

November 2023

West Bloomfield Health and Rehabilitation Center

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Celebrating November

American Indian Heritage Month

International Games Month

Adopt-a-Turkey Month

Día de los Muertos
November 1

Nachos Day
November 6

World Freedom Day
November 9

Veterans Day (U.S.)
November 11

Diwali
November 12

Rock Your Mocs Day
November 15

International Men's Day
November 19

Thanksgiving (U.S.)
November 23

Square Dancing Day
November 29

The Game Is Afoot

As friends and family gather together during the third week of November to celebrate Thanksgiving, they will have another holiday to celebrate: Game and Puzzle Week. This weeklong holiday is designed to inject some old-fashioned fun and games into a holiday that is often dominated by eating and watching television.

Despite our preoccupation with digital screens, board games are currently enjoying a "golden age" of popularity. In 2021 alone, tabletop games earned a whopping \$13.4 billion worldwide. Designers are developing plenty of innovative, creative, strategic, and beautiful games for our enjoyment. Most importantly, however, these tabletop games deliver something that a screen cannot: a shared social experience.

There are plenty of competitive games where one winner comes out on top: *The Settlers of Catan* rewards the player with the most advanced settlement, *Ticket to Ride* the most extensive rail network, and *Seven Wonders* the most dominant civilization. But designers now offer plenty of games where players must cooperate to win the day. *Pandemic* pits players against the outbreak of various diseases, *Mysterium* requires solving a mystery and a ghost story, and *Robinson Crusoe* forces players to survive together on a deserted island. And then, of course, there is the mother of all tabletop games, *Dungeons and Dragons*, where players assume the identity of a group of fantasy heroes, playact their decisions, and even make the story up as they go along.

Whether games are competitive or cooperative, they often force us to face challenges and solve problems together. Faced with challenges, the strongest and most vulnerable parts of our personalities shine through, revealing who we truly are to the players around the table. These revelatory moments, in a low-stakes setting where defeat means that we can just play another round, are what make gaming so fun. Win or lose, games are bound to provide plenty of laughter, levity, and memories of time well spent.

The Finest Hour



November 12 might be National Happy Hour Day, but on most any day of the week, you can find restaurants offering half-priced drinks and appetizers. The first “happy hours” actually had nothing

to do with cheap drinks and apps but were instead a practice initiated by the U.S. Navy to alleviate the boredom of sailors out at sea.

In 1913, a group of navy wives and homemakers who called themselves the “Happy Hour Social” organized weekly parties known as “smokers” aboard the USS *Arkansas*. These social events provided entertainment, such as boxing and wrestling matches, music, dancing, movies, ice cream, cake, and plenty of cigarettes and cigars, yet had nothing to do with alcohol. By the end of World War I, these parties were widely called “happy hours,” and the practice had spread beyond the *Arkansas* throughout the U.S. Navy.

When the 18th Amendment establishing Prohibition was passed in 1920, people were driven to drink in secret, either in their homes or in speakeasies. Before heading out to dinner or a show, people would drop into a speakeasy for an illegal late-afternoon drink. The banning of alcohol during Prohibition led to the invention of the first cocktail hours, and these cocktail hours were eventually called “happy hours,” a coded euphemism used by those wanting to skirt the law and find a place to drink.

By the end of Prohibition, the notion of a “happy hour” was cemented in the public’s imagination. By the 1960s, restaurants recognized that they could cash in on the practice and began to offer discounted cocktails and bar food as a means to lure customers. Over the decades, businesses have offered all kinds of deals: two-for-one, half-price, kids eat free, early afternoon discounts, and late-night discounts. States like Massachusetts, Indiana, and North Carolina, in an effort to rein in customers who might get too “happy,” banned happy hours altogether. But just as during Prohibition, even bans have not dimmed the happiness of a determined public.

Life Support

November 18 is Married to a Scorpio Support Day, but what is it about Scorpios, those born between October 23 and November 21, that makes marriage to them so difficult?

Every astrological sign has personality traits and characteristics associated with it, but Scorpios have gotten a bad rap for their intensity. Not only is Scorpio’s astrological sign a dangerous scorpion, representing the scorpion that stung Orion to death, but the sign is ruled by both Mars and Pluto, the two most powerful planets of the zodiac. Astrologers believe that under these ruling planets, Scorpios’ life experiences are more intense.

No wonder Scorpio spouses might need a little extra help! Blake Lively is married to Scorpio Ryan Reynolds. Kurt Russell is the partner of Scorpio Goldie Hawn. Bill Clinton is married to Scorpio Hillary Clinton. It takes a lot of energy to match these Scorpio personality powerhouses!

Sandbox Artistry



The Siesta Key Crystal Classic, America’s premier sand sculpting competition, will be held from November 11–13 on the island of Siesta Key, near Sarasota, Florida.

This is no regular day at the beach. The sand sculptors are magnificent artists able to sculpt sand like the Renaissance artists of old. Just how do they do it? Professionals often have access to tools that common beachgoers do not. This starts with massive wooden forms used to create giant bricks of wet, compacted sand. More water often means better sand for carving. Next, professionals get creative with their tools. A margin trowel, the kind used to set mortar or lay tile, is common, but some pros resort to forks, knives, credit cards, horse combs, or straws—anything that will work. The final and most important ingredient is creativity!

The Emu War

After World War I, Australian veterans were granted land in western Australia for farming. When the Great Depression arrived in 1929, the farmers were encouraged to increase their farms and their wheat crops. Vast tracts of land were cleared, irrigated, and cultivated. In October of 1932, the economic hardship of the Depression was compounded by another disaster, this one in the form of 20,000 emus.



Emus—those large, flightless birds native to Australia—migrate to the coast from the Australian interior after breeding. As the birds migrated, they encountered the newly cultivated farmlands and found them an excellent new habitat full of food in the form of wheat and water from irrigation. The massive flocks soon ate and spoiled the wheat crop and left gaping holes in fences that let in other pests, such as rabbits.

The soldier-farmers petitioned the government to save their livelihoods, and the government agreed to send military machine gunners to the area, so long as the farmers provided food and accommodation and paid for the ammunition. On November 2, 1932, the machine gunners declared their “war” on the unsuspecting emus.

By November 8, Major Gwynydd Purves Wynne-Aubrey Meredith had led several attacks on the birds with little success. Over 2,500 rounds of ammunition had been fired and only 50 birds had been killed. Army reconnaissance noted: “Each pack seems to have its own leader now—a big, black-plumed bird which stands fully six feet high and keeps watch while his mates carry out their work of destruction and warns them of our approach.” The military decided to withdraw and regroup. They returned to “battle” the following week but with marginal success. By November’s end, the “Emu War” had ended and had done little to stop the birds. The Australian Army was largely foiled. Today, as many as 700,000 emus still call Australia home.

Ladies’ Choice

Sadie Hawkins Day on November 13 gets its origins from Al Capp’s comic strip *L’il Abner*. In the comic strip, Sadie Hawkins was the daughter of Hekzebiah Hawkins, one of the founders of Dogpatch, the comic’s fictional setting. Sadie was unlucky in love and was destined to become a spinster. On November 15, 1937, the comic depicted Hekzebiah declaring a “Sadie Hawkins Day,” a day when all the eligible bachelors of Dogpatch would participate in a footrace against Sadie. Whichever man Sadie caught would have to marry her.

In November of 1938, Capp revived the storyline. Soon, college campuses across the country began celebrating Sadie Hawkins Days of their own, with young women chasing men across campuses. Over the years, Sadie Hawkins Day has become a day of role reversals, where women ask men on dates, or at Sadie Hawkins Dances, girls ask boys to dance. While the unofficial holiday often falls on November 13, Capp himself used his last *L’il Abner* comic on November 5, 1977, to set November 26 as the “official” holiday.

Offering an Olive Branch



In 2019, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared November 26 World Olive Tree Day. Why does the olive tree deserve such special treatment? The olive tree’s symbolism dates back to ancient Greece. Poseidon, the god of the sea, and Athena, goddess of wisdom, both vied for possession of Athens. Poseidon struck the Acropolis and water ran out. Athena planted an olive tree. The gods granted Athens to Athena due to her superior gift, one that would sustain the people. Ever since, the olive tree—and especially its branches and leaves—have been considered dignified symbols of peace, fidelity, and strength.

Lighting the Darkness

Diwali, India's fabulous "festival of lights," occurs on the night of the new moon during the Hindu month of Kartik, and this year falls on November 12. Diwali is the most important holiday of the Indian calendar. It is primarily a religious celebration for Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs, but it has become so popular that many other South Asian countries treat it as a national holiday.



Across India, Diwali is celebrated over five days, but the darkest night, the night of the new moon, is the main day of the festival. Families light small, clay lamps known as *diyas* to ward away evils

associated with the darkness. Diyas, candles, and lanterns are arranged throughout the home, in the streets, in places of worship, and even floated on lakes and rivers. Some places set off bright explosions of fireworks in the night sky. Once the lamps are lit, families gather for fabulous feasts and prayers to Lakshmi, the Mother Goddess of good fortune and prosperity. To celebrate Diwali is to celebrate the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil.

Throughout India, there are many legends associated with Diwali. In the north, Diwali commemorates the return of King Rama to his kingdom of Ayodhya after 14 years of exile. To celebrate the king's return, his subjects lit lamps and decorated Ayodhya with rows of diyas, a practice reflected in modern Diwali celebrations.

In southern India, the story is told of Lord Krishna vanquishing the demon Narakasura with the help of his wife, Satyabhama. The demon had been granted immortality and could be slain only by his mother. Krishna knew this and asked his wife to accompany him to battle. It was Satyabhama, as an incarnation of Narakasura's mother, who felled the demon with an arrow. In western India, as in the south, Diwali is celebrated as the triumph of good over evil. Here, the festival marks the day that Lord Vishnu sent the selfish and vain King Bali to the netherworld. Despite these differences, no matter where you go, Diwali is marked with light and family.

November Birthdays

In astrology, those born from November 1–21 are Scorpio's intense scorpions. Scorpions seek deep connections and nurture deep empathy and commitment. Those born from November 22–30 are Archers of Sagittarius. The Archers have a unique blend of passion, curiosity, and adaptability. Bold travelers, they are unafraid to explore and conquer new terrain.

Will Rogers (cowboy) – Nov. 4, 1879
 John Philip Sousa (conductor) – Nov. 6, 1854
 Bram Stoker (novelist) – Nov. 8, 1847
 Jonathan Winters (comedian) – Nov. 11, 1925
 Whoopi Goldberg (comedian) – Nov. 13, 1955
 Gloria Foster (actress) – Nov. 15, 1933
 RuPaul (drag queen) – Nov. 17, 1960
 Allyson Felix (athlete) – Nov. 18, 1985
 Robin Roberts (newscaster) – Nov. 23, 1960
 Joe DiMaggio (athlete) – Nov. 25, 1914
 Tina Turner (singer) – Nov. 26, 1939
 Chadwick Boseman (actor) – Nov. 29, 1976

Monster Success



On November 3, 1954, the film *Godzilla* premiered across Japan. *Godzilla* remains one of Japan's most enduring pieces of popular culture and has been identified by *Guinness World Records* as the longest-running film

franchise in history. The film and its gargantuan monster symbolize something more sinister, however—a nation's collective terror over nuclear war. In early March of 1954, a Japanese fishing ship was contaminated with radioactive fallout from a nuclear test conducted by the Americans at Bikini Atoll. Soon, fears of nuclear contamination spread across Japan. The film's producer and director deliberately seized on that anxiety when they created a monster that embodied nuclear destruction. Skeptical critics thought the film would be a flop, but time has shown that *Godzilla* has conquered even those critics.