



Celebrate! Holidays In The U.S.A.

Father's Day *(Third Sunday in June)*

The United States is one of the few countries in the world that has an official day on which fathers are honored by their children. On the third Sunday in June, fathers all across the United States are given presents, treated to dinner or otherwise made to feel special. .

The origin of Father's Day is not clear. Some say that it began with a church service in West Virginia in 1908. Others say the first Father's Day ceremony was held in Vancouver, Washington.

The president of the Chicago branch of the Lions' Club, Harry Meek, is said to have celebrated the first Father's Day with his organization in 1915; and the day that they chose was the third Sunday in June, the closest date to Meek's own birthday!

Regardless of when the first true Father's Day occurred, the strongest promoter of the holiday was Mrs. Bruce John Dodd of Spokane, Washington. Mrs. Dodd felt that she had an outstanding father. He was a veteran of the Civil War. His wife had died young, and he had raised six children without their mother.

In 1909, Mrs. Dodd approached her own minister and others in Spokane about having a church service dedicated to fathers on June 5, her father's birthday. That date was too soon for her minister to prepare the service, so he spoke a few weeks later on June 19th. From then on, the state of Washington celebrated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Children made special desserts, or visited their fathers if they lived apart.

States and organizations began lobbying Congress to declare an annual Father's Day. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson approved of this idea, but it was not until 1924 when President Calvin Coolidge made it a national event to "establish more intimate relations between fathers and their children and to impress upon fathers the full measure of their obligations." Since then, fathers had been honored and recognized by their families throughout the country on the third Sunday in June.

When children can't visit their fathers or take them out to dinner, they send a greeting card. Traditionally, fathers prefer greeting cards that are not too sentimental. Most greeting cards are whimsical so fathers laugh when they open them. Some give heartfelt thanks for being there whenever the child needed Dad.

Embassy of the United States of America