer could be entirely healed by the year 2060, as long as countries adhere to the ban—which means we get to keep on celebrating!